The Marketing of Canadian Dairy Produce

There is a good deal of truth in the statement that a cheese is only half made when it is put on the shelf in the curing-room. This being the case, it is important that our Canadian cheese should be carefully handled from the time they are put into the curing-rooms until they are placed on the British Market. The most important point to observe to get the best results is never to allow the cheese to become exposed to a temperature above 65 degrees. Canada has made fairly good progress during the past four years in adopting means to control the temperature of her dairy products, from the making-room to the consumer. The first step in this direction was taken by the Dairy Division of the Department of Agriculture for the Dominion in establishing four cool-curing rooms for cheese in different sections of Ontario and Quebec in 1902, to illustrate, on a commercial basis, the advantages of controlling their temperature. As a result of this work, many of the cheese factories have now cool-curing rooms, where the temperature is controlled by ice and never goes above 60 or 62 degrees in the hottest weather. Properly-made cheese, cured in these rooms, are always of a smoother texture and of better flavor than those cured in ordinary rooms, where the temperature goes up to 70 or 75 degrees in the warm weather. The usual method of delivering cheese from factory to shipping point is for the patrons to draw the cheese, but many times the wagon boxes are not clean or large enough to hold the cheese properly, and often the boxes dirty and broken. The most satisfactory way is to let the contract of hauling the cheese to one or two parties with proper facilities. Many factories provide waterproof covers to protect the cheese from the sun or rain on the way to the shipping point.

Most of the cheese sold in Eastern Canada are sold subject to Montreal inspection for both quality and weights. The Montreal Merchants' Produce Exchange employs a man to test the weights of both butter and cheese in the warehouses in Montreal. The rule for weighing is that each cheese or box of butter must weigh one quarter of a pound up beam over the weight marked on the boxes. A large beam scale is used. It is hung from a tripod, with a swinging platform to place the cheese or butter on, and is carried from one warehouse to the other by the men who do the weighing. In the busy season three gangs are employed, with three men in each. One man in each gang does the weighing and keeps a record of the weights. The other two take the boxes off and place the cheese or butter on the scales and pile them up again. They weigh about 10 per cent. of the boxes or packages in each lot.

In the early spring and late fall the cheese are usually shipped in insulated cars, and in the summer months a great many refrigerator cars are used. The Department of Agriculture for the Dominion gives assistance in providing refrigerator cars for cheese by paying $5.00 per car for icing a limited number of cars on the different railway lines running into Montreal. The railway companies provide these cars at the request of the shipper.

About one-fifth of the cheese received in Montreal during the summer months is brought in by boats from ports on the Bay of Quinte and upper St. Lawrence, Ottawa & River and Rideau Canal, Lower St. Lawrence, Richelieu, and Saguenay River.

There are no cold storage or cooling facilities for butter or cheese on any of the river boats, and much of the cheese and butter brought in by these boats in the hot weather is badly heated, but they usually arrive in better condition than those shipped by rail in ordinary box cars. All through shipments of cheese or butter in carload lots are shunted directly to the docks by the railways. The cars are usually placed alongside of the sheds, and the unloading is done by the 'longshoremen trucking the boxes from the car to the ship's gangway. All the cheese shipped to the warehouses in Montreal is delivered from the freight sheds and river docks to the warehouses by cartage companies, many of the teams drawing from 90 to 100 cheese at a load. The dray platforms are wide enough to place four cheese side by side, and from ten to twelve in length. The cheese are placed on their sides, four rows in the bottom, then three, and two, and one.

IN THE MONTREAL WAREHOUSES

Nearly all the cheese warehouses in Montreal are situated west of McGill Street, on St. Paul, William and King Sts, which on a busy day, are almost blocked with drays loaded with cheese and butter. The cheese are delivered from the drays into the warehouses by rolling them along small gangways or chutes hung out over the sidewalks. As the cheese roll into the warehouse, a man calls off the weight marked on each box to a clerk who keeps a record of the weights, brands and number of cheese in each lot. The man who calls off the weights also piles the cheese five or six high, and they are then trucked to different sections of the warehouse. To receive and store from twenty to twenty-eight thousand boxes of cheese per day, or about one hundred and twenty thousand boxes per week, requires large warehouses, and no small amount of executive ability on the part of the cheese merchants of Montreal. It is only by having an almost perfect system of handling the cheese inside of the warehouses that this is accomplished day by day without any apparent bluster or friction.

In addition to receiving them, there is the very important work of inspection. Each firm has one man who does practically all the inspection work on cheese, so that it may be said that all the cheese received in Montreal are inspected by about twenty five men, and probably about three-quarters of the cheese by six or seven men. Some of these inspectors have had experience in making cheese, but most of them have gotten their training in the warehouses, and, although they cannot tell what may cause defects in the cheese, they are experts at discovering defects, which is, after all, the main point from buyer's side.

To anyone who has been accustomed to see the cheese inspected on the shelves at the factory, where every batch is tested, the system of inspection practised in Montreal seems somewhat haphazard.

In some of the warehouses, the first five boxes of a small lot, or ten boxes of a large lot, put off the dray into a warehouse are set aside for inspection, and the balance are immediately trucked into cool-curing room. In others, the cheese are all put immediately into cool rooms, where the temperature is about 45 degrees, and inspected there by examining from three to ten of each lot. In others, many of the cheese are inspected and kept for days in the receiving room, where the temperature is not controlled.

