

EXPERIMENTAL DAIRY FACTORY.

It has been decided that the experimental dairy factory formerly proposed to be erected at Wallaceville will now be erected at Palmerston North and on the grounds of the Massey Agricultural College. This building will be used for various purposes, and should prove a useful adjunct to the industry.

The plans and lists of plant prepared for the building at Wallaceville have been used as the basis for planning the new building at Palmerston North and providing it with plant. Extensions have been made to provide for the demands of the college. It is expected that the new building and plant will be ready for use next spring.

CHECK TESTING MILK AND CREAM SAMPLES AT DAIRY FACTORIES FOR BUTTERFAT.

The issue of the Dairy Produce General Regulations enabled the Division to give this matter better consideration. Dairy companies are now giving the Division an indication of their figures representing the yield of cheese or butter as per pound of butterfat for the season. Some of these are regarded as being rather high and as from 1st January, Mr. G. R. B. Boswell, has been on duty as check testing officer. In connection with this work he is directly responsible to and takes his instructions from the Director of the Dairy Division. It has been deemed advisable to keep this service segregated from the butter and cheese instruction work so as not to interfere with the good feeling existing between factory-managers and Dairy Instructors. Mr. Boswell's work has evidenced need for such checking. There has been too much carelessness in connection with the carrying out of this work at a number of dairy factories. Many irregularities have been noted and, we believe, corrected. Up to the present this work has actually been more of the nature of instruction than inspection.

CERTIFICATE-OF-RECORD TESTING.

Although there remains a steady demand for the services of the Division's testing officers in connection with the certificate-of-record testing of purebred dairy cows, the support accorded this work last season did not reach the figure of the previous year. For the calendar year 1927 some 529 certificates were issued, as compared with 576 for the previous year. For the peak month of the present season 214 breeders were participating in this work, their entries totalling 622 cows.

OFFICIAL HERD-TESTING.

At the commencement of the present season the official herd-testing of purebred dairy cows was introduced. This scheme is open to all C.O.R. breeders, and permits the testing of all purebreds in the herd other than those on C.O.R. test. In isolated instances, where no other opportunity of testing is available, the Division has extended acceptances to cows other than purebreds. The method is similar to the C.O.R., except that the owner takes no milk-weights, the yield being based on milk-weights and samples taken by the testing officer at the time of his usual C.O.R. visit. The fee for this service is 5s. per cow per season. The support accorded the scheme for this, the first season, has been very gratifying, some 109 of our C.O.R. breeders participating to the extent of over 1,500 cows in the flush of the season.

HERD-TESTING ASSOCIATIONS.

During 1926-27 some 170,150 cows were tested in New Zealand, these figures representing testing under the group system, where milk weights and samples are taken by an independent officer, and under the association system, where milk weights and samples are taken by the herdowner or his agent. This number of 170,150 represents 13 per cent. of the total of our dairy cows in milk and dry, and is comprised of 109,827 cows tested under the group system and 60,323 under the association method. Herd-testing for the season under review has received a certain impetus by the Government subsidy of £8,000 toward the cost of carrying out this work, and although definite figures are not yet available it is anticipated that the number of cows being systematically tested in the Dominion this season is little short of 200,000.

STAFF.

The volume of dairy-produce now being manufactured has entailed increasing work on all members of the staff, and their loyal and efficient co-operation is thankfully acknowledged.

The Division desires to record its deep regret at the death of Mr. W. R. Harkness, Dairy Instructor, who passed away after a short illness in January last, and extends its sympathy to Mrs. Harkness and family in their sad loss.

Regret is also expressed of the retirement through ill health of our colleague, Mr. A. A. Thornton. Mr. Thornton was the first Grader appointed by the Department, and his service to the dairy industry leaves an ineffaceable impress on the grading-work of the Division.

Mr. G. M. Valentine, Dairy Instructor, has been appointed Superintendent of the dairy factory attached to the Massey Agricultural College, and will take over his new duties during May. He will continue to be an officer of the Division.

A further appointment is that of Mr. G. R. B. Boswell, Special Inspector, whose principal duties are the checking of butterfat tests at factories of milk and cream, and the checking of cream-grading.

APPRECIATION.

Thanks are extended to the Department's Chemist and Bacteriologist for their valuable help, and also the Forest Products Branch of the State Forest Service for assistance rendered during the year. The various cattle-breeding associations, and also the freezing companies controlling the cool stores where dairy-produce is held waiting shipment, have willingly assisted the Division during the year, and this is gratefully acknowledged.