EXHIBITIONS AND PRIZE BUTTER.

By Prof. JAS. W. ROBERTSON, Guelph, Ont.

Value of Exhibitions.—The trend of action and the usefulness of many of the agricultural societies, during the past ten years, has been mainly in the direction of holding fairs or exhibitions. Some writers and speakers have been severe in their censure of the responsible directors for permitting or encouraging that one aspect of all the work, ostensibly undertaken by these societies, to so effectually monopolize their funds and energies. On the other hand, it should be recognized and remembered that the stimulus of healthy, hearty and friendly competition which they have fostered has been very beneficial.

Every department of farm work, even on the farms whose tillers are most remote from educational influences, has felt the quickened pulsations of life from the intensified circulation of knowledge resultant from exhibitions. Few farms are now isolated from such aid by reason of their geographical location; but many are still out of reach, because of the sad, secluded mental attitude of the men and women who live on them. If a man or woman, a boy or girl, can be enlivened into a fair competition with others of their fellows in any branch of their work, a great economic boon will have come into their lives. In this I see a bond of union between the purpose of Farmers’ Institutes in their work of informing, instructing and educating those engaged in agricultural pursuits, and the plans of agricultural societies in providing exhibitions for comparing attainments through open competition.

Preparing for Exhibitions.—The work of preparing for the summer and autumn exhibitions will be engaging the thoughts and hands of many farmers’ households by the time the readers of your bulletin see this. I could wish that such an interest were more general and intelligent. The cattle and horses of those intending to show will be specially “fitted up,” which unfortunately too often means the “breaking down” of excellent qualities by excessive fattening.

How to Make Prize Butter.—Roots and fruit for display will have befitting care and concern bestowed upon them. The boys hardly in their teens will be doing their share of the bragging about the colt, the calf or the lamb, and already in the innocent glee of boyish greediness, fingerling in imagination a red ticket for each animal. The girls not yet in their teens will be interested in everything generally, with all the young girl’s wonderful capacity of expectation; while the daughters not now in their teens will be—well I won’t leave my ignorance open to caustic criticism by trying to guess what they’ll be doing. However, in the anticipation of the same—the exhibitions, not the criticisms—I will try, with all due modesty, to give those of them or their mothers who may be thinking of how nice it would be to take the first prize on butter at one of these
exhibitions, some helpful information on how to do it.

Rule I.—See that the cows have an abundance of good wholesome feed. Supplement the grass with bran or grain. Corn and peas make firm butter. If grass be dry or scarce, furnish green fodder besides. The quality of the feed determines to some extent the quality of the fat globules in the milk. Fine butter is mostly composed of these globules. Green fodder is fed with better effect on the quality of the butter after being wilted for a day or two. This is especially the case with clover.

Rule II.—See that the cows have a liberal supply of pure cold water. As well might a cook expect to make good palatable porridge out of musty oatmeal and stagnant water, as to get pure, sweet-flavored, wholesome milk out of musty feed and foul drink consumed by a cow.

Rule III.—See that the cows have access to salt every day. They know best when to help themselves.

Rule IV.—If there be not sufficient shade in the pasture-field, the cows should be tied up in a darkened stable during the heat of the hot days. I believe in soiling.

Rule V.—Let the cows be saved from annoyance and worry. Any harsh treatment that excites a cow lessens the quantity and injures the quality of her yield.

Rule VI.—Where practicable, let the cows be milked regularly as to time and by the same person.

Rule VII.—The udders should be well brushed and then rubbed with a damp, coarse towel before milking.

Rule VIII.—All milk should be carefully strained immediately after the milking is completed.

Rule IX.—Thorough airing of the milk for a few minutes by dipping, pouring or stirring will improve the flavor of the butter.

Rule X.—When set for the rising of the cream, milk should be at a temperature above 90° Fahr.