WAREHOUSE INSPECTION

The inspector classifies the cheese as he examines them, making careful notes regarding the quality of each lot, and his report is kept on file. If all the cheese he examined in each lot is found of good quality, the whole lot is passed. If only one cheese in the number is found defective, the defective ones may be picked out and full price paid for the balance. Usually if more than one cheese is found wrong in quality in the number examined, the whole lot is rejected and a lower price paid for them.

(*Continued on page* 87).

POULTRY

Poultry Notes.

Spraying the house and furnishings freely and frequently with a two per cent solution of carbolic acid tends to keep away lice.

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The proper plan to pursue in regard to fowl diseases is to prevent them. Get good strong, healthy stock at the start, keep them in clean sanitary quarters, and watch carefully for the first indications of disease and remove at once all birds showing indications of sickness. Most chicken diseases are contagious.

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In most cases with sick fowls "doctoring" is of little use. The most successful poultrymen are those who adopt the heroic practice of beheading immediately any fowl that shows symptoms of disease. Medical treatment rarely pays.

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In planning house to be occupied by fowls it is well to allow at least four square feet of floor space or twenty-four cubic feet of air space per fowl.

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Fowls should be permitted as free a range as possible. Any plan that gives the birds the freedom of the fields is excellent, providing they do not get in places where they are not wanted.

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The ground over which fowls run, if the yard is a small one, should be plowed or spaded over each year. Many of the diseases affecting poultry are carried over from year to year in the soil.

Keep the Chicks on Fresh Ground.

Many of the ordinary diseases affecting poultry and responsible for the high mortality among young chicks, are carried over year from year and become contagious in flocks, largely from the practice many poultry keepers have of running their chicks year after year over the same ground. Diseases such as white diarrhœa and gape worms, two ailments perhaps that do more damage in chicken yards than any other, may be largely prevented if fresh land is provided each year to coop the chicks on and run them over. Both of these diseases, it is known, may be contracted from the chicks feeding off ground on which diseased birds have fed the year before. And there are others as well. Success in poultry is largely measured by the attention which the man engaged in it gives to the details of the business. Moving the chickens' runs to fresh ground each year, and thoroughly plowing up the soil on which they have been cooped the previous season, is one detail of the chicken business too important to be neglected.

Raising Poultry in Alberta.

A reader at Ponoka submitted to us the following list of questions: 1. What plan of building would you suggest for housing 500 hens? 2. What would be the cost of such a house? 3. What breed of fowl would you advise a farmer keeping? 4. Can anything be made in breeding laying strains? 5. What area of land would be required for 500 hens? 6. What height should the fencing be? 7. What would the fencing cost?

This man intended going extensively into poultry raising, so we submitted his questions to Mr. A. W. Foley, poultry expert for the department of agriculture, Edmonton, who sends this reply:

1. "The plan of building that I would suggest for your Ponoka correspondent is that known as the single style of poultry house (Page 13 of the Bulletin) as it is simple and economical in construction. This house is usually built 12′ wide with studding 8′ high in front and 4½′ at the rear. The size of the pens would depend largely on the number of birds that your correspondent would care to have running in the one flock. A nice size of pen is 12′x12′ which will contain from 25 to 30 birds. A bulletin describing this and other styles of poultry houses will be sent to your correspondent on making application to the Department of Agriculture, Edmonton. The location of ground is a matter for consideration. High dry ground with a southern inclination should be selected. For the purpose of extending and increasing the house the portion to be erected should be built either to the east or west end of the ground upon which the house is to be built so that any addition to be made could be extended towards the end. The end of the pen could be finished solid with a doorway as a means of passage to any addition made, which is a much better way than to have a long continuous house without solid partitions as it has an inclination to check draughts and disease should same break out.

2. "The probable cost of such a house would depend largely on the quality of the material and whether the house was to be finished with rough or planed lumber. The number of ply of lumber would also have material effect on the cost. I would suggest that on the ends and north side of the building clap boards be placed on the outside of the studding, then paper and finished with some suitable style of siding. On the inside of the studding, paper and clap board could be used to advantage. While not familiar with the actual cost of construction of such a house I am of the opinion that an exceptionally good house could be erected at from $2 to $4 per running foot. The larger amount in case the building were erected by hired labor.

3. "As to the best breed as layers I would refer you to an article I wrote dealing extensively with this subject in the December 4th issue of the FARMER'S ADVOCATE of 1907. The laying qualities of any of the breeds are not so much the breed itself as a careful persistent selection of the breeding stock to build up laying strains. I would, however, advise your correspondent to stock his house with good strains of Rocks, Wyandottes, Orpingtons or Rhode Island Reds.

4. "The poultryman in Alberta who will give special attention to breeding up good laying strains of these varieties combining with them the best type for meat producing purposes will have no need whatever to care for markets as he will be able to sell all the birds and eggs that he can produce for breeding purposes at more satisfactory prices.

5. "I would suggest that at least five acres be alloted for the keeping of five hundred hens. Not that five hundred hens cannot be kept in less space but the chances of success are much greater where more room is allowed. A consideration must also be given to the rearing stock to replace the five hundred head of breeding stock which should be done annually, as young birds are capable of producing greater profits during the first twelve or fourteen months of their existence than older birds. To replace this flock of five hundred birds annually would mean the hatching of some 1,200 or 1,500 birds each year, and more than five acres for this purpose could be used to advantage.