1934 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN OF BUTTER MAKERS’ ASSOCIATIONS

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I don’t meet you cheese makers as often as I would like to.
In dealing with this quality question I shall take the liberty of talking around my allotted subject perhaps quite as much as on it.
What is taking place in the quality campaign of the creamery butter industry is of interest to you men in the cheese industry only as it may point the way for you. In that respect it is of great interest.
Men in the creamery business know that the time has come when they can no longer ignore the quality problem. Some have lost great sums of money this year because of seizures of cream and butter containing “extraneous” matter. Over 70 federal inspectors are on the job seizing and condemning cream and butter. No fooling about it, they mean business.
The creamery butter manufacturers are thoroughly aroused to the seriousness of the situation. They have been busy, for months, putting their houses in order.
The creamery men are making real progress along quality lines, not because they wanted to, but because they were forced to.
Here is an interesting sidelight about their interest in quality. I have been in contact with many of them in recent months. They like it. They are wondering how they could have been so careless in the past. They have found a new interest in their work. They are carrying their campaign for better quality clear back to the farms where the milk and cream is produced. They are finding out that the farmers know how to produce good milk and cream. They are not so dumb as some folks think they are.
The food and drug division of the United States Department of Agriculture is made up of men who are interested in just one objective—i. e., the marketing of only clean, wholesome food. The inspectors are hard boiled. They don’t care anything about the troubles of the manufacturer. They will add to his troubles if he is making a food product that is not clean and wholesome.
How long do you suppose the cheese industry is to be let alone by these food inspectors? How about the foreign matter that is going into some cheese? How do you enjoy the prospect of a couple of federal inspectors at your factory ready to pounce upon milk and cheese that may not measure up to their standards?
That is exactly what is happening in the creamery business right now and I see no reason why the authorities should pass up the cheese industry.
I think that we can all agree that there is much to be done along quality lines. I am a firm believer in quality improvement all the time. No matter what we may be doing it should be our constant aim to do the job better.
Nothing is to be gained by passing the buck. The favorite indoor sport of some men is to blame somebody else. The cheese maker who attempts to excuse his poor cheese by blaming the farmer is not different from other folks. He is just passing the buck, and the woods are full of folks just like him. I am not going to brand him as a bad citizen, at least until it becomes a crime to make poor cheese.

This whole question of quality improvement could be easily settled if the men in the dairy industry really wanted to settle it. If they really wanted to make good cheese and good butter and good ice cream and all the other good dairy products, they could do it.

The trouble is they don't want to. They have been trained to believe that almost any old way is good enough. So long as the buyers of milk and cream accept it, regardless of quality, and ask for more, why should the producer worry? The same rule holds good with the makers and buyers of cheese, butter and other products. Why should the makers worry if the buyers are satisfied?

It should, by this time, be plain to all of us that if there were no market for poor milk and poor cheese, and for poor cream and poor butter, there would be none produced.

Don't make the mistake of thinking that the farmer cannot produce good milk. He can produce good milk all right if he can't sell the other kind.

As some of you know, I have been hammering away at this quality problem for a good many years. Even when others paid little or no attention I kept pounding away. I continually prophesied that the day would come when the prosperity of this great industry would depend largely on our attitude toward quality.

I know what the cheese maker has been up against when he tried to get better milk. I've heard it over and over again; in fact, I used to hear it when I was state food official thirty years ago. If one maker refuses to accept a farmer's poor milk the next maker is ready to take it; he is that tickled to get a new patron.

I am not discounting the importance of this stumbling block in our efforts to get better milk, but, gentlemen, it is not the big stumbling block that some have painted it. Some makers have had no trouble with it. They have been able to get good milk and hold their patrons. They have not used it as an excuse for passing the buck.

Most of us can somehow arrange to do the things that we really want to do. If we miss going to church it is usually due to the fact that we didn't want to go in the first place.

If we want a new car badly enough and long enough we finally arrange somehow to get it.

Really, friends, if we want to make better dairy products badly enough we will find a way of doing it. Most of us follow lines of least resistance. Life is largely made up of doing that. When we men and women in this dairy business really want to market dairy products of high quality we will find a way of doing it.
We will learn how to work together better than we have in the past. We will make each man’s problems the problems of our group and solve them by mass action instead of doing it alone.

I sometimes wonder whether you men engaged in the production end of the cheese business really appreciate your strength—really realize what you might do for yourselves and for your industry if you would just pull together as you might.

