Farm Equipment

One of the most outstanding features that attracts special attention in traveling through the farming and dairy sections of Wisconsin is the fine improvements found on the farms. Wisconsin farms average only about 90 acres each and vary in size from 40 up to 300 acres. Almost every farm boasts of a good modern house, large barns, silos and other improvements, all painted and well kept, indicating a commendable degree of pride taken in comfortable and pleasant surroundings.

It is plain to see what the farmers and dairymen of Wisconsin had in view in making these improvements; first, substantial comfort, and second; the adaptation of their improvements to the dairy business. In other words they believe that proper equipment is necessary to success.

The houses were large as a rule for farm houses and the style of architecture was modern. Several of our party went into different houses to view the interior, and reported that they were unusually well furnished and equipped for comfortable living. In front of most of the houses was a well kept lawn, with shrubbery and flowers, and usually a board or picket fence enclosing the yard. The barns had quite generally a stone or concrete basement with a frame upper story or loft for the storage of feed, the basement being used for sheltering the stock. As a general thing living water was piped into the barns from wells. The indispensable silo was almost invariably an attachment to the barns. Frequently there were more than one barn and several out buildings. The cow barns had concrete floors and feed troughs, and were equipped with stanchions and bins for ground feed. They were arranged with a view to convenience in feeding and milking. Probably 25% used milking machines. Some of the dairymen preferred the machines and others preferred hand milking. Quite generally, however, those that were using machines reported them a success. There seemed to be an absence of surplus farm machinery, and it was a rare thing to see a valuable farm machine standing out in the weather.

There is no question but what the people of Wisconsin generally believe in good roads and consider them essential to profitable farming. They also take a pride in their schools and at frequent intervals the country school houses would be passed as we traveled along. It is simply astonishing how many of the country boys and girls are looking forward to a course at the State University, and the work of the country school is regarded as a preparation to entering the University. Country churches were also quite numerous and gave evidence of constant use for worship.

It was quite evident that the country population of Wisconsin gives quite a little attention to the science of living. Just when, or how, or where they received the inspiration to live comfortably, methodically and with an apparent purpose in life, enforced by industry and thrift, would be an interesting speculation. The probability, however, is that it is inborn and the result of generations of training.

When inquiry was made as to where the money came from to pay for these improvements the invariable answer was that it was made on the farm and is the result of the profitable marketing of their farm products through the dairy cow and the sale of improved dairy stock.