

not reduced, and a starter that had been very successfully operated at Lepperton, Taranaki, was given a trial. Results for a period of about seven days were very pleasing, cheese grading $93\frac{1}{2}$ points.

Unfortunately, however, dry weather conditions were again being experienced, with the result that the relationship between acid and cook was disturbed, and the grade fell to $92\frac{1}{2}$ points, slitty and open texture being the defect.

During the latter part of the month a short trial had been made with a starter obtained indirectly from Opouriao, Bay of Plenty, where consistently close cheese were being made, but as this culture showed some contamination it was discarded.

Milk-supply at the end of March was declining rapidly, this being reflected in the higher butterfat content, the average test for the month being 4.63 per cent., with a range of 4.6 per cent. to 5.1 per cent. in vat tests. Casein tests indicated a low ratio during the drier portions of the month, and cooking temperatures ranged from 100° to $101\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, it being deemed inadvisable to exceed the higher figure. Results showed that cooks were no more pleasing at the higher temperatures than at the normal standard.

Milk quality showed some improvement in March, second grade being just under 4 per cent., practically all of which was by the curd test. Only four samples decolourized in less than two hours under the reductase test—three of these were second grade under the curd test.

April.—April was a dry month. As in part of March, difficulty was experienced in obtaining the type of curds desired, and a fairly large proportion of the samples on the curd test were showing the effects of the climatic conditions prevailing. Acidity at drying with the "straight off" method was around 0.26 per cent. and 0.27 per cent., which proved, with 0.85 per cent. at three hours, quite enough acid.

Early in the month another culture, direct from Opouriao, was used, and, apart from the slitty texture, gave good results. At this time an experiment consisting of holding some cheese from each vat for three days in the press was carried out with a view to ascertaining if longer pressure would have a tendency towards reducing slitty texture. All the cheese from the vat were placed in the press as usual overnight, and next day three cheese, in the hoops, were removed to another press. Each succeeding day pressure was relaxed, the outside section of each hoop removed, lubricated, replaced, and pressure again applied. Results of this trial were disappointing, as the longer pressed cheese were as slitty as those held for the usual period.

A further experiment to test the effect of pressure upon the reduction of slittiness was the placing of cheese in Canadian-type boxes. Each box was made to fit a cheese fairly closely, and was similar in shape to an ordinary hat box, the height being so adjusted as to cause each cheese to project slightly above the side of the box. The cheese were placed in cool storage, stacked five high, and changed weekly, with the result that the cheese received almost continuous pressure. The value of this experiment will be ascertained at the end of three months storage.

An experiment with clarified milk was also carried out during the month, and will be referred to later.