I have been delighted to note the founding of your county groups. Co-operation—working together—enjoys its fullest measure of success in small groups. It thrives best when neighbor meets neighbor.

I have enjoyed watching the members of these group associations grow in understanding of what it is all about. I have not been privileged to be present at their meetings, but I have carefully watched the reports of those meetings.

Members are learning to do things together. They are becoming more friendly with one another and are learning each other’s problems. As they eat and drink together they learn to think and act together. Don’t worry about the few who will not join with you. They will eventually come in if you keep inviting them. I suspect that right here is a weak point. You forget to invite that neighboring cheese maker to go with you to your meetings. You depend on your secretary to invite him. Don’t do that. Call him on the telephone a couple of days ahead of the meeting, or go over and call on him and urge him to be there.

Oh, sure, he may have taken a patron away from you, or he may monkey with the test occasionally, or he may have said something about you that you didn’t like, but ask him anyway. It’s all the more necessary to get him in with you in your group activities.

The chances are that when you get him in you will find that he is a pretty decent sort of a chap. You can probably have him as a friend afterwards instead of a stranger that you can’t trust. Wouldn’t you rather operate your cheese factory with friends in your neighboring factories? Of course, you would.

I wish that I might say something that would cause you men to feel your strength and to use it. You are merely tasting the results of group action, you are not enjoying them as you might. You don’t accomplish what other groups in the dairy industry accomplish.

I am in position to observe what other groups are doing and I want to tell you frankly, yet kindly, that you have a long way to go in order to catch up with the others.

You men in the cheese industry have travelled alone so long that you don’t know how to do team work. You seem to have been afraid all these years to step out all together and demand things in the name of your great industry. You haven’t trusted your next door cheese maker enough to ask him to join you in demanding your rights.

I have observed these things by meeting you in your factories, in your conventions, at public hearings and before legislative committees. I have seen a legislative committee room filled with cheese makers each with his personal opinion and with no program whatever.
No wonder the committee members become confused. No wonder the cheese maker becomes a political football. No wonder he doesn't get what he deserves. He has only himself to blame.

That isn't the way other groups get what they want. They don't flock to hearings and committee meetings with no program. In fact, most of them stay at home and send a committee to speak for them. They have a program all worked out and they know what they want.

Do they get it? Look up the records. Do cheese makers get what they want? Again, look up the records. They do not, as a rule.

I have had considerable experience around state legislatures and even around Congress. I know how the machinery operates. I am drawing on that experience when I suggest to you that you stop chasing to Madison with your individual remedies. Save your gasoline and spend your savings to support and promote your trade associations. Talk over your problems with your brother members and agree on a definite program. Then adopt it in the form of a resolution and put it in the hands of a committee who will present it to the proper officials.

I understand that you have already made some progress along this line. As I see it you need to go a step further. You have, I believe, 29 county groups. There is the danger of lack of agreement by groups—the same as by individuals. My suggestion is that you devise a plan to get committees representing these groups together and let them agree on a state-wide program. Send a committee to Madison, representing all the cheese makers of the state, with a definite program for law enactment and you will get what you want.

I don't care whether the committee consists of one man or a dozen men, so long as the committee actually represents the expressed opinion of the men in the industry.

In addition to getting concrete results you can, by cooperative effort, gain the satisfaction that comes only through working with others for the common good. We get in life what we put into life, and life, in all its fullness is not made up of lone efforts. In order to gain it you must work with others. You draw from this bigger life in proportion to what you contribute.

This is the law of compensation and is as unchangeable as the laws which govern the movements of planets. We get out of an organization what we put into it, not alone in money, but in other ways. Inertness or neglect of duty never pays a dividend. The amount we contribute in money to society or to an organization will do little or nothing for us unless we identify ourselves personally and become active, useful members.

History is replete with great achievements through organization. We all know by experience that organized effort is necessary if we are to make real progress in building this industry.

One of the greatest shortcomings of the human race is selfishness. That is the reason so many members of the average association—even members who pay their dues regularly and promptly—hold back and do little or nothing else beyond paying dues.
They are selfish. They have other interests from which they derive greater pleasure. They don't want to make the extra effort necessary to make their memberships worth more to them and to their industry.

It has been demonstrated over and over again that the man who wholeheartedly works to give his associates the best cooperation gets the same brand in return. Co-operation is a recognition of the rights of others, and they have a right to expect your support in every laudable effort to promote the industry.

