

Paying for Milk by the Babcock Test

Dairy Instructors Give Their Views on This Important Subject—The "Pooling" System Must Go

As stated in our last issue, the practice of adding water to or taking the cream off milk supplied to cheese factories, seems to be on the increase and makes it necessary that something should be done to counteract this tendency. Believing, as we do, that the only effective way of stopping this practice on the part of dishonest patrons is to pay for milk for cheese making according to its quality, and with a view to obtaining information that would be helpful in a discussion of this important subject, we submitted the following questions to the dairy instructors of the province. The following are some of the replies received, others will appear later. Some of our correspondents have replied to the questions direct, others have given their views on the subject in a general way. All the information, however, is valuable, and will bear careful reading. The answers to the questions are published under the name of the instructor sending them:

- (1) How many factories are you in charge of?
 - (2) How many of these factories pay by test?
 - (3) Are the patrons and makers satisfied where milk is paid for by the Babcock system?
 - (4) Where the "pooling" system is still in use, what objections, if any, are made toward paying by test?
 - (5) Would you advise factories to pay by the Babcock test?
- Any information not covered by these questions that you may care to give will be gladly received.

W. W. WADDELL, Strathroy, Ont.—

- (1) Twenty-two.
- (2) Three.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) Too much labor. Testing not properly done.
- (5) Yes.

I believe there has been room to find fault with the test because the work has not been properly done. The samples have not, in some cases, been carefully taken and preserved and not always carefully tested. This has just caused dissatisfaction with the test. There is too much of a tendency on the part of makers to do this work in a careless manner sometimes, because their time for the work is limited. It may become necessary, to make a success of this work, that some outside party be engaged or appointed to do the testing. This is done at present in two of my factories and is working well.

J. BURD, Mille Roches, Ont.—

I have had quite a good experience in paying for milk according to the fat content. I have paid in this way for eight years, and it was very satisfactory so much so, that when a new board of directors was appointed some of them who were men who had always pooled their milk decided to throw out the test, and a resolution passed to that effect. But when the time came for the factory to open, the people said, if you don't pay by the test we will take our milk elsewhere. So they paid that season, and have done so ever since.

There is this difficulty about it, however. In the testing of composite samples of milk the maker must know his business thoroughly, and be able

to meet any questions asked him and answer them correctly. He should also be able to figure out sales, and draw the line between the two systems. If the maker is a competent man, the people will place confidence in him. This is what is necessary to make this system a success. The maker will have to demonstrate and prove to the people by facts and figures that there is a very wide difference between the two systems.

Some of the reasons why the test system is not in favor in cheese factories in this section are as follows: (1) Makers have discouraged it through their inability to do the work properly, or at all; (2) makers who are qualified to do the work discouraged it simply because they did not want this extra task put upon them; (3) when they decided to do the work they shirked it, and paid according to the tests of previous seasons; (4) some makers and owners of factories have used the test as a drawing card and the patrons were wise to get on to it, and then lost confidence in the system.

I have every confidence in the test system if the work is properly done. I believe that a dozen factories might better pay one man than trust it to the average maker even if he is qualified to do the work. He can scarcely spare the time to do it. This is why they discourage it so much. They have no good grounds for doing so, other than the extra labor attached and not having time to carry it on satisfactorily to their patrons or themselves.

I believe from what I see in my work and learn in traveling through the country of how farmers are breeding at present for flow irrespective of quality, that within the next ten years the quality will be reduced so that it will take 1½ pounds of milk on an average throughout the season to make a pound of cheese. The aver-

age seems to be higher this season, and I can safely say that there is not one-eighth of the tamping with milk this season that there was in years previous. This is my experience, and I have been watching things very carefully for some years along this line.

ALEX. McKEAY, St. Marys, Ont.—

In answer to your questions, I would say that I have 22 factories to which I pay regular visits. Of this number six pay according to quality and the system gives very good satisfaction.

With the exception of a few of the patrons, whose milk tests very low, where the pooling system is in use, the principal objection to the test is that it has either been in use in the factory and been discarded or hearing of the same taking place in some other place, patrons have become dissatisfied. It is my opinion that in nearly every case where this has happened that it has been due either to carelessness or to ignorance on the part of the operator.

I would certainly advise all factories to pay according to the test, though where they are paying by the per cent. of fat, +2, it leaves room for tampering with the milk. I think, however, that paying according to quality is very much better than the "pooling" system.

A. H. WILSON, Athens, Ont.—

- (1) Twenty-five.
- (2) None.
- (3) Only a few objections are made.
- (4) If properly conducted, it doubtless is the best system in the world. It has two redeeming features—but little fat is lost, and flavors are better.

However, until all makers learn all the various phases of testing milk (and especially composite samples), until the manufacturers learn to give their makers more wages and better help, I certainly would not advise factories to take it up.

It is illogical to ask a patron to take great care of his milk for that special object and then have that special object defeated at the factory, which has and is at the present time being done—where the maker is care-



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