

Wednesday, September 3, 1941

Subject: "BETTER CREAM ON THE FARM." Information from the Bureau of Dairy Industry of the Department of Agriculture.

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Plenty of good milk, cream, and butter! These are stepping stones to good health.....and enjoyment. They're a convenience in cooking and a pleasure in eating. Almost any homemaker will tell you her hardest food problem is over when she has plenty of milk, cream, and butter to serve and cook with. No wonder! These "three musketeers of the milky way" have what it takes!

Today we're going to talk about cream about how to have better cream on the farm. It takes good cream, you know, to make good butter - and whether we use the cream at home or sell it, it ought to be good. Poor quality cream is a waste of time, feed, and labor.

Of course, in talking about care of cream, we also talk about care of milk - because we won't separate them just yet. Care of milk and cream begins with the cow and milker and barn. All should be spic and span. Clean, healthy cows should be milked in a clean place. The milker should wear clean clothes, and milk with clean, dry hands. It's important to use a bucket with a small-mouth or hooded top to help keep out dust and dirt.

Have a barn or cowshed that is clean, well-lighted, and well-ventilated with pure fresh air. Keep it well-bedded with clean straw - especially in winter when the cows stay in it more. As soon as it is drawn from the cow, take the milk from the barn and cool it. Cool it as quickly and thoroughly as possible. Try to cool it to 50°F or less and then keep it there. Do this whether you plan to market your cream, or make butter from it, or....make a big freezer of ice cream. Of course if you are going to separate the milk at once it need not be

cooled, but the cream should be cooled so it comes from the separator.

Some people pour milk into a shallow pan to cool - and let it set in a cold place for about 36 hours for the cream to rise. Setting it in cold water for at least awhile is a good idea - because water cools it a lot faster than air. Somebody has said it cools about 18 times faster than air, but I'm not sure whether that's true or not. Of course, ice water is better than ordinary cold water but you may not have ice. If you don't, be sure to change the water several times a day and oftener at the beginning. Stir the water every little while, say every ten minutes at first. And stir thoroughly so as to keep an even temperature.

An even better way to cool milk than in a shallow-pan is in a "shot-gun" can. (Shallow-pan shot-gun can - makes a rhyme, doesn't it?) Well, milk cools quicker in a shot-gun can because the can is tall and slender and the coldness can reach all parts of the milk faster and more at the same time. You can cover it up and set it deep in the water. Shot-gun cans help cream rise faster and more completely, so you can skim it before it loses its fresh, sweet flavor.

Some farm folks have regular cooling tanks, or barrels for milk and cream. It's true these coolers don't grow on trees, but they are easy to make and can save a lot of time and sour milk trouble in the long run. County Extension agents and Farm Security supervisors are always glad to tell people how to make them.

Keep cream in cold water in winter as well as in summer but, in winter, don't let it freeze. Frozen cream develops a bad, bitter flavor, and the bitterness carries over into butter. Also butter made from frozen cream is likely to be mealy or greasy. So when it gets cold this winter, remember to first cool cream in cold water and then keep it cold in a well-ventilated place - and not some place where it will freeze.

Never mix warm cream with cool cream, or the other way around. It will sour faster. Always chill warm cream before you add it to the other, and then stir them well together with a clean stirrer. Stirring will help keep out lumps too.

Don't let cream stand uncovered. A good idea is to put a fine screen, or clean cheese cloth over it. These will keep out dust and flies and still let the air circulate through it.

We might say "cleanliness is next to coolness" in care of cream not only at milking time but in handling containers and utensils later. All pans, buckets, and other equipment should be washed immediately after using. First, we should rinse them in lukewarm water and then scrub them with a brush in warm or hot water. Rinsing them in hot water first would "cook" the milk on them. A little common soda makes a better washing powder than ordinary soap or soap powders because soap suds usually leave a soapy film. Then rinse everything with clean, warm water and, last of all, sterilize them - with live steam if possible. But be sure you really sterilize. If you don't have steam use boiling water, really boiling.

Don't use milk or cream vessels that have cracks and crevices in them. All seams should be smooth and even and no rusty spots or rough sides. Rounded sides are better than squared ones, too.

When you've finished washing and sterilizing, put things in a clean place and let them dry and sun. Don't dry them yourself on a dish rag or tea towel. Invert them and let them dry themselves. The less you touch them with anything the better. And incidentally, be sure no one at your house ever uses milk or cream utensils for anything but milk or cream. A few people have been known to grab up a milk bucket or cream pan and carry gasoline or coal oil in it. Result was that they could never use the container again for milk or cream because the odor never quite left and the milk or cream would take it up.

Speaking of odors, if you are hauling your cream to market, be careful what else you are hauling. Coal oil, gasoline, chickens, grain, or something else can easily spoil the flavor of a lot of good cream. When you're taking cream to town, always cover it to protect it from dirt and dust - and in summer, to protect it from

heat. If the weather is warm, and you want to protect it, cover the can with a wet burlap sack or wet blanket. 'Might set the cream can in a shallow pan, and let the burlap sack or cloth reach down into the pan. That way the cloth would keep drawing the water up as it evaporated or dried out. You can do this if you are leaving the can at the side of the road for someone to pick up. But try to find a shady spot as well.

Another thing - if you're selling extra cream these days, be sure to sell it often. It's better to sell only a little at a time than keep it too long. Good fresh cream is what your buyer wants and what will make good butter. Dairy specialists say at least 3 times a week in summer and twice a week in winter are necessary.

If you would like to have a leaflet or some printed information about taking care of milk and cream, you can write to the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Or you can ask your County Agent or Farm Security supervisor for them. They will help you with "separator" problems too, if you use a cream separator.

Here's to better cream on the farm!