The member who fails to measure up hurts his industry, but he hurts himself most of all. He fails to get the true viewpoint of what it is all about. I have digressed somewhat from the quality question, so far as it applies to dairy products, but I hold that personal quality improvement must come before we can have product quality improvement. We must want to promote our industry before we can really go very far in improving cheese quality. Making better cheese is just incidental to building a better industry.

When we get the right perspective of our industry and its needs the quality question will take care of itself. We will produce only good milk and make only good cheese because the other kind holds back industry development.

I know what some of you are thinking about. What are we going to do about the men in the business who will not cooperate? They don't come to gatherings like this one. They refuse to make a move to improve quality or to recognize the need for quality improvement. They go along in their careless ways totally unmindful of any obligations to others or to their industry.

They are not all farmers or cheese makers either. They care nothing about quality so long as they can make a profit and it doesn't bother them a bit if the profit they make is gained at the expense of the best interests of the cheese industry.

I will tell you what to do with such fellows. Make it so uncomfortable for them that they will either join with others to work for the common good or get out of the business.

It can be done, too, if you men in the cheese industry will just realize your strength and use it. You can, by working together, revolutionize the practices of men engaged in it. It can't be done over night, but it can be done along the lines I have suggested.

Men in this industry must realize that they are producing and marketing human food. The consumer is entitled to clean food. There is no middle ground. It is possible, of course, to produce human food that is clean, yet not of good quality, but it is contrary to the general rule. High quality food is usually clean food.

You men can, through your organizations, get the necessary legislation to deny a market to the producer of unclean milk. That will stop its production. You can likewise get legislation which will require all manufacturers of human food to keep it clean. That will force the dirty manufacturer to clean up or get out.

This must, in my opinion, all come as preliminary to any successful campaign to increase the per capita consumption of cheese and to get
more money for it. It is the big job ahead, and it is up to you men in the industry to tackle that job with all the power and wisdom that you possess.

A good trade convention like this furnishes the inspiration that men in industry need in order to do their best.

I take it that every man here is anxious to better himself—to widen his acquaintance and to take his place among the leaders in his business.

What does the regular attendant of dairy conventions get more than the fellow who stays at home? I shall try to give you the result of my observations.

I attended my first dairy convention in Le Sueur, Minnesota, in October, 1899. I have attended many conventions in that state since that time. At each I met many of the men who attended the Le Sueur convention 35 years ago. Very few of them are operating factories. The majority have better positions.

They have been attending dairy conventions all the time. Do we need to ask those men to set a value on trade conventions?

I have attended trade conventions in many states—in fact about everywhere where dairying has gained a foothold. I know many of the leaders in those states. I always meet them at the conventions. Doesn’t the fact that they are leaders and that they are inveterate convention fans teach us a lesson?

Now, I’m not going to claim that attending dairy conventions will, in itself, make a man a leader of men. I am not going to claim that it will make a good cheese maker out of a poor one, or a good editor out of a poor one. I do claim, however, that the same ambition that urges a man to do his best on his everyday job will prompt him to attend conventions.

It is impossible to measure the value of conventions to the dairy industry. Great as that value is they are, I believe, of still greater value to the men who attend them. You can stay at home and read what happens at the trade conventions, but you can’t get the inspiration that you get when you attend and participate.

I have emphasized the selfishness that prompts men to attend conventions. They hope to profit and they do profit, as I have pointed out. Such selfishness is what I term enlightened selfishness. They help others as they help themselves.

Scoring contests have long been incidental to dairy conventions. Their value to the individual cheese maker is too well known for me to enlarge upon it. Scoring contests are both educational and inspirational. They furnish the element of contest which is enjoyed and appreciated by every red blooded man—whether it be a horse race, a world series baseball game, or a matching of cheese scores.

You men who attend conventions are the best cheese makers in your communities. You spend time and money to attend conventions and the fact that you do is proof that you are progressive.

I wish it were possible to interest the fellows who are not here. I would like to tell them what they are missing. I would like to tell
them that cheese making is a poor business for a man to be in when he doesn’t have spunk enough to attend conventions.

Such a man may even be a good cheese maker in the sense that he makes good cheese, but in the broader sense he is a failure and a positive detriment to the industry. I dare say that if all our cheese makers would take the same interest in improving conditions in the industry that you men take, the dairy business would not be in the shape that it is in. At least I am sure that improvement will come about only as you and others like you bring it about.

