

Legislation to Govern Cream Separator Business.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In considering the subject of how the introduction of cream separators has affected the price of creamery butter, one is confronted with so many factors that separately or collectively influence butter prices, that only the closest intimacy with the trade can permit of intelligent discrimination between these influencing factors in accurate proportions.

Unlike Denmark, whose butter industry exists upon a national basis, and whose standards and prices are entirely dependent upon foreign markets, the Canadian butter trade is becoming more and more a matter of home requirements first, with export demand only for the surplus.

Thus it will be seen that statistics may be misleading, and especially export statistics, which at one time represented the bulk of our butter production, but which of late years have decreased to but a small percentage of our entire output. Naturally, statistics of the export trade can be compiled with a far greater degree of accuracy than those of our home markets, of which merely approximate (or otherwise) estimates can be obtained.

According to the Dairy Commissioner's report, the exports of butter in the fiscal years 1890 to 1908, inclusive, averaged, per pound, as follows: 1890, 17½ cents; 1891, 16 cents; 1892, 18 2-5 cents; 1893, 18 2-5 cents; 1894, 19 4-5 cents; 1895, 19 1-10 cents; 1896, 17 4-5 cents; 1897, 18 1-5 cents; 1898, 18 1-5 cents; 1899, 18 2-5 cents; 1900, 20 3-10 cents; 1901, 20 1-10 cents; 1902, 20 3-10 cents; 1903, 20 2-5 cents; 1904, 19 1-5 cents; 1905, 18 7-10 cents; 1906, 20 4-5 cents; 1907 (nine months, ending March 31st), 22 1-5 cents; 1908, 23 3-10 cents. From these figures there is nothing to imply that the advent of the hand separators and their widespread introduction since 1896 have had the effect to keep down the price of creamery butter.

Thus far, this article has dealt solely with the export side of the question, and if the quality of hand-separator creamery butter is generally inferior to that made from whole milk separated at the creamery—and no butter buyer or maker is likely to dispute the fact—then, the gradually rising prices paid for export butter must be due to British market conditions, over which we have little or no control, as well as, to a large extent, the speculative nature of the buying in the absence of any definitely-established national system of grading. While such conditions are anomalous, the producer will ever look for the best prices possible under any circumstances, and while a system of grading might regulate export prices, and put inferior qualities where they belong, yet the transition period through which the butter industry seems to be passing must influence prices in a seesaw manner, just as the home consumption increases or decreases, according to the state of the money market, the conditions of production and the number of mouths to be fed.

These influences, which affect the price of butter, are not difficult to discern, but I cannot trace any lowering of price in markets, or any individual cut in my own experience, attributable to the introduction of hand separators.

In the Province of Quebec, where the business has necessarily been upon an export basis from its infancy up, I have recognized no lowering of prices on account of hand separators, and, apart from the creamery which I operated for the Provincial Government, where prices were maintained, in spite of lower-grade butter being produced through whole milk giving way to gathered cream, apart from my personal experiences, I have seen, week after week, gathered-cream butter selling on the Boards as high as whole-milk creamery butter. This may not be as it should be, but these are facts.

Since coming to Western Ontario, I have met with different conditions, where the home market is the chief consideration for the greater part of the year, and the production of a good storage article the rest of the time. Under these conditions, I have not noted that farm separators have caused any noticeable drop in the price of creamery butter. Just as was my experience in the East, so has it been here, and, except in exceptional cases, butter made in whole-milk creameries commands no more than that made in gathered-cream plants. Of course, the speculative element which enters into buying butter for export purposes in the East, is accentuated to a far greater extent in buying butter for storage purposes in these parts; and how well is this exemplified in the conditions which prevailed in the butter market the latter part of this winter, when it transpired that so much butter was held in Montreal to compete with Toronto, Hamilton, St. Thomas and Ingersoll stored goods. Here, again, then, abnormal conditions are met with in disregarding quality in the competition to secure storage butter.

From the above it can be gathered that, while my experience cannot trace any depreciation in butter values to the introduction of hand separators, yet there is sufficient difference in the qual-

ity to warrant some discrimination in favor of the average whole-milk product. To my mind, both for storage and for export, the question is not so much whether the butter be made from whole milk or hand-separator cream, as whether it be the product of pasteurized or unpasteurized cream.

Apart from the effects which the farm separator has had on the creamery business, there is no doubt that dairy butter has very materially improved through its use, and that a great saving has been effected over the milk-setting system. This has been recognized in the leading markets by the establishing of special quotations for "separator dairy," which range within a couple of cents of creamery butter.

While the cream-gathering system is forced upon many creameries, especially those in outlying districts, and where competition is excessive and the cost of drawing milk too high, at the same time, the farm separator has wormed its way into territory that does not come under either of these heads, and it will continue to do so as long as creamery management does not provide for the equitable return of the skim milk in a sweet and wholesome condition. It is not to our credit as creamerymen that the cheese-men should have had to show us the lead in this important matter, by pasteurizing the whey.

It is questionable if farm separators would ever have become so popular if pasteurization of the skim milk had become a universal practice in creameries.

Now farm separators are here, we must make the best of it, and, with organized effort, there should be little difficulty in teaching the farmers that it is a much easier thing to cool and take proper care of 25 or 30 pounds of cream than it is of 200 pounds of milk. This sort of thing falls to the maker, as a rule, and rightly so; but at the same time, it would be a big lift all round if the instructors put in every other visit on the cream wagon, among the cream producers.

The names of the different makes of separators are legion, and they are sold under all sorts of conditions, and by all sorts of agents. I have thought that there should be some sort of legislation governing the sale of farm separators. For instance, no separator should be sold without an automatic speed indicator, or without a card of directions, stating, amongst other things, that the bowl must be washed and scalded every time it is used, and that the cream should be cooled to 50 degrees immediately after separating, such card to be tacked up in a prominent place near the separator by the agent at the time of setting up the machine. At present, separator agents can sow seeds of dairy heresy which may require a generation of honest effort to eradicate.

