

The Guardian, Charlottetown, Fri., June 23, 1961

ACROSS THE ISLAND

Solids In Milk Standard Seen

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OUR DAIRYMEN are concerned these days about a new method of measuring the value of milk. Milk is paid for now on butter fat content. The new idea is for a "solids, not fat" test to determine the food value and regulate the price it will bring the producer.

In the past two weeks I've heard our Guernsey, Holstein and Ayrshire breeders discuss the idea seriously. Other breed associations are also thinking about it.

Pushing the idea most, I think, are the Holstein breeders for they would have the most to gain. They get the biggest volume of milk and the lowest test on a butter fat basis. The relation of non-fat solids to butter fat favors them more than any other breed.

There's still a lot to be learned about properly measuring the non-fat solids of milk but one authority, cited by the Dairy Farmers of Canada, says that the non-fat solids in a pound of 3.5 percent milk, per pound of fat is 2.42 pounds, while there are only 1.81 pounds of non-fat solids per pound of fat in milk testing 5 percent butter fat

There was a time when the Holsteins were laughed at and twitted for their low test. Some of the other breeders suggested the best part about them was that the owner didn't have to wash the milk pail because Holstein milk was water anyway, and did not stain the utensil.

OF COURSE it was a gross exaggeration but their milk was low in butter fat content. I don't know how low a test can go, but I've heard of it going to a little more than 2 percent.

Through the years, though, good Holstein herds have built up their test and the average here on P.E.I., for the last period for which I have records, was 3.7 percent. Even at that they were well behind other breeds in fat content and right now some of them are probably happy about it.

Stewart Eagles, senior livestock fieldman, Canada department of agriculture, gave me figures yesterday on five breeds in this province, compiled on record of performance tests in the 305-day division for the period ending March 31, 1961.

FROM 309 Ayrshires tested the average was 9.221 pounds milk, 384 pounds fat, test 4.2 percent. From 84 Guernseys the average was 7,843 pounds milk, 398 fat, test 5.07. Holsteins produced 10,943 milk, 413 fat, 3.7 test on 368 records. Jerseys produced 7,408 pounds milk, 416 fat, test 5.6 on 117 animals tested and Shorthorns averaged 6,240 milk, 253 fat on 42 records for a test of 4.05.

To maintain complete accuracy Mr. Eagles wanted me to say the Ayrshires tested averaged 4 years, 362 days; the Guernseys 5 years, 228 days; the Holsteins 4 years, 309 days and the Jerseys 5 years, 118 days. I haven't the age of the Shorthorns.

SOME MEDICAL research has damned dairy fats and in many cases it has thrown suspicion on practically all dairy products. The most damning suggestion, I think, is that

there is a relation between the use of dairy fats and the incidence of heart disease, or ailments related to the heart and the circulatory system.

I did some reading on it recently and found that some researchers disagree. A Chicago man, Dr. John J. Miller, director of nutritional research of Medical Dairy Specialties, Inc., had some interesting findings. Noting that poor circulation, or lack of circulation, hardening or thickening of the arteries is the arch-villain in modern times, he said:-

‘THICKENING OF the arteries is a modern disease, especially of the last 25 years, whereas whole milk has been a healthful, basic dietary food for more than 2,000 years.’

His findings go into more detail, and I'll come back to them in another column when I have an opportunity, but there seems to be a great deal of simple, homely truth in that general statement that makes some of the modern views on whole milk and its alleged damages difficult to justify.

THE MAIN steelwork on the new Hillsboro bridge should be completed in a few days time. It recalls several stories I've heard recently about the old bridge and the Southport-Charlottetown ferry that carried people across the river before the bridge was built.

W.A. MacLean, Clyde River has a stumping hook made from a piece of the old bridge steel back around 1904 or 1905 when it was being built. The hook was made for C.D. MacLean, Mr. MacLean's father, by Bruce Stewart who founded the company that carried his name for more than fifty years.

Mr. MacLean was having trouble getting a hook strong enough to stand the tremendous pull which was exerted by the old capstan stumping machine. Mr. Stewart jumped on a bicycle, got an odd bit of the bridge steel and fashioned the hook which has lasted through the years and soon will be a valuable souvenir.

It could be a museum piece when our Fathers of Confederation building is erected, and we finally get the provincial museum which has been demanded for years.

I'M REMINDED, too, that Dr. Hammond Kelly, director of veterinary services for the province, has a pass that his grandfather, Hammond Kelly, used on the old Southport ferry. The piece of cardboard entitled the holder to cross the river but there was one reservation. "No manure" was allowed on market days which were Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Mr. MacLean also brought me an old pamphlet advertising Mayor Todd, an outstanding standard bred stallion that Hammond Kelly owned back in 1913. The big horse - he weighed 1100 pounds - had a mile in 2.18 and a half in 1.08 as a 4-year old which was good time in those years

A paternal half-brother, Bob Douglas, had a mile in 2.04 1-4 which was really fast. Mayor Todd's dam, Alclayetta had a record of 2.36 1-4 which gives an idea of the times some of the good horses were making in those years.

One of the best known standard bred stallions of his time, Mayor Todd is still talked of when veteran horsemen meet.