"1929 Swiss Cheese Factory Troubles"

By Fred A. Kuenzi

Local Swiss Cheese Factory Inspector, Monroe, Wis.

Mr. President, Friends and Members of this Association:

Last year was my second year as Field Instructor in Southern Wisconsin, including four counties, Green, Lafayette, Dane, Iowa, and some factories in Illinois.

I inspected close onto 700 factories and about 160 barns since May 1st. The most trouble to the cheese factories have proven to be the milking machines and inexperienced cheesemakers. The milking machines are a very nice and time saving machine if they are kept clean, but a very small percentage are in a condition to be used.

Most of the factories in Green and Lafayette counties have had very good success with cooling their milk which means a better quality of cheese.

Often times when I called on patrons and cheesemakers to inspect barns, milk machines, factories and utensils, I was called down and sworn at when told of their uncleanliness, which was only for their benefit as well as others.

I must also say I cannot alone blame the farmers for the cheese troubles. Some cheesemakers must be more strict and sanitary and especially have more experience and I find the most trouble to be among the younger generation, which is a damage to our Swiss cheese industry. I can give you at least a dozen names of cheesemakers that should not have the cheese license anymore until they can show a better satisfaction in their cheese practice.

Although we have a very great percentage of very good cheesemakers that cannot be beat. As an old cheesemaker, I find that he must be the leader and be
respected by the farmers. With what respect will a farmer take orders from an unclean cheesemaker?

I believe that our Dairy and Food Department should be more severe. If some of these farmers and cheese makers would be fined and their license taken away, we would find that the quality of the cheese would be improved and would raise the standard of our profession as cheesemakers.

We all know that when a cheesemaker sends in one dollar, he gets his license. Now, right here is where it shows what our Dairy and Food Department know about those things. We are about 10 to 15 years behind Switzerland; there a man cannot get a license until he has been a hired-help for four years and by proving by an examination at a Dairy School and is qualified by them.

It is my judgment that the instruction work of our organization together with the power and inspections of the Dairy and Food Commission should be so lined up that it should eliminate the unclean and inefficient cheese makers from our profession.

I thank you.