This should not be done under the nose of a paternal and ever-watchful Department of Agriculture. Separator agents should be compelled to uphold the interests of the dairy industry in plying their vocation, or quit.

As already remarked, the names of farm separators are legion, and so is their quality. There are a few good ones, and a lot of poor ones, but, to my knowledge, no dairy school in the land has as yet shown courage enough to warn our dairy farmers from investing in certain makes of machines, which their experience and facilities for testing must have placed them in a safe position to do so. It is ridiculous to say that any separator will do good work if properly operated, because there are machines now on the market that will not do so. There are very few separators that will skim a 40-per-cent. cream, and neither block up nor have excessive loss in the skim milk. These facts can be ascertained at our dairy schools, and I think the time is past when the feelings or pockets of the separator companies should be spared, at the expense of our dairy farmers. I don't believe that is what our dairy schools are equipped for.

The average farmer does not produce as high a quality of cream as he should. One reason for this is that separator agents invariably leave their machines with the cream screw set to take only about 20 per cent. cream. The reason is obvious. They are expected to make a trial of the machine with milk before leaving, and so, to avoid delay and a hitch of any sort, the cream screw is set for a thin cream; but, of course, the agent is careful to say that this can be adjusted later to suit special requirements. Agents would not be quite as thick on the ground if every farmer buying a separator demanded that it actually skim a 35 to 40 per-cent. cream, with normal loss of fat in the skim milk. One of my patrons in the East demanded this, and it took him 11 weeks to be supplied with a separator, and only after the fifth machine was installed, and the others had been tested three to five times each. There are farmers who think that the more cream they get, the more butter, but this class is not difficult to educate by the buttermaker himself, if he goes at it in the right way.

This question of richer cream is a very important one, there being no doubt whatever that rich cream is easier kept sweet than thin. There is less bulk to cool and handle, and it can be churned more exhaustively.

If the Dairy Commissioner were to undertake some experiments this summer along the line of cooling cream, and taking rich cream from separators, and present the results to the public in the form of illustrated lectures, such as Geo. H. Barr gave us last winter, I think that a great deal of benefit would accrue; and, at any rate, it would offset the wrong ideas so often suggested by the separator agents. Then, if the instructors give half their visits to the cream producers, there should be some improvement noticeable in the general run of farm-separator cream before very long.

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Must Take Care of Cream.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The only influence I know of that farm separators have had on the price of gathered-cream butter is that, unfortunately, for a number of years, patrons did not know how to properly handle separator cream, and the quality of the butter was affected. This condition has been to quite an extent overcome during the last four or five years, by general dairy education and the good work of the creamery instructors in teaching patrons how to take care of their separators and cream properly, and the cream-gathering creameries are making better butter to-day than they ever did before the introduction of the hand separator.

In some cases there is no difference in price between whole-milk creamery butter and cream-gathered creamery butter, but often it is from ½ to 1½ cents per pound. There is more difference in price for export butter than there is for the local market.

My opinion is that manufacturing butter on the farm has more influence in lowering the price of creamery butter than sending the cream to the creamery. Generally speaking, people will not eat as much dairy butter as they will creamery. Any condition that lessens consumption reduces prices.

I do not believe there is any use trying to fight the cream-gathering system of buttermaking. Cream producers see so much difference between the creamery skim milk and that from the hand separators, that they are decidedly in favor of the latter. With manufacturers adopting the best methods of gathering the cream, and the patrons taking proper care of it at the farm, as good butter can be made from it as is made in a whole-milk creamery.

The chief cause of a depreciation in price of butter from the hand separator is that many of the separators are not properly cleaned, and the cream is not cooled immediately after skimming, and kept cool until delivered at the creamery. The producer of the cream is therefore responsible for the lower price, and he is the only one who suffers from it, so it is up to him to remedy the trouble. Many skim too thin a cream, 20 to 25 per cent.; it should not be less than 30 per cent. Lack of cooling is the greatest defect in handling the cream at the farm.

Dominion Dairy Branch. GEO. H. BARR.

Don't Make Butter at Home.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The hand separator is just now engaging the attention of farmers, dairymen and patrons of co-operative cheese and butter factories in Prince Edward Island. Some have spoken without knowledge, and have condemned the use of hand cream separators entirely. This matter has been taken up by our Institutes during the past winter, and has been well discussed. Notwithstanding all the abuse the hand separator received, there are still many good points in favor of its use. Go to the man who has used a hand separator for one year, or for five years, and ask him what he thinks of it, and in 99 cases out of 100 he will say, "The warm skim milk for my calves, pigs and colts is excellent, and this alone is worth considerable." Do not ask the separator agent, for he, of course, will tell you all he knows, and just a little more, especially if he thinks he can make a sale. Do not ask the man who has never used a separator in his life, and perhaps would scarcely know one if he saw it, but who is constantly crying down the introduction of the hand cream separator, and saying, "Those machines are going to ruin our dairy business." He imagines a whole lot of trouble that is not likely every to bother him. But, instead, ask the man who is in a position to know and speak on this question.

In reply to some questions, Mr. McDougall, the Dairy Superintendent at Sussex, N. B., said: "The hand separator is all right. All things being equal, cream will keep better than whole milk." He also said that the buttermaker at Sussex creamery made his St. John prize-butter from cream separated by patrons at home and sent to the factory, as it had a better flavor than the cream taken from the whole milk which was sent to the factory. Those are arguments which should carry some weight, and not only prove to the dairy farmers of P. E. I. and all the lower