MY EXPERIENCE WITH THE CHEESE MOISTURE LAW

By H. W. SCHADE, Marshfield, Wis.

I do not suppose that my experience with the Moisture Test Law is any greater than that of my fellowmen, but as I will not be able to come to the Convention as I told you in my last letter, I will try to write you a few lines of my experience, and what my opinion is about the law.

Since I have resumed cheese making for the last few years, being disabled by accident and unable to follow my trade as machinist, and the Moisture Law has come into effect, I have often found it a hard matter to compete with some of the neighboring factories, or at least to satisfy the men I have been making cheese for, on account of the other factories paying more and getting a better yield out of the milk than I was. But there is just where the trouble lies. Most cheese dealers do not care anything for the quality of the cheese. They pay the same price to the factories that send a soft, soaking cheese, as they do for the cheese of good quality, and in this way I generally found myself from 5 to 15c behind in paying out for milk. And since I have run a factory for myself, I have found that I almost have to go the highest point of moisture to keep up with some of the factories in my locality. I have no moisture test of my own, but some time ago my cheese dealer sent me notice to make my cheese more firm, as it was running too high in moisture, and when the statements came out I found myself still behind some of the other factories. It must be on account of the moisture, as most of us make the same type of cheese.

Nevertheless, the Cheese Moisture Law is the best law ever passed, to the effect that it brings a better grade of cheese on the market than we had years ago. But I am in favor of having it more thoroughly enforced, and my idea of doing this would be to have the Food Commission send an inspector to every cheese dealer and cold storage plant to test every shipment of cheese delivered, for moisture, and every cheese maker should be compelled to stamp each and every cheese of his make with a number assigned to him by the Food Commissioner, of which there should be a record at Madison. In this way it would be very easy to trace every cheese to the maker for any serious fault found in his cheese at any time, and to trace such cheese often lost in shipping, and of which the maker has to stand the loss.

The Wisconsin cheese makers should work more unitedly, observe the laws more closely and deliver a better grade of cheese on the market. Wisconsin has the record of producing more cheese than any other state in the union. Let us all try to get the record of making the best cheese for exporting purposes. Do not exceed 38 per cent of moisture and by the end of 1919 we will have the record that the most cheese sent to foreign countries comes from Wisconsin. If we can deliver the quantity, surely we can make the quality. At the present
time and price of cheese, Wisconsin cheese makers cannot afford to place a poor grade of cheese on the market, and they never should, at any price. If we make a better grade of cheese, which may probably result in a little less of it, it will bring the market to a more stationary price and in time this will regulate the price on cheese factory supplies, and we will get more out of it than we do at the present time.

DISCUSSION

MR. DAMROW: As the law reads, is it just the manufacturer who is liable, or also the dealer where the cheese is found by the inspector, provided the dealer has paid for the cheese?

MR. ADEHROLD: As the law now reads it holds only the man responsible, who has in possession, who offers for sale or intends to sell. The law is imperfect and ought to be remedied in that respect.

MEMBER: Would every cheese maker have to have one?

CHAIRMAN: It is best to have one. They cost only $7.00.

MR. ADEHROLD: Anybody that knows how to make cheese and tries to make good cheese will obey the law. If one wishes to run near the moisture limit better get a tester and test every day's cheese.

MR. NOYES: How are you going to remedy it?

MR. ADEHROLD: I think the dealer ought to help out a lot. They are willing to do it if the cheese makers are willing to listen to them. I am telling them that frequently let your dealer tell you whether you have too much moisture in your cheese. The dealer is a much better judge of cheese than the average cheese maker because he sees so much of it. The inspectors will always have to keep an eye open for high moisture cheese and they will have to make some prosecutions if the attitude of the cheese makers is the same as it has been with some of them. It has come to me in a round-about way that they can afford to pay a fine as long as they can keep right on making high moisture cheese and so long as we have men like that in the business the inspectors will have some work to do on this moisture test.

MR. NOYES: I believe we had two or three old cheese makers in that section that try to get as close as they can. I believe that is where the old cheese makers have it on the young cheese makers. I think this ought to be remedied. I think through competition between factories and makers, one trying to pay a little more than the other man instead of getting together and figuring out the differences in their statements. They don't stop to figure differences in butter fat. They only figure how much they pay for their hundred weight of milk. I sincerely hope this law will be lived up to by every maker in Wisconsin. We have done more talking about this moisture test law than anyone in Wisconsin. I don't think the farmers are living up to this law. I think they ought to cooperate. The cheese-makers ought to see that they do this. I wish another thing was done, that the price of 100 pounds of milk was cut out altogether, not shown on the statement at all. We ought to pay for our milk by the
butter fat. That ought to settle it. Our present law does not work satisfactorily.

