

The use of artificial colours in foodstuffs appears to be under better control than formerly, and labelling regulations are complied with to a much greater extent.

Milks.—The number of samples taken under the Sale of Food and Drugs Act was 2,230. Of these 1,740 came from Wellington City and suburbs, and almost all the remainder from the chief towns of Taranaki, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, and Nelson.

Wellington City: The City Inspector was responsible for over 80 per cent. of the samples taken in and around Wellington. The laboratory results show the supply to be almost free from adulteration in the ordinary sense. Of the 1,740 samples analysed, only eight were seriously deficient in fat, and eight watered. In these respects the high standard of the previous year was maintained. The conditions as regards dirt, and staleness arising from insufficient cooling after milking, or prolonged keeping prior to sale, were again not so satisfactory. There were six prosecutions for such defects, and a large proportion of the thirty-eight warnings issued were due also to one or other of these causes.

To facilitate testing of milk for staleness the Inspector has now been provided with an ice-chest in which to place the samples immediately after collection.

The use of preservatives in milk, which was very prevalent some years ago, is seldom practised now. Only one sample during the whole year contained preservative, in this case boric acid.

Country Districts: The milk-samples taken in the country districts also indicated that, while deliberate adulteration is not general, more cleanly conditions are desirable in many supplies. The results for these districts are summarized in the following table:—

Locality.	Samples received.	Seriously skimmed.	Watered.	Slightly below Standard.	Warned for Dirt.
Blenheim*	23	..	..	1	1
Carterton	4	..	..	..	..
Dannevirke	35	..	1	..	..
Eltham	13	..	..	1	1
Featherston	2	..	..	..	..
Feilding	5	..	..	..	..
Foxton	2	..	1	1	..
Gisborne	54	1	..	2	1
Greytown	1	..	..	..	..
Hastings	37	..	1	1	2
Hawera	51	..	1	..	3
Levin	1	..	..	..	..
Masterton	12	2	..	..	..
Napier	62	..	..	2	1
Nelson	53	..	2	1	8
New Plymouth	55	1	1	3	2
Palmerston North	4	..	..	..	..
Pahiatua	3	..	1	..	..
Patea	1	1	..	..	..
Picton	9	..	..	..	3
Shannon	2	..	..	..	..
Stratford	23	..	1	..	..
Taihape	3	..	..	..	..
Waipukurau	4	..	..	..	..
Wairoa	9	..	..	..	1
Wanganui	16	1	..	1	1
Woodville	2	..	..	..	..
Totals	486	6	9	13	24
Totals, 1923	562	12	7	1	4

* One sample contained boric acid.

Plunket Society: During the year 217 analyses of human and humanized milks were made for Plunket nurses.

Post and Telegraph.—The Engineering Branch of this department forwarded samples of various supplies for examination for purity. Among them were beeswax, faulty cable, French chalk, galvanized fittings, paraffin wax, petroleum jelly, shellac, solder, Stockholm tar, sulphuric acid.

Public Works.—The laboratory is now equipped with an almost complete set of apparatus for testing bitumen, and numerous samples were examined for the Main Highways Board, and for some local bodies. A thorough test was made of the galvanized coating on several brands of iron for the Engineering staff. The conditions of the Rotorua sewage system were carefully examined with the object of recommending a suitable jointing-material for the pipes to replace cement, which is subject to attack by acid-fumes.

Stores Control.—Numerous samples of cloth, fuel oil, motor-spirit, lubricants, soap, &c., submitted with tender or supplied on contract, were forwarded by the Stores Control Board, and the Stores Branch, Post and Telegraph Department, to determine compliance or otherwise with the Board's specifications,