SPRING CONDITIONS AFFECTING THE CREAM PRODUCER

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With the coming of spring come troubles that affect a great many of the cream producers. These troubles may be classed under three headings:

1. A lowering of the cream test
2. A decline in the quality of the cream
3. Undesirable flavors in the cream due to certain weeds the cows have eaten

LOWERED OF THE CREAM TEST

Frequently dairymen complain that with the arrival of spring there is a decrease in their cream test. This is a condition that is quite likely to occur and is often misunderstood by the cream producer.

Usually there are a large number of the cows in the herd that freshen at this time of the year. This, together with the sudden turning of cows into fresh pastures, causes a marked increase in the milk flow which is accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the test of the herd milk. Whenever such conditions exist, the dairyman can well expect to find a decrease in the test of his cream, even tho his separator is set the same and operated under as uniform conditions as possible. A decrease in the percentage of fat in the milk to be separated will cause a decrease in the cream test.

The cream producer should always examine the statement which he receives from the cream buyer. The pounds of butter fat paid for and the total amount of money received for this butter fat is what he is primarily interested in. When these two factors remain constant, the test of the cream is of minor importance. During this seasonal change it will be noticed that the decrease in test is offset by a corresponding increase in the pounds of cream, so that the total pounds of butter fat paid for will be the same, or perhaps more.

QUALITY OF THE CREAM

The natural cold temperatures of winter aid the cream producer materially in caring for his product. When the warm spring weather arrives, he may not be equipped for taking proper care of his cream. A tank set between the well and the stock tank should be so constructed that the cream may be cooled by the cold water which is
pumped to the stock tank. This is an inexpensive and efficient method for cooling cream.

The following suggestions may aid in improving the quality of cream:

1. Keep the milk as clean as possible and separate directly after milking.

2. Wash and scald the separator each time it is used. The bowl parts should always be kept dry when not in use.

3. Set the separator so that it will skim a cream testing 40 to 45 percent.

4. Cool the cream as soon after skimming as is possible. The cream should be cold when it is mixed with cream from previous skimmings. Keep all cream in cold, running water and stir it at least twice a day to keep it smooth.

5. Deliver the cream at least twice a week.

UNDESIRABLE FLAVORS IN CREAM

Probably the most undesirable flavor that contaminates cream during the spring months is that of onions. This flavor is caused by the cows eating the succulent green tops of the weed commonly called wild onion or wild garlic, which infests pastures at this season of the year. There is no method for removing this flavor from cream; hence, dairymen should try to eliminate the contamination by preventing the cause. All infested portions of the pastures should be fenced off so that the cattle cannot eat this undesirable weed, or the pasture may even be abandoned temporarily.

If the cream producer cannot keep his cows from eating wild onions, he must be content with selling his cream as a second-grade product. A small amount of onion-flavored cream will spoil a whole churning of butter; therefore, the creameryman must exercise care and grade out all of this undesirable cream and make it up into a second-grade butter. He is therefore forced to pay a second-grade price for such cream.

It is hoped that the foregoing suggestions will assist the producer in delivering a quality of cream which will command the highest price even under these more difficult conditions.
A PROPERLY CONSTRUCTED CREAM COOLING TANK

Adopted by American Association Creamery Butter Manufacturers