

CITY MILK SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

Hamilton Milk Producers Agree to Sign Yearly Contract

Ed. The Dairyman and Farming World: The Hamilton milk producers have bowed submissively to the rulings of the retailers and agreed to sign yearly contracts for milk at 16 cents a gallon, the contracts commencing in May.

This step was decided upon at a meeting of the producers' association held in Hamilton on Saturday, April 24th. Last year, 15 cents a gallon was paid for the five summer months and 16 cents during the winter months.

For a summer price 16 cents is a reasonable one. It compares favorably with that ruling in other leading cities and enables producers to realize a fair profit from their business. As an average price throughout the year, however, it is much too low in view of feed and other conditions, existing this past season, and prices paid elsewhere.

Two causes were operative in bringing about this decision. One, and the chief one, is lack of cooperation among the producers of the producers' association; the other is the fact that the retail price of the larger milk companies in Hamilton is being undercut by a number of independent producers who are retailing their own milk at any price. Among a class of consumers who cannot discriminate between milk values in the hopes of realizing greater profits. This latter cause is ruining the milk business both from the retail and wholesale standpoint.

At the meeting held on Saturday to decide upon a price it was learned that a number of the members had already contracted their milk at 15c a gallon. This knowledge gave the retailers, who had not contracted for any milk, good cause to be bold in offering a price and made the producers "weak kneed" with the result aforementioned. Two or three fighters held out for 16 cents for summer only, the contracts to run until October 1, when new contracts would be made. These men felt that in view of what had been done in Toronto last spring and prevailing prices elsewhere the retailers could be forced to pay this price even if at the expense of the producers losing some milk through holding it for a day or so. The amendment favoring this, however, was voted down. This means that the producers are accepting without a murmur practically the offer of the retailers who certainly would not put up a figure that would not bring them a nice profit. The producers, on the other hand, must puzzle themselves for another year how best to make ends meet. Many of them last winter, at 16 cents a gallon, found this impossible. Until the producers agree to hold together and work together for their common good they cannot hope to accomplish anything in the way of increased and profitable prices for milk.—G. H. C.

Control of Milk Supply

Since milk is so extremely variable in quality, and so easily adulterated, since often considerable variations are not readily detected; above all, because the amount of milk used by any given person or family is comparatively small, the consumer of milk is almost wholly at the mercy of the producer and dealer, and must rely for a good product very largely upon their honor. The State has recognized this, and to prevent imposition by unscrupulous people, has in various ways sought to regulate the sale of milk and like products. The chief of these has been to establish arbitrary standards of quality, and to subject to fine those dealers whose goods should be found to be below the required standard. The standards established by various states and municipalities have varied widely. From 2.5 to 3.7 per cent. of fat, and from 11.5 to 13 per cent. of total solids have been the minimum requirements. These standards, while efficient in securing honest dealing where they are rigidly enforced, nevertheless may work injustice, so far as honesty of the dealer is concerned, under various circumstances, and may prevent the production and sale of a comparatively low quality product at reasonable price. It would seem therefore, that the best means of regulating the traffic in milk would be, not to set up an artificial standard to which all must come, but to require each individual dealer to guarantee his own standard, and hold him responsible if his milk were found below. In this way it would be possible to sell milk of various qualities, from strictly skimmed to heavy cream, upon a gradual scale of prices, with exact justice to everyone.—Prof. H. H. Wing, Cornell University.

The Farmers' Feed Situation

In our last week's issue, we gave some space to reports upon the feed situation throughout the country. The following is more of the situation as sized up by our correspondents.

Feed is very scarce and farmers here have had to buy more than last year.—James S. Miller, Parry Sound Co., Ont.

Farmers will not need to buy any more feed this spring than usual.—J. B. Aylesworth, Lennox and Addington Co., Ont.

Feed is higher in price and farmers will need to buy more of it this spring than last.—Wm. Corning, Yorkmouth Co., N. S.

Feed is scarce and farmers will have to buy much more than usual.—F. A. Comerford, Hastings Co., Ont.

Farmers are feeding very sparingly. I don't see any sign of much feed moving. There are some enquiry now and then.—N. S. Palmerton, Norfolk Co., Ont.

The feed position will depend somewhat upon the spring. Not often is hay advertised for sale as much as it is this season in the local paper.—C. F. V. Grey Co., Ont.

Farmers have had to sell and are selling it at good prices.—W. M. Macadam, Prescott Co., Ont.

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Farmers will have to buy more feed this spring than a year ago.—Geo. Wright, Wellington Co., Ont.

Most farmers have sufficient feed. They are feeding with more care than usual. Live stock are coming through the winter in fair condition. A few are short of feed, but there will be little loss for want of it. There is not much grain marketed here. High prices last fall induced some to market more than they would otherwise have done which leaves feed scarce than it otherwise would be.—Wm. Thurston, Victoria Co., Ont.

Farmers have to buy a lot more feed than a year ago. They are buying chiefly grain, bran and corn.—Chas. Van Blaricom, Hastings Co., Ont.

As a rule there is plenty of rough feed in this section. Farmers are not buying so largely of mill feeds and coarse grains as usual.—F. W. Heacock, York Co., Ont.

I do not think farmers will have to buy any more feed than usual.—R. Cullis.

Farmers will have to buy more feed than a year ago.—Chas. O'Reilly, Peterboro Co., Ont.

There is a marked scarcity of both grain and fodder in this section. Many farmers are buying hay and straw at top prices. Hay is selling at \$5 a ton more than a year ago at this time and straw is double the ordi-

inary price. Most granaries are nearly empty and the majority are depending on mill feed.—W. R. Carroll, Oxford Co., Ont.

I think feed will hold out here pretty well, owing to the careful feeding practised during the winter. Farmers will not have to buy any more or very little more than a year ago.—Wm. Collins, Peterboro Co.

Feed is very scarce here but not nearly as short as anticipated. Most farmers have enough to pull through on. About 10 per cent. more farmers are buying feed this year than last.—Wm. Pratt, Simcoe Co., Ont.

Feed is scarce as we have never imported any hay or straw; farmers are making what they have, do or are buying from neighbors who have a little to spare. As to grain feed, so many sows were sold off last fall, and so few pigs wintered that the demand for grain will not be so great as a year ago.—E. C. McGrachy, Kent Co.

Through the system of advanced registry, many breeders of Holsteins have been enabled to increase the produce cows which have made and held the world's milk and butter records, thereby outclassing all other dairy breeds.—H. Bollert, Oxford Co., Ont.

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