

Work done for the Fields Division included examination of soils and fertilizers sent in by the Instructors in Agriculture.

For the Dairy Division analyses have been made of various dairy products, of stock-foods, tonics, &c., of waters for dairy use, and of various preparations used in the dairy industry. Under the new Dairy Regulations, which require all calibrated glassware used in the purchase of butterfat to be tested by the Department, the examination of skim-milk test-bottles, and of dairy-thermometers, is now carried out in this laboratory. Officers of the Division have been advised on many chemical questions affecting the dairy industry, and have been collaborated with in various investigations. Further samples of "vegetable parchment" for butter-wrapping were examined and reported on. The quality of paper used for butter-wrapping is now dealt with under the new Dairy Regulations. The so-called "soda flavour" in butter was investigated. The results obtained led to the conclusion that the objectionable flavour was due in many cases to the use of high-acid cream, rather than to the over-neutralization of cream of a lower degree of acidity.

For the Horticulture Division analyses were made of apples for arsenic content, of honey for metallic poisons, and of various preparations used in horticulture, &c.

SUMMARY OF SAMPLES RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR.

Samples received were as follows: Soils, collected by Laboratory Staff, 417; soils, collected by Fields Officers, 35; soils, miscellaneous, 36; fertilizers, unofficial samples, 20; fertilizers, miscellaneous, 24; reputed fertilizers and phosphate rocks, 16; limes and limestones, 109; paints and paint materials, 1; toxicological specimens, 17; wheats, 25; flours, &c., 2; cheese, 22; milks and creams, 46; butters, 13; caseins, 7; honey, 1; waters, 27; fodder plants, 342; sheep and cattle dips, 231; fungicides, 2; stock foods, 31; miscellaneous, 136: total, 1,560.

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