Mr. Weigle: I am really anxious to know what the facts are. I think one of the best laws that has been enacted since 1890 is the cheese moisture law.

Mr. Noyes: The thing to do is to get the manufacturers living up to it.

Member: Mr. Noyes was speaking about changing the custom of paying for milk by the 100 pounds. A great many pay by the pooling system.

Mr. Noyes: They are behind the times.

Mr. Aerhold: They are weak-kneed. They only value a pound of butter fat worth 10c up there.

Mr. Weigle: I just listened to a remark about farmers skimming butter fat. How about the cheese maker skimming his cheese?

Mr. Noyes: That is just what we are trying to stop. They are not honest. They must cooperate somehow and become honest.

Mr. Munch: Regarding the butter fat, as Mr. Noyes here says, we can figure very closely that every point of the test you can figure very nearly ¼ lb. of cheese. That may not work out in every factory but on the average I think you can figure pretty close to a quarter of a pound of cheese to every point of the test.

Chairman: I think a great many cheese makers try to cover up all the faults with the moisture test. If they don't get the yield that they should they lay it to the fact that they are trying to keep within the moisture law. For instance, Mr. Shaw one time worked for me. I criticized him for not getting yield but on making moisture tests the moisture was all right.

Member: Any good cheese maker ought to know that if he is taking care of his milk and keeps a sample. If the farmers are taking off too much he ought to know.

Mr. Noyes: What are you going to do about it when you do find out? The cheese maker does not dare to say much as his patrons might go to the next fellow.

Chairman: Keep to the subject.

Mr. Chapple: It seems to me that in all the talk the feeling is not right. If a farmer goes to work and waters his milk you call him a thief. If a cheese maker waters his cheese and gets by with it you call him smart. The feeling is not right.

Mr. Harbort: I am not a cheese maker when it comes right down to it. I am a butter man. I have found out that there were times when I was losing money making butter so I got a moisture tester. Since I got it I can regulate moisture to one point. I have experimented just about a month with it now, and have found lots of times there was not moisture enough, and sometimes too much. My idea is to get that down fine, and know where I am at, all the time. The only way is to test your cheese every day and know what you are doing. Every cheese maker ought to be able to tell just what he is doing every day but without a moisture test he cannot tell. You can
tell if you have too much. I would not be without a moisture tester.

Mr. Aderhold: A few cheese makers are going to get a moisture
testing outfit, probably many of you will. You want to be sure to get
your samples dry. Be sure your scale is sensitive enough. You will
need some instructions then, some experience, and then some more in-
structions. Be sure and get your samples dry. If you use a 10 gram
sample of cheese and if you have a pressure of steam of 50 to 60
pounds, it will take from five to six hours of drying to get rid of all
that moisture. Of course, if you have a higher pressure it will not
take that long. I have tested where I have had to keep it in for 24
hours because of the low steam pressure. You can find out if it is
dry or not by leaving the samples in the oven until you think they
are dry, keeping track of the weights and then put them back in the
oven and see if they become lighter. If they do, the moisture has not
been driven out. In that way you can find out with a given steam
pressure the moisture of your cheese. If you get a moisture testing out-
fit I suggest you get an oven big enough so you can put in six samples
at one time. You save a little time and the extra size of the oven as
far as the cost is concerned does not amount to anything.

BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS IN WISCONSIN AND ITS RE-
LATION TO THE CHEESE INDUSTRY

By Dr. O. H. Eliason, State Veterinarian.

Mr. President and Gentlemen: This is my first attempt to speak
before an audience after an attack of the flu. I have been very much
interested in your discussion. I am also very well satisfied with the
attitude you folks are taking towards a number of things. I am re-
mineded somewhat of a man who was driving along a road with a
lumber wagon. I got on and rode with him and our conversation
turned to automobiles and road hogs. He says there is only one law
that is necessary and that is that everybody ought to be decent while
they are on the road. Now, when we simmer all this down, if every-
body would be decent we would not need very many laws and we
don't need laws for the decent fellows. After all laws are only the
voice of the people who say that so and so shall be done. There may
be a certain number of people that want to do a certain thing.
Sometimes they may be wrong; other times they are right. In the
general shakeup, we find that most laws are for the common good.
There is once in a while one which does not work for the common
good and we have machinery to put it out of business.

I am supposed to talk to you about the relation bovine tubercu-
losis has to your cheese making. I was very much interested in the
texts of some of the speakers that have preceded me, particularly
Prof. Humphrey, when he says that all of you ought to be interested