

To improve the farm dairy instruction service, reforms calculated to impress on those producing milk and cream the need for greater attention to the hygienic condition of milking-machines and dairy equipment were introduced two years ago. The changes in policy providing for a more positive approach to uncleanness are progressing very satisfactorily and a tighter standard is evident in all areas under supervision. Farm Dairy Instructors with more confidence have implemented this policy thoroughly; others have made a slower and less satisfactory response. Nevertheless, the tighter policy as expressed by the serving of notices to ensure immediate cleanliness is expanding rapidly and can be expected to develop further as confidence develops. Such notices, and the temporary prohibition of supply in appropriate cases, have been served in all supervision areas during the year, and the Dominion total of notices served (about 4,000) and prohibitions of supply (about 150) will be approximately double the total of the previous year.

This more positive policy of farm dairy instruction has generally had an enthusiastic reception by the industry, and many dairy companies have commented on the effectiveness of this approach to improving dairy-produce quality. Some dairy companies have not only supported the present practice, but have suggested that the policy could be tightened still further. Several companies have expressed their appreciation of the apparent improvement in milk and cream quality, which they believe is due to the more direct attack on uncleanness in supplying dairies.

The farming community has also accepted the new policy in a reasonable manner, and despite the serving of about 4,000 notices and 150 prohibitions of the removal of dairy-produce from dairies, only two cases in which action was disputed are known. This says a great deal for the respect in which Farm Dairy Instructors and the system of farm dairy instruction are held and for the tact and discretion of officers who make these enforcements. If such enforcements are made fairly and tactfully, an uncompromising attitude to uncleanness will be readily accepted by the industry and will have the support of dairy companies and their suppliers.

Rotational inspection, which was adopted at the same time as other innovations, has been justified and has resulted in an increased number of visits to dairies with a reduction in the mileage travelled per visit.

Caustic soda, which is generally used for cleaning dairy equipment, is still in short supply, and though other detergents have been used as substitutes, the results obtained from some have not been altogether satisfactory.

To meet the present increased costs of providing the farm dairy instruction service, the Division found it necessary to increase its charges. On the basis of the industry meeting three-fifths of the cost, rates of 0.008d. per pound of butterfat credited to suppliers and 4s. per supplier had been levied on dairy companies from the inception of the national farm dairy instruction scheme in 1938. Because of increasing costs over recent years these rates had proved too low for the purpose of recovering the industry's share of the costs, and increased rates became necessary. The new rates were fixed at 0.012d. per pound of butterfat and 6s. per supplier and came into operation on 1st August, 1948. Authority for the increase was given in the Farm-dairy Instruction Regulations 1949 (Serial number 1949/14), which replaced the Farm-dairy Instruction Regulations 1938 and amendments.

Progress has been made toward the objective of farm dairy instruction of maintaining and promoting the quality of farm dairy production. Though there has been greater emphasis on the inspectorial aspect of the work, instruction has not been lost sight of, and methods of education complementary to the work in the field are being considered.

MILKING-MACHINES

During the year 1,456 new and 953 used milking-machines, a total of 2,409 machines, were installed. In the previous year the figures were 1,425, 995 and 2,420 respectively.