

MILK - PRODUCTION.

EFFECT OF CHANGE OF PASTURE AND FEED.

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As showing the importance of an entire change of feed and a complete change of pasture to the milking herd the following experiment conducted at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction is of interest.

From the New Year until the 27th March the dairy herd at this station received, in addition to pasture grass, a liberal supply of forage in the form of chou moellier, millet, millet and peas, maize, maize and peas, &c., but, despite this fact, by the latter date the milk-yield had commenced to go down very rapidly. A fine paddock of green barley and tares being then available the herd was moved altogether from the pasture, and was confined to the barley and tares. The crop was really meant for ploughing under, the paddock being naturally a very poor one, but I considered it a good opportunity for carrying out a valuable experiment. Any of the crop the cows may seem to waste will make the best of manure when ploughed under.

Attached is a table giving the results. These results are all the more remarkable seeing that the majority of the cows are nearing the end of their period of lactation. It is recognized by all dairy-men that adverse circumstances will cause a cow to decrease her milk-yield much more quickly than she will increase the yield under the most favourable conditions, particularly towards the end of the milking season. It is now also freely admitted that an increase in the milk-yield often means a decrease in the percentage of butter-fat, yet the attached results show a very decided increase of butter-fat as well as milk-yield. Taking the Shorthorn Jean as an example: This is a two-year-old heifer, and has been milking for nearly eight months, yet she shows an increase on the week of 58.5 lb. of milk and 0.3 per cent. of butter-fat, while the cow Adelaide also shows an increase of 62.4 lb. of milk and the abnormal increase of 1.4 per cent. of butter-fat.

The milk is weighed with every care twice a day, and the tests are semi-official. There can be no mistake in the latter, the increase