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MILK PRODUCERS AND THE TUBERCULIN TEST

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A forced Tuberculin Test is unpopular with the producer. Restrictions of any kind necessarily increase the cost of production, for which the consumer is not always willing to pay

IN Great Britain, on the Continent, in Canada, and, perhaps, in a greater measure, the United States, city authorities, boards of health, and hygiene committees, have been and are particularly aggressive in formulating and carrying into effect measures calculated to improve the conditions surrounding and governing the milk supply from the time it is drawn from the cow until it reaches the consumer. The ultimate object of such measures is to give the consumer a wholesome article of milk, to protect infant life and decrease its mortality. From a humanitarian standpoint all efforts which have as object so worthy should receive our commendation and the hearty support of all right-thinking citizens.

While we realize certain measures are necessary to govern this very important matter, yet we are of the opinion that many such measures have borne heavily on the producer without resulting in the desired improvement in the milk supply. All such measures affect very materially the producer, who must conform to the dictates of council boards and inspectors, or go out of business. We realize that there is room for improvement in the quality of milk at present offered for sale in our cities, which improvement could be effected were a measure of co-operation between the producer and city authorities adopted. Then reasonable measures, based on the conditions governing production and transportation, could be enacted. More care and cleanliness exercised in the production and handling of the milk, and a more liberal use of ice wherewith to cool the milk, would cause an improvement almost beyond conception. This extra cost could be charged up to the consumer were he willing to pay, but he is not.

RESTRICTIONS UNPOPULAR

To many producers, rules and restrictions are irritating and repulsive; such are apparently infringing on the economy of their private affairs. Others accept them and aim to meet them with the best grace possible, and almost invariably at an increased cost of production. The producer puts on the market a better article for which the consumer is not always ready to pay the extra cost. Restrictions, even the modified, have the effect of increasing the cost of producing milk, while onerous restrictions destroy the profit due the dairyman; they make his occupation no better than that of the common laborer.

Possibly the most unpopular and burdensome restriction that can be adopted and enforced by

our city authorities is that regarding the tuberculin testing of all cows supplying market milk. Much has been said and written, especially in our American contemporaries, on the many sides of this question without any apparent solution of the problem at hand. "Shall the cows supplying market milk be tested with tuberculin?" The problem is a big one, and is outside the scope of our large cities to carry to a successful issue. To make even a partial success of enforced testing would require an army of inspectors, to maintain which would tax our cities beyond the limit.

EXPERIENCE OF OTHER CITIES

A few years ago the city of Boston attempted to pass regulations calling for a forced tuberculin

Within the past few weeks Chicago followed New York with an even more sweeping ordinance. It says: "No milk, cream, buttermilk, or ice cream shall be sold within the city of Chicago after January 1st, 1909, unless such products have been obtained from cows that have given a satisfactory negative tuberculin test within one year; or that the milk has been pasteurized according to the rules and regulations of the department of health of the city of Chicago. Milk made into butter or cheese must be pasteurized or come from herds free from tuberculosis." An ordinance like this can work only harm. Just a few months for the Chicago dairymen to carry this into effect! What an absurd piece of legislation. We feel that the very drastic nature of the measure will render it abortive. "Hoard's Dairyman" takes a most sane view of this "Bovine Tuberculosis" question. It speaks of this new law in no uncertain voice as "the folly and idiocy of the Chicago ordinance." No legislation of this nature will be effective without the co-operation of the dairymen.

IN OUR CITIES

How is it in our Canadian cities? Quebec and Ottawa come the nearest to attempting to enforce regulations re tuberculin testing of herds supplying milk to the city. They have met with but a scant measure of success. Other cities have attempted it without success. Where do we stand on this question in Canada? The health boards of nearly all our cities have this question under consideration, and have had for some time without being able to solve the problem. Through time measures may be adopted to prohibit milk and cream coming to our cities from herds that have not been subjected to the tuberculin test. We do not believe in drastic legislation in this matter. Any needed reforms must be brought about by education, although a writer has said that

"laws are the best educators."

While this may be true of many things, and also to a large extent, in respect to rules governing milk production and sale, yet on this score of tuberculin testing it will not be effectual until there is something more definitely settled as to results. We are told that milk from tuberculous cows is injurious as a food. Again, we are told that it is not. We are told that tuberculin testing is injurious to the animal, leading to abortion and other diseases. Again, we hear this combated; and yet all seem to have authority for their statements. The experience with tuberculin testing of our herd has not been unsatisfactory, and we believe it is the best means at our disposal to diagnose tubercular diseases in our herds.

NOTHING TO FEAR FROM THE TEST

In the hands of a careful practitioner no dairyman need fear evil results from a test taken every twelve or eighteen months. We know of



Ensuring a Thirty-Bushel Crop of Fall Wheat.

In no manner can manure be more advantageously applied to the soil than when put on as a top dressing. The illustration, which was taken by our special representative, shows a manure spreader in operation, on a Grant Co., Ont., farm top dressing fall wheat land. An increased yield of wheat, and a certain catch of red clover, is invariably secured on this farm, as a result of applying the manure on top.

test of dairy herds. Buffalo, Syracuse and other cities followed, but in all it was a dead letter. New York during the past twelve months has been very active in formulating rules governing its milk supply. Among them the tuberculin test is called for, yet it will likely prove abortive, because dairymen will not stand for it. Probably, the laws governing the milk supply of New York City are more exacting than those of any city on the American continent, and from all over the New York milk zone—New Jersey, Connecticut, Vermont, Massachusetts and New York State—we hear the bitter complaint of the dairyman against these exactions which tend to increase the cost of production to a "no profit" limit without the prospect of an increase in price. This in the face of increased prices for labor and feed stuffs means much to the dairyman. Shall I continue in an unprofitable occupation or turn to some more remunerative one? Is the concern of many dairymen in the United States to-day.