

# FARMING

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## The Outlook for Creamery Butter

While the outlook for cheese is very much brighter than it was a year ago at this time, the creamery butter trade on the surface would not seem to have such a bright outlook in so far as the present season is concerned. While this may be in a large measure true there are good reasons for looking forward to the future of our export butter trade with a very large degree of hopefulness. And we would advise those who have made a start in the creamery butter business not to relinquish their efforts in regard to the quality or quantity of the product they are making because of any easing off in the prices at the present time.

A comparison of the prices paid for choice fresh creamery during the past week or two shows that they are about what they were a year ago. A year ago at this time new cheese was selling at from 8 to 8½c. at Montreal, which would mean from 7¾ to 8c. at the factories. And because of these low figures the somewhat low price of butter at that time was not noticed. It is because the price of cheese as compared with that of butter is much higher than it was a year ago that many dairymen are inclined to change from butter to cheese, and to think the former too low in price. While it is to the interest of dairymen to follow that line of dairying that will pay them best, yet they should carefully consider everything before making any decided change. Even at present prices for cheese and butter, if the value of the skim-milk and its advantages to the farmer in the way of raising young stock are fully considered, it will be almost a toss of the hat as to which will return the more profit.

But there is a wider view of this creamery butter question than the present condition of the trade. There are evident signs that the English make of butter is decreasing. Many British farmers are turning their attention to supplying milk to the large cities and towns, and when we consider what an enormous trade there must be in this, there is good reason for believing that the home make of butter will be very much smaller than it has been heretofore. Large quantities of milk are shipped to England from France, and it is only within the last year or two that the English farmer has begun to realize that he might with a little effort have a large share of this trade for himself. There should certainly be a better field for him in this line than in endeavoring to compete with the foreign butter coming in from nearly all quarters of the globe.

Another feature of the situation that may serve to increase the demand for butter in Great Britain is the determined efforts which the authorities are making to put a stop to the selling of mixtures and margarine as butter. A new Food Act has been provided and it is expected that when its provisions are put into force margarine and kindred spurious products will have a harder time to find a market, while genuine butter of good quality will be less hampered by the competition of these adulterated goods. Large quantities of margarine are imported by the United Kingdom every year. For one week ending March 25th last there was imported 20,226 cwt. of margarine as compared with 18,904 cwt. for the corresponding week of 1898. If the enforcement of this law will lessen these spurious imports and create a larger market for the genuine article, we have another cause for gratification in connection with the export butter trade.

But in noting these various conditions that have to do with our butter trade it will not do to overlook the fact that we have competitors who are watching the British market as closely as ourselves and noting as carefully the changes affecting it. We cannot hope to have the field to ourselves, and whether the outlook is bright or otherwise we must count upon the keenest kind of competition. Last year Great Britain imported upwards of \$80,000,000 worth of butter. Of this amount Denmark supplied nearly one-half and France about one-seventh, while Canada supplied barely one twentieth. Then there are several countries such as Sweden, Holland, Australia and the United States whose exports are about the same as those from Canada to be considered that are making as strenuous efforts as we are to gain trade.

Our dairymen, however, need not be afraid of this competition so long as they keep on improving the quality of the product. The reports from last season's trade as to the quality of Canadian butter sent to Great Britain are very gratifying indeed, and are such as should cause a greatly increased demand for the product the present season.

In summing up the situation we may safely claim that the outlook for our export trade in creamery butter was never better than it is at the present time. What the trade requires is prime quality, regular shipments and safe transportation from the producer to the consumer and with these supplied we may look forward to a very large increase in our butter export trade during the season upon which we have just entered

## Curing-Rooms in Quebec

### Means Adopted for Their Improvement by the Local Government

In our issue of March 7th last we pointed out that the Quebec Government had made arrangements to make a grant of \$50 to every cheese factory that would put in a sub-earth duct to regulate the temperature in the curing-room. In a bulletin recently issued by the Quebec Department of Agriculture, a copy of which came to hand last week, the same Government is offering premiums, ranging from \$100 to \$200, according to the size of the curing-room, to cheese factories making certain improvements and complying with the conditions laid down by the Department. In order to induce the building of larger curing-rooms and better ventilated buildings no premium will be granted to any new factory to be erected that has a less curing-room floor space than 700 square feet. In old buildings the premium will be \$100 where there is a floor space of from 400 to 700 square feet. For new and old buildings of from 700 to 1,000 square feet of space the premium is \$150, and for curing-room space over 1,000 square feet it is \$200.

The conditions laid down for obtaining these premiums provide for a great improvement in the construction, ventilation and regulation of the temperature in the curing-rooms now existing and the ones to be built, and if by this plan a large proportion of the factories comply with these conditions there must result a marked advance in the quality of the cheese made in Quebec from improved curing facilities.