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## ACROSS THE ISLAND

### Dairy Situation Poses Problem

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Provincial - Farm Editor

I TALKED this week to Lincoln Dewar who has recently been chosen to head the Dairy Farmers of Canada's national executive committee, that is charged with the task of expanding the use of dairy products across the country. It's a big task but one that's necessary if the dairy industry is to survive.

The first job is to convince the dairymen they should contribute more to the promotion of their own industry. The one-quarter of one per cent of the yearly milk and cream receipts is asked from each producer, and this, Mr. Dewar tells me, will amount to approximately twice as much as what was contributed in the "June set-aside" which was one cent for each pound of butter fat sold in that month.

STRANGELY ENOUGH Lincoln feels that the biggest part of the job is to convince the dairyman his contribution is needed. I don't think he was referring so much to producers here, because they achieved virtually 100 per cent of the goal in the June set-aside effort, but with the exception of Alberta, other provinces fell far short of perfection.

If the full potential is realized in the present effort, it will make available \$1,334,945 for promotion purposes, a DFC release explains. The other parts of the job are to establish better public relations - and they are terribly bad in many cases - and to promote consumer research and seek new ways and means of making manufactured or processed dairy products available in forms the housewife will buy for her family.

### Islanders Use More Butter

I HAVEN'T the exact figure but Islanders use an average of approximately 30 pounds of butter a year. If everyone else did the same there would be no butter surplus, Mr. Dewar assured me. The national average consumption is about 17 pounds per person. "Our people are more butter conscious because they eat more bread" and use more butter as a spread. Many people in urban centres "only make a pass at bread," Mr. Dewar contends. Of course the general use of margarine in other provinces contributes to the smaller butter consumption.

I know many dairymen oppose the idea of having anything taken off their cream or milk cheques - deductions are made at dairy plants and plant operators co-operate in this way. One letter I saw said flatly "you have nothing to do with our cream" and ordered that no deduction be made. The man was entirely correct so far as he went, but unless dairymen in general realize they are up against tremendous competition from other spreads and drinks, their business will dwindle far more rapidly in future than it has in the past.

## Competitors Spend Millions

THE MARGARINE people spend huge sums to promote their product. The soft drink people spend millions to sell a product, most of which cannot compare as a beverage with milk, if it is displayed and sold in its most tasty, appetizing form. I have seen a great improvement in the type of milk dispensers that some of our better restaurants and motels are using now. They make you feel like asking for milk, and it is deliciously palatable.

But the milk that is served almost lukewarm, as it often is, can have little appeal for the consumer, even for those who normally drink the product.

One type of soft drink expends \$25 million annually on promoting its products, I am told. And did you ever notice the most attractive dispensers for those products even in small roadside diners? Those people really work at promoting their product. It's my humble opinion that dairymen have to do the same, or continue to watch surpluses mount and their industry decline.

## One-fifth Of Total Farm Income

WHY AM I interested in the dairy dollar? The answer is simple. I live on the Island, which means I have to earn my living here. The basic economy here is agricultural which means that unless the farmer is reasonably prosperous, I'm not going to be either. Milk and other dairy products make up 20.5 per cent of the total farm income here. That's why I'm interested.

I want to add one more thought. The total receipts from the June set-aside in 1960 were only \$381,000. You can see the tremendous expansion necessary if the amount is to hit the desired \$1,334,945. Mr. Dewar and associates have a big job on their hands.

## Long Walk When Trains Were Stuck

REACTIONS CONTINUE to come in to the column on snow blocked rail lines in 1923. One from Norman MacDonald, Summerside is so interesting I am going to tell you about it. I hope he doesn't mind because it was enclosed merely as an incidental reference, in a letter he wrote me in reply to a question about an entirely different matter. Here are his comments:

"I was reading your column, the one dealing with the large snowfall in the spring of 1923, and it certainly brought back old memories. I was at Prince of Wales College that spring, and when Easter came, the Island trains were all stuck, and it began to look like I would have to stay in Charlottetown over the holidays; my home was in Murray River then.

"A chap named Brehaut, he was from Murray Harbour, and I think his first name was Roy, proposed that we walk home and I agreed. We reached Vernon the first night, and stayed at a rooming house in the village, then walked to our homes the following morning. We followed the railway tracks all the way, and one wag wanted to know if we went around the Loop, as the train used to do in those days with the result you passed

Lake Verde station twice. The two-day hike amounted to some 40 odd miles”, Mr. MacDonald believes.

Dougald MacKinnon, a long time member of the legislature and cabinet minister of former years, recalls that they cut the trees in the woods as close to the snow as they could that year, and the snow had settled considerably even before they could get into the woods, but next year they got almost enough firewood by cutting the lengthy stumps that were left the previous year, when the snow had all melted away.

### Tore “Tick” Apart To Feed Cows

FREEMAN LESLIE, St. Peter’s, a most interesting man whom I hope to tell you about soon, recalls that heavy snow year of 1905, when people walking between Charlottetown and Souris were a common sight.

Hay was brought in from Quebec to Souris that year in ice breakers - Tom Ledwell, St. Peter’s also told me about this. - and it was hauled from the ice off Souris where the ship dumped it. But Mr. Leslie recalls one man arriving with a horse and sleigh, only to be told there was none left. The hay was all gone.

“What in the world am I going to do with my cows?” he asked the people on the boat. “I just tore apart my last straw and chaff tick (an old word for mattress) and fed it to my cows before I left home,” he related sadly.

### Hospitals Really Need Money

THE HOSPITAL people are right when they say they still need your support, that the hospital insurance plan doesn’t meet all of their needs. While doing stories for these papers recently, I met the top people from both hospitals here, and they put at my disposal their books, records or any other information I desired. So I got the complete picture. I got the same completely frank co-operation from the top people in the Hospital services commission so that I had access to all of the facts. And that need, of course applies to all of the Island’s hospitals, not merely to those in Charlottetown.