

Price to Producers

The price to be paid to the Wellington Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Association, Ltd., and the price to be paid to the Rahui suppliers is based mainly on the butterfat content of the milk, and the effect of the agreements entered into each case is to adopt an adjusted average for the guaranteed price for butter and cheese and to increase that by an amount designated the "added value." This added value is obviously intended to compensate the producer for the extra cost incurred by him over that that he would incur in ordinary seasonal factory production. The prices paid to the producer are indicated in the following table supplied by the Milk Department of the Council. Butterfat rates are calculated at 17·25d. per pound butterfat for the summer and autumn periods, but at 17·25d. plus 85 per cent. for the winter period :—

Period.	Average Butterfat Test.	Butterfat Value per Gallon.	Added Value.	Total.
	Per Cent.	d.	d.	d.
16th August to 31st January	4·32	7·67	2·87	10·54
1st February to 15th April	4·74	8·42	4·50	12·92
16th April to 15th August	4·89	16·06	3·25	19·31
Weighted averages	4·59	10·53	3·33	13·86

COLLECTION

The milk sold by the nearby farmers is brought into town and vended by the farmers themselves. The milk drawn by the Milk Department from the 30-mile area is brought in by the Department, which lets contracts for the purpose. The milk is picked up generally at the farm-gate, but in cases in which the dairy-farm is off the main road the milk is brought by the farmer to a point of collection. The milk is placed on stands at the farm-gate or roadside, and these stands are supposed to be covered, but this provision appears to be neglected in many, if not in most, cases. The collecting vehicles are required to have suitable covering from the 1st October to the 30th April in each annual period so as to protect the milk from injury by the sun's rays. When milk is required from outside the 30-mile area it is carted to the station by the suppliers and brought into the city by train. Under their contract either party—that is, the producer or the Milk Department—may call for double daily delivery for the period from 1st November to 30th April, but the producer's right to call for delivery twice a day is contingent on evidence being available that the standard of the milk is suffering by the delay.

In the Hutt Valley the producer-vendors convey the milk they vend into the zoned area and the quantities supplied by the Wellington Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Association, Ltd., are collected by the association from the individual farmers and delivered at the vendor's premises. The quantities supplied to milk-shops and camps is also collected and delivered by the association. The milk is collected once daily after the evening's milking. This milk is delivered in cans, but the separation and identity of supplies from different farms is not maintained in all cases, and the Department of Health states that in many instances it is unable to trace the supply back to its source.

The cost of collection by the Municipal Milk Department is 1·46d. per gallon, and the comparable cost throughout the other areas varies from 0·75d. to 1·126d. The cost to vendors of raw milk and the relevant share of the cost of producer-vendors must vary considerably.

Treatment

The most distinctive feature of the supply of milk to the Metropolitan Area of Wellington is that approximately 80 per cent. of the milk supplied to Wellington—that is, to that portion of the metropolitan area excluding the Hutt—is handled by the Milk Department of the City Council. Of this amount, a quantity comprising between 74,000 and 75,000 gallons of milk and between 11,000 and 12,000 gallons of cream are supplied by the Department to forty-eight nearby farmers in the period of shortage. Three of these nearby farmers received in the year ending 31st March, 1943, 6,487 gallons of raw milk and the other forty-five received 67,703 gallons of pasteurized milk. As all the milk that the Department vends is pasteurized, very little short of 80 per cent. of the liquid milk and cream passing into use in the Wellington City area is pasteurized. All the milk that is retailed by the Department and all that that is supplied to the schools is bottled, while the wholesale supplies and the supplies to the Armed Forces are delivered loose. The testing, pasteurizing, and bottling at the milk depot is excellent, and the system adopted has undoubtedly attained the best results in New Zealand.

The Milk Department of the City Council maintains a laboratory that is under the control of an analyst whose appointment was approved by the Health Department. Each day every supplier's milk is weighed on arrival at the depot and a sample is taken for testing. Part of every sample is subject to the reductase test, and for the year ending 30th June, 1942, 27,444 such tests were made and non-compliance with the statutory standard was established in only 1·422 per cent. of cases. Altogether, 9,914 tests were made for butterfat content in milk and 1,398 for butterfat content in cream and 97 for total solids, and each of these tests was made on a composite sample of separate samples taken each day for ten days. The average butterfat content for the year was 4·486 per cent. and of solids not fat 8·84 per cent. In the same period 4,942 tests were made for sediment and 1,716 for added water. There were 66 micro examinations, 6,038 agar plate counts, and 1,507 for *B. Coli*, 2,105 for fermentations, 448 for pH. values, and 202 phosphatase tests. Sediment was found in 0·12 per cent. of the tests and added water in 0·002 per cent. Other abnormal conditions were found to exist in 0·011 per cent. An important feature of the tests applied to the suppliers' milk is that a financial loss is immediately attached to any milk found to be below standard. If the milk falls below the standard of four hours under the reductase test it is graded as second class. Once the milk of a supplier has been graded as second class succeeding supplies are not again bulked until after the result of the test has been ascertained. Then if it proves still to be second grade it is separated and the supplier is paid for it at 1d. below the rate allowed by the Council in respect of butterfat content. If the milk continues second grade until it has been separated on three days in succession, further supplies are condemned until the trouble is remedied, and the supplier receives no payment but is charged for cartage from the farm to the depot. If a supply does not stand up to the test for more than fifty minutes it is condemned at once and the