

Cheese Department

Makers are invited to send contributions to this department, to ask questions on matters relating to cheesemaking and to suggest subjects for discussion. Address your letters to The Cheese Maker's Department.

Develop the Home Market for Cheese

Canadians are cheese-makers, not cheese-eaters. A very small percentage of the cheese we produce is consumed at home, though the amount is increasing each year. In any case the home consumption of cheese is away below what it should be, and what it might be, if more attention were given to catering to the home demand. Our dairymen have paid little or no attention to the home market. It has been largely used as the dumping ground for "culls." Upon the unsuspecting patron has been loaded the "rejected," and what he could or would not take has been palmed off on the storekeeper in neighboring towns and villages. With hundreds of factories producing occasional batches of "culls," and which were gotten rid of in this way, the supply of inferior stuff loaded on to the local market was by no means small. Conditions have, however, improved in recent years. Fewer "culls" are being made, and consequently the local consumer is getting better cheese for his own use. In the large cities, such as Toronto and Montreal, where large quantities are consumed, the trade is looked after by jobbers, who buy the season's output of a factory or two. Often, too,

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cheese rejected by the exporter, will be bought by the jobber for local use at considerable reduction in price. Thus it is, in one way or another, the inferior stuff, that will not pass muster for the export trade, that finds its way to the local market.

Under these conditions, is it any wonder that Canadians are not large consumers of cheese? They do not know what first-class, well-cured cheese is. What they buy for cheese is often nothing more than old curd. It is dry, leathery, unpalatable, and, what is worse, indigestible. There is nothing in it to attract or to create a desire for more. People buy it because they think cheese is required to complete the bill of fare, and not because it will contribute anything to the nutritive value of the meal. Even if a well cured cheese is found on the local market, it frequently has some foreign flavor, that has been accented in the curing, making it anything but inviting. The person buying such cheese for well-cured stock, is not impressed with its quality, and prefers the less cured article, in which bad flavors have not had a chance to develop. It is far from being what well-made, well-cured, pure-flavored, finely-textured cheese ought to be. The average consumer, even in the larger centres like Toronto, does not know what a well-cured, well-made cheese is like. Judging from the quality he has to choose from, he wonders how it is the Englishman has such a fondness for Canadian cheese. It is seldom that he comes across a cheese that will create a strong desire for more of the same kind. He complains to the grocer that the last cheese was not to his liking. The grocer has something else to offer. The consumer tries it, with no better success, other than that he has got something different, but no better, and so it goes. There is no uniformity in quality, foreign flavors of all kinds are met with, and, for the most part, the cheese is uncured and unpalatable.

There has been, as we have already stated, some improvement in recent years, and the local market is getting a better quality of cheese than it did ten years ago. This has not been because any special effort has been made to cater to this trade, but because the general quality of the product in the country has greatly improved. The work of the instructors is decreasing the number of "culls," and there are fewer cheese rejected by the buyers. And thus, it might be said, in spite of the dairymen, the Canadian consumer is getting a better quality of cheese. The effect has been to greatly increase the home consumption of cheese. Mr. J. A. Ruddick, Dairy Commissioner, in his evidence before the Agricultural Committee of the House of Commons recently, stated that the decrease in exports could be accounted for to a large extent by the increase in the local demand for cheese. If, therefore, so much can be accomplished by a general improvement in quality, what might not be done by giving some special attention to the needs of the home market. Ways and means of doing this will be discussed in later issues.

Dairying in Hastings and Prince Edward Counties

A couple of weeks ago several dairy instructors of New York State visited Prince Edward and Hastings counties, to make a study of dairying conditions, and the methods of instruction followed in Ontario. In company with Chief Instructor Pablow, they visited a number of cheese factories in that district, and, needless to say, were very favorably impressed with what they saw. Mr. W. W. Hall, of Coopersville, N.Y., one of the delegation, in a letter to the

Watertown, N. Y. Times, gives a full account of the trip. Some extracts from this letter are of interest to our readers:

Mr. Hall makes special reference to the good roads in these counties, which are always kept in good repair.

Speaking of the farms, he says: "The farms are under a high state of cultivation, and at present they are harvesting a fine crop of hay, with great prospects for a large yield of oats, barley and wheat, with the corn crop in a flourishing condition. The occupant of the farm is, in nearly every case, the owner, and the buildings would warrant one in thinking that his finances are in a healthy condition, as the houses are in many instances built of brick, the barns are new, and of the latest and most convenient plans, with all of the modern appliances attached. The lawns are well kept, as a rule, and flower beds adorn their front yards. There certainly must exist a fertility in the soil to produce such results."


In regard to dairying, Mr. Hall writes in glowing terms of the manner in which patron, maker and instructor co-operate to produce the very best quality. Chief Instructor Pablow's ability and work are spoken of in the highest terms. At every factory visited, his last words to the maker were: "Make none poorer than these, and as much better as you can."

CURING ROOMS

"It has been found by both scientific and practical demonstration

that cheese taken from the press should after 24 hours old, be placed in a temperature not to exceed 60 degrees, and that the temperature must remain constant if best texture and flavor are to be secured. At Mountain View an ice house is constructed adjoining the curing room, and filled with ice. The walls are filled with shavings, so that no sawdust or other material need come in contact with the ice. Intakes are made through the wall to the curing room about a foot from the floor, where the cold air, fresh from the ice enters. Five or six outlets above, under the ceiling, are provided for the warm air to enter the ice room again, providing a circulation of dry cool air all of the time, night and day, without regard to the atmospheric conditions outside. It is inexpensive, as the patrons, who are the owners, build and fill the ice houses themselves. This process is called 'cool curing.' Better results follow than is the case when cheese is kept just above the freezing point."

Altogether, Mr. Hall's letter is very flattering as regards agriculture and dairying in Prince Edward and Hastings counties. The farm homes, he says, compare favorably with the homes in the county towns of Belleville and Picton. These homes have been built, equipped, and are being maintained by the well-managed cheese factories in the district, where only the finest full cream cheese are made. The present generation is developing a rich heritage for their children, whose future is secured.



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