There is more to making a success of your profession than making good cheese. There is more to it than keeping a clean factory. I once knew a cheese maker who failed and had to quit his profession, because he was a crank. Now, being a crank is not always a handicap but in his case it was. He was a crank on cleanliness. He was so clean that it was his besetting sin. He would almost throw a patron out of his factory if he stained his factory floor.

He couldn’t make friends because he couldn’t think of anything else except cleanliness. He overworked it.

Above everything else a cheese maker should build a reputation for integrity. That is more essential than a reputation for making high score cheese. Live so that people believe in you. Be above doing mean things. Hold your standard of living high and don’t let a temporary advantage make you deviate from it. Be the soul of honor and you will profit in the long run. People will believe in you and they will help you advance.

Now, that may sound like preaching but you know it is true. The best in life comes to the man who follows the teachings of Him who set the high standards that are recognized in every civilized land as the bulwarks of good citizenship.

You can’t win through trickery and meanness. Smarter men than you have tried it and failed.

Build for good citizenship. Endorse and help promote the best community life. You can be leaders among men because you occupy commanding positions. Live and act so that people in your community will swell up with pride when they speak of “our cheese maker.”

I wonder how many of you men believe in luck. How many of you have been guilty of pointing to the successful man and explaining his success by terming him lucky? How many of you have at some time or another attempted to excuse yourselves because you have been unlucky? Not many, I am sure, because the most of such fellows do not attend conventions.

Don’t be guilty of comparisons that seek to excuse your lack of progress, and which seek to explain the reasons for the other fellow’s success, by crediting “Lady Luck” with results.

What constitutes success, anyway? If we were to all write down our definition of success we would have a variety of answers, I am sure. But they would agree in the main. We would agree that the man who has bettered his station in life, who enjoys the confidence of his friends and who knows how to enjoy life, is a success.
I would agree with that sort of a definition, and I think those are the very things we should strive for.

You don't have to leave the cheese making business to succeed, but if you can, while making a success of that, use it as a stepping stone to something better, you are surely justified in doing so.

Things come easier as a man succeeds. The man who starts out to build a fortune finds that the first thousand is hardest to get. Likewise, the man who strives for the respect and confidence of his friends finds that the job becomes easier as he goes along. Confidence begets confidence and you build as you go along. You can build a reputation for honesty and integrity or you can build the other kind.

Do these things and you will not have to worry about eventually getting your reward. Opportunities will be laid at your feet. They will come in various forms, but they will come.

The biggest one of all is right before each one of you now. That is the opportunity to do whatever you are doing in a way that leads to progress. Let each day bring improvement—improvement in efficiency and improvement in character. The others will follow. Thank you.

CURING CHEESE AT THE FACTORY. CURING ROOM CONSTRUCTION

Discussion Led by Steve Suidzinski, H. H. Solie and Others

PRESIDENT: Is Steve Suidzinski or H. H. Solie here? Is there anyone else here that has experience with curing room construction or cooling systems?

MR. WRENSCH: Ladies and Gentlemen: A couple of years ago I had a little trouble with wet cheese. My curing room was in the basement, and I had a hard time to get a good rind on cheese, so I put in a Kelvinator system, about 10 by 16, not a very big outfit, but it works very well in getting the cheese dry. Inside of two days there is a good rind on it. I have four inch walls consisting of rock cork which do not cost so much to install. Possibly you can do it yourself, if you investigate how it is done. The cost of the whole outfit is $1400. The curing room alone cost me about $300 and a one horse Kelvinator unit cost me about $1100. Of course, this was all put in by contract. I could have made a little saving if I had done some of this work myself. It dries the cheese off very rapidly and keeps the temperature about fifty and it holds your cheese as well as any other storage. If I had to put this unit in again I would install a little larger one and make the curing room about 16 by 25, but one always builds a little too small when he builds the first time. So the experience I have had with this worked out pretty well so far. If any of you want to ask any question on this maybe I can answer.

MR. MULLOY: Do you paraffin your own cheese?

MR. WRENSCH: Yes, I have a tank, I can paraffin if I want to.

SECRETARY SAMMIS: Mr. Wrensch, what time of the year do you find this outfit the most useful?

MR. WRENSCH: In hot weather is when it gives the best results, and it comes in pretty handy. This is quite an advantage when you have a slight gas on your cheese. You can keep down the gas from the start. By putting it in the cooler and drying it off you can save a good deal and you get quite an advantage that way. Of course, to get good milk in the intake will be the next step.