Rule XI.—When shallow, open pans are used for setting, it is most important that the surrounding air be pure. A damp musty-smelling cellar is not a fit place for milk.

Rule XII.—When deep-setting pails are used, the water in the tank should be kept below or as near 45° as possible.

Rule XIII.—The skimming should not be delayed longer than 24 hours.

Rule XIV.—Cream should invariably be removed from the milk before it is sour.

Rule XV.—The cream for each churning should be gathered into one vessel and kept cool and sweet. A good practice is to mix 25 per cent. of pure water with the cream.

Rule XVI.—The whole of the cream should be well stirred every time fresh cream is added, and half a dozen times a day besides.

Rule XVII.—Two days before the churning is to be done, about a quart of cream for every four pailsfuls to be churned (or two per cent.) should be set apart and kept as warm as 70° Fahr.

Rule XVIII.—Then one day before the churning, that small quantity of cream—(a fermentation starter which then will be sour enough)—should be added to the whole of the cream intended for churning and well mixed therewith.

Rule XIX.—The cream should afterwards be kept at a temperature of 60° Fahr.

Rule XX.—During summer the best churning temperature is 57° or 58°. During late fall or winter 62° to 64° are found to be better.

Rule XXI.—The agitation of churning
should be kept up till the butter comes into particles rather larger than clover seed.

Rule XXII.—The buttermilk should then be drawn off and pure water at 55° added in its place.

Rule XXIII.—By churning this for a few minutes the butter will be washed in the churn in its granular state.

Rule XXIV.—The milky water may then be drawn and replaced by a weak brine at the same temperature viz: 55°

Rule XXV.—After a minute’s churning the butter may be removed from the churn and pressed for salting.

Rule XXVI.—Pure salt of medium fineness and with a body velvety to the touch should be used.

Rule XXVII.—Three-quarters of an ounce to the pound will be the right quantity for most markets and judges.

Rule XXVIII.—The butter should be kept cool during the working, and also during the few hours while it may be left for the salt to thoroughly dissolve.

Rule XXIX.—As soon as the salt is thoroughly dissolved, the butter may be worked the second time to correct any streakiness which the first mixing of salt may have caused.

Rule XXX.—It should then be put up neatly and tastefully, with as little crimping or beautifying as feminine fondness for these will permit.

Rule XXXI.—It will then do its maker credit if it does not receive the first prize, it will be prized and praised by its eaters.

**Hints on Winter Dairying.**

The following letter from Mr. L. N. Brown, Gurnee, Ill., which contains some good suggestions, was read at the closing institute, Mr. Brown being unable to be present:

Winter dairying, I think, could and should be much improved. There are but few winter dairies in Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin that more than pay expenses.

I will make one suggestion. Let your meeting chose a dairyman who has all his cows fresh in milk next November. Let them be divided so that each half shall be of the same milking quality. Keep one-half in every respect as the average dairyman keeps his cows. Let the other half be kept in a warm stable. As the weather grows cold the stable should be heated with artificial heat and kept between 55 and 65 degrees. Do not let the cows leave the stable. Water them with water at 98 degrees; keep a true account of all feed and expenses for 90 days, and then see how the profit of each lot will compare.

Or try this way: Give each half the same amount of hay. Give the half kept in the warm stable just grain enough so the product will equal that of the others; then see if it will require over half the grain. I am satisfied that one-half the grain that is fed to winter milk cows is used up by cold. Cold is about as injurious to milk as frost is to corn.

Now, if your people will choose a dairyman who will try this experiment, try it fairly, and have the trial made public from week to week, it will do more to improve the dairies of this section than any one thing that I can name.

There are two faults with many dairy men of this section. First, the dairyman don’t make dairying his business. Second, many of them don’t do as well as they know how.

If every sober, industrious man will manage his dairy as I have mentioned, his note will be worth one hundred cents on the dollar.

In my forty years of dairy life, I have done much poor dairying; but I am now taking a wiser and better course.