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Winter Dairying

IN many parts of Canada to day the closing of the cheese factories means the opening of the winter creameries. The winter creamery has now got far beyond the experimental stage. In many sections the operation of the winter creamery is just as necessary to the prosperity and success of the dairyman as is the operation of the cheese factory. True, the high prices for cheese during the season just closed have somewhat thrown the creamery business in the shade. But, nevertheless, the creamery business is of the greatest importance to the country, and the highest point of development in dairying can only be reached by combining the two, and making cheese during the summer and butter during the winter. This, of course, does not mean that there should be no creameries operated during the summer months. We believe that the more summer creameries there are the better. There are many parts of Canada better adapted for making butter all the year around than cheese during the summer and butter during the winter. Where such conditions prevail every effort should be made to develop the creamery business rather than cheese.

But to return to winter dairying. There are several advantages to be derived from it that must be apparent to every dairyman. One of the most important is that the winter creamery furnishes an opportunity to the farmer to make money out of his cows all the year round. And why should he not do so? In these days of competition and business strife a farmer must utilize every means at his disposal to increase the revenue from his farm. To keep a dozen or so cows during four or five months of winter weather without obtaining any revenue from them is to allow a valuable source of profit to be neglected. No farmer who is in the business of cow-keeping or milk production can afford to let such an opportunity slip by. The winter dairy enables the dairyman to round off the returns per cow for the year in a most satisfactory way. If a cow, during the summer season, barely returns enough to pay for her keep during the whole year, as many cows no more than do in a most favorable season, then the extra receipts from the winter dairy must be considered as all profit. It is a sound business rule that the more one can get for a product or out of a product after the first cost has been met, the greater the profit and the success of the venture. If every dairyman would apply this principle to his business, he would soon find a way for greatly increasing his profits.

Hinging onto this question of winter dairying is that of the length of time a cow should be milked. Though there

is a difference of opinion on this point we believe that the majority of dairy authorities are agreed that the average cow should have from four to six weeks' rest during the year. Of course there are individual cows in which the milking qualities are so highly developed that it would do positive injury to attempt to dry them up for even four weeks. Persistent milkers of this kind, if properly fed, can be milked continuously from the dropping of one calf to another without any injury. Then the question arises, if there are cows of this class are they not the most profitable cows for the dairyman to keep? Undoubtedly they are. A dairyman will never reach that point from which the highest possible profit can be obtained until he has a herd of cows in which the milking qualities predominate in the highest degree. But such cows require the very best care, the very best food and lots of it to do their best, which the average dairyman sometimes is not ready or willing to give. But the average cow, under average conditions, controlled by the average dairyman will do better one year with another by having a few weeks' rest from milking every year. Notwithstanding this fact, however, every dairyman should endeavor to develop the milking qualities of his cows, and in doing so should ever bear in mind that it is the cow that gives a good average flow of milk for a long season that is the most profitable. A cow that gives a large flow during the flush of the season and dries off early is never a profitable cow. She usually gives this large flow at a season of the year when milk and its products are lowest in price. It is the persistent milker that is hard to dry up at any time that is the most profitable cow.

We have not space to deal further with the more practical side of this subject just now but will defer that till some later issue. The outlook for prices this winter is good. In this the local market is perhaps a more important factor than the export market. In fact for some months back many creameries have been able to obtain higher prices by selling locally rather than to the export trade. Last week export prices for choice creamery ranged from 20c. to 21c., while on Toronto market choice creamery prints were quoted at 23c. to 24c., and tubs or boxes at 20c. to 22c. per lb. This range of values, favorable to the local trade, will apply to many more centres than Toronto. The situation then at the present time seems to be that while the export trade may be depended upon to take a large share of the surplus winter creamery at profitable prices the bulk of it can be disposed of to better advantage to the local trade. This has been the experience of the past year or two and the outlook at present seems to warrant a similar condition of affairs for this season. Though this may be the case the export side of the business should in no wise be neglected. Should the make of