

CHECK-TESTING OF MILK AND CREAM SAMPLES.

Supervision of this work at dairy factories has been continued, but owing to a reduction in the number of officers engaged on it, and to the fact that those remaining were called upon to undertake a certain amount of supervision in connection with the extension of the farm-dairy-instruction work, the number of visits for this purpose was fewer than for the previous year. These totalled 1,044 for the past year, compared with 1,303 during 1937-38.

While check-testing has served a valuable purpose and has been the means of improving the accuracy of the work done at dairy factories, it has always been recognized that it was a comparatively easy matter for any person who wished to do so to show results which would give a good comparison with the check-testing figures and still be inaccurate. Whether from this cause or from some other unexplained reason, there has been a distinct increase during the past year in the number of instances where the yield of both butter and cheese cannot be justified by the fat in the manufactured product.

For many years past an analysis for fat content, which includes every churning of butter and every vat of cheese graded, has been carried out at all grading-ports. Based on the figures so obtained the fat recovered in both is calculated each month, and in too many instances this figure exceeds the amount credited to the suppliers after due allowance has been made for unavoidable losses. It would appear that the time has arrived when steps should be taken to deal with the position on a basis of the fat contained in the butter and cheese manufactured by each dairy company, and this question is at present receiving close attention.

FARM-DAIRY INSTRUCTION.

On 1st August 1938, the farm-dairy-instruction work was extended to cover the whole of the Dominion, and it can now be claimed that this service is available to every supplier to a manufacturing dairy in New Zealand. Although a large number of new appointments were required, it is pleasing to be able to report that the work has been carried out with practically no friction, and this is no doubt due to the fact that every man chosen for these positions had had practical experience in either butter-making or cheesemaking, and thus had a knowledge of milk and cream quality, was familiar with dairy plant, and had had experience of dealing with suppliers.

Reports received at this office indicate that the extension of this work to those areas not covered formerly was much needed, and there are indications that after a reasonable time has been allowed for urgent improvements to be made a firmer attitude will require to be adopted with a certain number of suppliers if the full benefit of the work is to be obtained.

Expressions of appreciation of the work being carried out have been numerous, both from individual suppliers and from dairy companies.

INSPECTION OF MILKING-MACHINES.

During the year the notifications of milking-machine installations received at this office have totalled 3,095, compared with 3,006 during the previous twelve months. The prominence given to the incidence of mastitis during recent months, and the suggestion that the vacuum exerted on the cows had a bearing on it, has led to a large number of devices for reducing the vacuum at the teats being placed on the market. While it is not the function of this Division to pass judgment on the claims made for these units, it has been necessary to keep a close watch on them from the point of view of hygiene, and this has entailed a considerable amount of work.

For the same reason, the question of erecting the milk-pipe at a low level near the floor of the shed has received considerable attention, and here again the attitude adopted has been that, providing the quality of the milk produced is maintained, no exception will be taken to this system of erection of plants.

DAIRY-FACTORY MANAGERS' REGISTRATION BOARD.

Since the making of the regulation requiring all applications for registration to be in the hands of the Registrar on 1st May in each year the work of the Board has been much simplified, and two or three meetings per year seem to be quite sufficient to deal with the business coming forward without inflicting any hardship on any one concerned.

There is, however, the need for the Board to be given authority to delegate some of its powers to an executive Committee, which could deal with minor matters which may arise during the year, as some inconvenience to dairy companies would thus be avoided in a few instances.

INSPECTION OF NEW ZEALAND DAIRY-PRODUCE IN BRITAIN.

The responsibilities of the officers engaged in this work seem to increase with the passing of time. This is probably due to a gradual transfer of complaints received by distributors from their own organizations to the Dairy Sales Division of the Primary Products Marketing Department. Many of these are referred to the officers of the Division for a report, and the time so taken up must necessarily reduce the number of routine examinations of shipments. These investigations, however, give personal contact with those concerned, and from that point of view are valuable, while they afford an opportunity of furnishing the manufacturer in New Zealand with a report on the actual condition of his produce. It will be recognized that the co-operation between the London representatives of these two Departments is invaluable to both and to the producers in the Dominion,