less of the interest of the whole undertook to take out the milk fat and we know what that means in recent years more than we did then and put in hog fat or other fats and tried to palm off on the public. It took more than a quarter of a century to recover from that and they did recover but that recovery has not been completed yet and now gentlemen my argument is this, before plunging into to many extremes consider it fairly and squarely what it involves. (Great applause.)

THE SWISS CHEESE MAKER’S WORK AND PAY

By C. M. Gere, Brodhead, Wis.

Mr. Chairman: This part of the program is easier to me.

As our American cheese makers make up this gathering, I have gone into a little more detail in outlining the manufacture of the wages, etc., of the Swiss cheese maker and the duties of the Swiss cheese maker in starting his regular routine work. He of course, takes in milk and starts it the same as you do in any ordinary factory. The time occupied for the manufacturing process of Swiss cheese of course, occupies about four or five hours, the actual manufacturing process is cutting the curd, working and stirring and taking the cheese out and cleaning up. This part of the work depends on whether the milk is received once or twice a day. More than 85 per cent of our Swiss cheese factories are receiving milk and making cheese twice a day which of course involves eight or nine hours in the actual manufacturing. Then we come to the amount of milk that can be handled by one man in comparing the work of the American cheese maker and the Swiss cheese maker. It is possible only for one man to handle approximately five thousand pounds of milk for Swiss cheese daily. That would be about the maximum and it would probably be considered a good day’s work for the American cheese maker. In this five thousand pounds of milk the yield of Swiss cheese, the average would be seven to seven and one-half pounds of milk. The yield that would make approximately three hundred to four hundred pounds of cheese. In American cheese it would represent approximately—it would yield approximately five hundred or four hundred and seventy-five pounds of cheese. After the cheese is taken out, instead of developing acid in the vat as American cheese does, the cheese is placed on the press. This cheese is turned four or five times and remains on the press over night until the next morning. Then it is taken from the press and placed in a curing room, or in salt, or a salt brine tank. The cheese is allowed to cool off. The cheese is naturally very warm and has to be cooled off before going into the salt. Then it goes into the salting tank where it lays for a couple of days. After the actual manufacturing process is finished the cheese maker has his afternoon duties in a Swiss cheese factory. He has to go into the cellar. Cheese has to be turned twice a week, washed and salted and new boards placed under the cheese so as to
keep the rind dry and keep the rind forming. After they remain in this room for a couple of weeks then they move on into the warm cellars. That is to develop the eyes. Here they turn them three times a week and they are salted and also the boards are changed. These cheese as we have mentioned weigh from 150 to 200 pounds and sometimes more. If they remain in the warm cellar, and you get the proper eye formation, then they are removed to the cool cellar to retard the working of the cheese or stop the gas forming, that forms the eye. There they are handled and sorted and turned twice a week as in the first case. The cheese must stay in the factory two weeks or two months at least in our district down there. During this time they are sorted as we mentioned and turned and washed. We have been hearing about regulations adopted by this Association as to holding the cheese for two months—so our cheese are held in the factory and handled every two months. And then instead of having boxes ready made up—the Swiss cheese maker has to manufacture his own tubs. These tubs are built with staves of about one-half an inch material and the head is cut off of one inch boards and the tubs are made by the cheese maker, which is no small task. That is part of his duties. Then the cheese are packed in these tubs and shipped, four and five cheese in each tub, making a gross weight of a tub of cheese around six to eight hundred pounds. Then comes the matter of pay or salary that these Swiss cheese makers receive.

Then comes the matter of pay. The average maker in a farmers co-operative factory in the Swiss cheese district receives from 12 to 15 per cent of the gross receipts for the cheese. In this case the equipment, kettles, and manufacturing equipment, separator and boilers, etc. are owned by the cheese maker. Where the farmers organization own the tools, the cheese maker receives something like 8 or 7 per cent. In a few instances 9 per cent but in most cases in our district down there the Swiss cheese factories are owned and operated by the farmers co-operative organization and the cheese makers own the tools and works on a percentage ranging from 12 to 15 per cent. On an average it is calculated that the cheese maker receives from 7 to 9 per cent of the gross receipts for his labor which amounts in a factory handling five thousand pounds of milk, from sixteen to eighteen hundred dollars a season, of nine months. Two men are able to handle ten thousand pounds a day on the same basis. The labor cost in the way of helpers and assistants in the manufacture of Swiss cheese runs from sixty to one hundred dollars a month and board. Some companies pay their cheese makers on a straight rate of ___ per pound for manufacture of Swiss cheese. I have in mind a string of seven or eight factories which are operated on a per pound basis. This case they pay two cents a pound straight for the manufacture. And from seventy-five to one hundred fifty dollars for separating. This makes the gross income for the cheese maker range about sixteen to eighteen hundred dollars as in the case of the co-operative factories. It runs about the same. In the American cheese factory five thousand pounds would be considered a one man plant,
and the yield about five hundred pounds of cheese. My understanding is that the maker receives about a cent a pound for the labor, which would make him a gross income of nine months of about $1350.00. Now in pointing out the advantages or disadvantages whichever it might have been, we must take into consideration what we have mentioned here, the Swiss cheese are held for a longer period for the two months where the American cheese maker is able to move his cheese out in three days. He does not have the heavy cheese to handle. In other words, he doesn’t have quite as long a day’s work and in checking up we find that there is a difference in the yearly salary here of two hundred and fifty dollars and of course it is a matter of judgment of whoever is doing the work as to whether the additional work that the Swiss cheese maker has is worth more than two hundred and fifty dollars. That I leave to your judgment.

OBSERVATIONS AT SWISS FACTORIES IN 1924

By C. A. ECKBERG, U. S. Dept. Agric. and Univ. of Wisconsin

The past season has been in many ways one of the most perplexing the Swiss cheese maker in Wisconsin has experienced in a number of years. The quality of the cheese during the first part of the season was unusually poor, the cold wet weather was conducive to excessive eye formation resulting in a high percentage of No. 2 and Common No. 1 cheese. This coupled with the heavy carry over of the previous years’ make tended to make a very uncertain market for the average make.

The thing that is brought out the most forcibly is that in the face of these conditions we have enjoyed a good demand for large eyed fancy cheese, and when we pause and consider that in the year of 1923 we imported some 35 million pounds of Swiss cheese, which is 10 million pounds more than we made, and that practically all of the imported cheese was of the fancy type, the standard by which the domestic product is measured, it is obvious that quality is our greatest problem.

We have observed that factories using improved methods of manufacture have enjoyed a good demand for their output and received fair prices even with these adverse market conditions.

It is apparent that the common No. 1 cheese which has in previous years had a place on the market is now a drug and must be classed as a No. 2 cheese. I have spoken with dealers who said that in previous years it was customary to sell four to five hundred tubs at a time to the mining districts. This is, however, a thing of the past, nothing but the best is wanted there, and other places where we have been accustomed to selling our common No. 1 cheese. It is therefore apparent that to make the manufacture of Swiss cheese a profitable enterprise it is vitally necessary that we reduce the percentage of our No. 2 cheese to the minimum.

It has been proven that to do this we must adopt modern methods