

Cheese Department

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

Don't Overdo the Culture Business

In the making of the finest fall cheese, care should be taken not to use too much culture. If the culture is added when there is only a small quantity in the vat, and the temperature kept up it will not be necessary to use more than one-quarter of one per cent., that is, if the culture is added by using a small quantity in this way we get a more gradual fermentation. If we allow the vat to be filled before the culture is added, and then add a larger quantity, we are apt to have a very rapid development of acid at the dipping point. This will cause the cheese to have the appearance of that made from over-ripe milk. This should be guarded against, particularly with fall goods, as they are usually held for some time.

Set the milk sweet enough to give the curds time to firm properly. It will be necessary in most cases to use a little higher temperature, as the curds in the fall are usually richer in butter fat. Many cheese makers make the mistake of raking their curds very roughly in order to firm them. This will not do, so only as much as it breaks the curd, causing roughness in texture and a needless waste. Curds should only be kept in motion sufficiently to keep them apart. It will allow them to firm up by natural causes when the dipping point is reached.

Curd should not be allowed to matt while the whey is running off. It should be well stirred up before throwing it out into the sink. If allowed to matt, it has to be handled very roughly, and requires a lot of stirring to get the moisture out. I would urge on all makers the necessity of having the curds quite dry, or, in other words, getting rid of all the free moisture before allowing the curds to matt. If this is attended to properly, there is little danger of pasty cheese, provided they are not neglected in curing.—Alex. McKay, Instructor Western Ontario.

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WANTED—A YOUNG MAN to work in a factory, with some experience preferred. Must have good habits, and be willing to work. Give references and state wages, with board included. Box 1, Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, Peterboro. E-23

Operating the Babcock Test

Not much is written nowadays about operating the Babcock test. It is taken for granted that every maker knows all about it. And so he should. The maker who does not know how to successfully operate a Babcock milk tester does not know his business. There are makers, however, who either through ignorance or a desire not to know, are far from being experts in this line of work.

This test and the paying for milk according to its quality, have received more attention of late. The success of paying for milk for cheese making according to the fat content, depends in a large measure upon the accuracy with which the test is made. Not only must the maker or the party doing the testing, thoroughly understand the test, but he must show the greatest care and accuracy in operating it.

The Idaho government station has recently published some literature on the subject that may be of value in view of the likelihood that the Babcock test will figure more prominently in paying for milk for cheese making than it has done. The accuracy and value of the test will depend as much upon the proper taking of the sample as upon the test itself. Milk to be tested should be thoroughly mixed. The sample should be taken immediately after this is done. If the testing cannot be done soon after the sample is taken, it should be placed in an air-tight jar, and some preservative added to keep it sweet. Dealing with the test itself, the Bulletin says:

The Babcock test bottles are graduated on the supposition that an eighteen-gram sample is taken. Milk varies very little in its specific gravity, and a pipette graduated to hold 17.6 cubic centimeters will draw approximately 18 grams of milk. When the sample is ready for testing the jar containing it should be placed in warm water and slowly heated to a temperature of about 70 degrees F. Mix the sample well; especially see that any cream which may have gathered on the side of the jar is carefully mixed with the milk on the stem of the pipette. The measuring pipette is now filled to the mark. This is done by sucking the milk up into the pipette above the mark; the forefinger is immediately placed over the top of the pipette to prevent the milk from escaping. By gently releasing the pressure the milk is allowed to flow out until level with the mark on the stem of the pipette. The pipette now contains the 18 grams.

"The sample is then emptied into the test bottle. To do this, the test bottle should be held in a slanting position, the pressure on the pipette released allowing the milk to slowly run into the bottle in such a way as to allow the air to gradually escape from the bottle.

"The next step is adding the acid. This is measured in the acid graduate; the exact amount to use will depend largely on the strength of the acid, the temperature of the sample to be tested, etc. If an ordinary commercial sulphuric acid is used 17.6 cubic centimeters will be found approximately correct. With a little individual experience the operator will soon notice the proper amount to use. To prevent the burning or the charring of any part of the milk the acid is poured slowly down the side of the bottle until all the acid has added. Now give the bottle a gentle, rotary motion, thus giving the acid a chance to act equally on all parts of the milk. Then let it stand three or four minutes, after which the acid is given another rotary movement and then placed in the tester. It is always best to hold the test in such a way that if, accidental-

ly, part of it should spurt out, it would not strike the face of the operator.

"The bottles are placed in a tester in such a position as to keep the machine balanced. The bottle should now be whirled for five or six minutes as such a speed as indicated on the machine. The machine is now allowed to slow down for the purpose of adding water to the bottles. Enough water is added to bring the contents up to the neck of the bottle, after which the machine is again started and run for two minutes; again stopped and sufficient warm water added to bring all the fat contents up into the graduated part of the bottle. After another whirling of one minute the samples are to be read. It may be well to state that it is preferable to use soft water, and that the temperature should be about 120 degrees F.

"To read the amount of fat take out one bottle at a time, hold it upright, the graduated part should be on a level with the eye. The difference between the highest and lowest limits of the butter fat column is the amount of butter fat expressed per cent. direct. Most milk bottles are graduated up to 10 per cent., each large division indicates 1 per cent. of butter fat. To illustrate the method of reading let it be supposed that the top of the fat column is at 8.5, and the bottom at 4.5, then the readings 8.5-4.5=4 per cent. fat. This means that in 100 lbs. of this kind of milk there would be exactly four pounds of butter fat. If the testing has been properly done the butter fat column should be perfectly clear, of a brownish yellow color; the line separating it from the acid should be clear and distinct. Too strong acid is apt to cause black or charged particles to appear in the fat; this same result may also be due to too high temperature of either the milk or the acid. Insufficient amount of acid will give a weak acid; or too weak acid will cause a temperature of milk or acid may result in a white or cloudy test. Acid to be kept in a well stoppered bottle to prevent it losing strength."

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The Small Fancy Cheese Trade

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