

QUALITY OF BUTTER.

The general consensus of opinion among the Dairy-produce Graders and Dairy Instructors is that the quality of our creamery butter has been maintained, and that a number of dairy companies have effected some improvement.

Owing to the rank growth of pastures during the earlier spring months, and later on to the effect of the dry summer, supplies of raw material to the factories were detrimentally affected, but despite these drawbacks butter of a very uniform quality has been manufactured. The exercise of extreme care in correcting acidity in cream is now general, and soda flavours are rarely met with.

WHEY BUTTER.

The production of this class of butter shows an increase over last year's figures. There is still room for much improvement in quality. Owing to the pressure of work, the Butter Instructors are unable to devote more time in this direction, but a closer co-operation between the operator in the cheese-factory and the buttermaker would be instrumental in the production of a higher-quality article.

QUALITY OF CHEESE.

The high temperatures prevailing during the summer months made the manufacture of cheese of a high quality a very difficult task, and, taking the season as a whole, it has been a most trying one for the cheesemaker. Quality of cheese has in consequence shown some falling-off in most districts as compared with the previous year. While there has been an appreciable reduction in the quantity of "second grade" cheese manufactured, there has also been a decrease in the quantity of "finest." Lack of uniformity has been prominent amongst the defects, and many cheese were of open texture and weak in body. Coloured cheese were in some cases bleached in colour.

Finish of cheese continues to show improvement, and a large number of factories are now making a "rimless" cheese, while others are turning out a cheese with a minimum rim.

The pasteurization of milk for cheesemaking is now almost general, the output of this class of cheese being approximately 92 per cent., as against 86 per cent. for the previous year.

A number of factories have installed plant for the paraffin-waxing of cheese, more especially in the Auckland Province, where approximately 50 per cent. of the output was wax-coated.

STORAGE OF CHEESE AND BUTTER.

The arrangements for the storage and handling of butter and cheese intended for export are now on a very satisfactory basis. All cheese is pre-cooled prior to export, and temperatures in the butter-rooms are generally satisfactory. During shipping-out and loading operations the graders and also the shipping companies pay special attention to temperatures, and the duties of the shipping supervisor attached to the Dairy-produce Board include the supervision of suitable storage conditions for dairy-produce on overseas vessels. Shipments during the year have been frequent and regular, and no congestion has occurred at any of the grading-ports.

QUANTITIES OF BUTTER AND CHEESE FORWARDED TO GRADE STORES FOR YEARS ENDING 31st MARCH, 1928 AND 1927.

Port.	1928.		1927.	
	Butter.	Cheese.	Butter.	Cheese.
	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.	Cwt.
Auckland	956,523	229,173	870,946	237,787
Gisborne	22,298	..	15,570	..
Napier	32,497	4,686	18,216	2,453
New Plymouth	119,519	301,281	116,108	306,035
Patea	35,318	344,306	27,718	348,818
Wanganui	65,719	106,424	70,068	84,647
Wellington	186,001	229,658	150,870	241,028
Lyttelton	37,982	26,313	40,483	27,479
Timaru	7,336	14,174	10,735	14,173
Dunedin	29,528	41,061	34,344	36,991
Bluff	11,743	209,222	12,799	215,764
Totals	1,504,464	1,506,298	1,367,857	1,515,175

"FINEST" GRADE.

The use of "finest" grade, which includes all creamery butter and factory cheese scoring 93 points and over, has been in operation throughout the year. Despite the difficulties experienced by butter and cheese makers in consistently manufacturing a highest-quality article, chiefly through the extremely dry weather conditions which prevailed, 68.33 per cent. of the butter and 34.15 per cent. of the cheese graded was classed in this highest grade. Evidence appears to be accumulating to the effect that "finest" quality is worthy of a premium in price over "first" grade. More than one firm of buyers has requested that the crate numbers be indicated as for the different grades in lines containing more than one grade.