

The DAIRY

SOUR MILK COSTS FARMERS DOLLARS

Usually Result of Carelessness, Says Expert.

Sour milk costs producers thousands of dollars a year, and usually is caused by using unclean utensils or failing to cool the milk properly, says Prof. L. H. Burgwald of the department of dairy technology of the Ohio State university. "A little care on the part of the farmer would avoid this loss," says Professor Burgwald.

"Milk is an ideal medium for the growth of bacteria. All that the bacteria require when introduced into the milk, is the proper temperature, and they will multiply very rapidly. In growing they break down the milk sugar in the milk and convert it into lactic acid which in turn sours the milk. But the bacteria will grow very slowly, if at all, at a temperature below 50 degrees Fahrenheit.

"Milk coming from the normally healthy cow is practically free from bacteria, so when large numbers of bacteria are found it means either that they have been introduced after milking, through the use of unclean utensils, or that the milk has not been promptly and properly cooled, and the bacteria have multiplied very rapidly.

"The public judges the quality of the milk by the length of time which it will keep sweet. The milk plant has to use some test which will determine in advance how long the milk will keep sweet. This test takes the form of a bacteria count under a compound microscope, an alcohol test, or a methylene blue test. The blue color of the milk caused by the addition of methylene blue dye, disappears more or less quickly, according to the number of bacteria present. The microscopic test, however, an actual count of the bacteria present, is the one most commonly used."

Feeding Calves Three Times a Day Is Favored

Best results can be obtained by feeding calves three times a day, with the periods between feedings as nearly equal as possible. When calves are fed but twice a day the feedings should be 12 hours apart. A calf weighing 50 pounds at birth should be given eight pounds of whole milk a day, while a 100-pound calf should have about twelve pounds. The amount of milk should be gradually increased until at the end of the second week the calf should get from 14 to 16 pounds per day. At the beginning of the third week either skim or separated milk may be given for whole milk, at the rate of one pound per day, and the daily ration increased from two to four pounds, depending on the vigor of the calf. If the calf does not drink eagerly when milk is offered, the quantity should be cut down. At the end of the third week the ration should approximate one-half skim milk. At the end of the fourth week only separated milk is fed, unless the calf is very delicate. The quantity fed can be increased gradually to 18 or 20 pounds per day. Six months is a good average age at which to wean calves from the milk. When good pasturage is available, the calf can be weaned earlier. If skim or separated milk is available, however, calves, especially if they are available, may be fed on it with profit until they are eight or ten months old.

Dairy Notes

A cheap bull is about the most expensive investment a live stock man can make.

Sanitation in the management and blood testing are the methods of controlling abortion.

Immediate and adequate cooling of milk is necessary to prevent souring. A temperature of less than 50° F. is unfavorable to the growth and reproduction of the injurious bacteria.

With feeding of dairy cows, the question of minerals in the ration receives additional prominence. A cow may produce milk for some time without having sufficient minerals in her ration by drawing on her reserves.

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