

COLLECTION

Collection at present remains the responsibility of the vending interests, except to the extent that in Dunedin and Wellington the Dairy Farmers' Supply Association organizes part of the total quantity required.

The Commission points out that, whilst zoning has been introduced in the distribution of milk, little or no effective attempt has been made to control the zoning of collection of milk. This has led to considerable and wasteful overlapping, and the Commission recommends that collection be the responsibility of the Dairy Farmers' Supply Association so that costs may be reduced to a minimum. This would ensure that the full responsibility for the quality of milk until it reaches the vendors' dairy shall be accepted by one responsible body—namely, the Dairy Farmers' Supply Association. This body will then be in a position to impose proper penalties on any of its members who fail to provide the standard desired.

TREATMENT OF MILK

The Commission is convinced from the evidence placed before it that pasteurization of all milk distributed is desirable as a national policy. While the medical authorities in New Zealand lack complete information on the extent of milk-borne diseases, there is adequate evidence available from both within and outside New Zealand to indicate that the incidence of such diseases is by no means negligible. The Commission is satisfied that milk is not harmed in its quality by pasteurization, and that pasteurization is the only means of ensuring that the milk is perfectly safe for human consumption. The Commission has indicated that considerable reorganization of existing plants is essential, and that changes in organization should be introduced with all reasonable care in order to avoid dislocation of services and harsh treatment of existing interests. This is not intended to divert or impede in any way the introduction of the improvements necessary to achieve the desired objective.

The Commission recommends that as soon as possible the Central Authority should see that producer-vendors have their herds T.B. tested and brought up to approved or "accredited" standards and that the milk be distributed in sealed containers. All other vendors should be required to purchase their milk from treating-houses and to distribute it in sealed containers. Such action will introduce maximum economies both in treatment and in distribution, and is certainly in the best interests of public health. There will undoubtedly be a small section of the public which will continue to demand the distribution of raw milk. This demand may adequately be met by the producer-vendors, but, if not, then the Central Authority (through the local Milk Council or Supply Association) should investigate the circumstances and take the necessary action. Such action must, however, fully accord with the standards laid down for producer-vendors—*i.e.*, the source of the raw milk being distributed must be from T.B. tested herds of "accredited" standards.

Whilst much that has appeared in the Commission's report is indicative of an unsatisfactory state in many of the pasteurizing units, this is no argument whatever against the value of pasteurization, and the Commission's recommendations regarding the necessity for pasteurization of all milk are in no wise upset by their comments on the inefficiency of some of the present treating-houses. Such a state does, however, lend added emphasis to the recommendations set out by the Commission regarding the control of all processing-plants and the appointment of fully qualified and fully-trained working managers.

The necessity for improving the standard of milk and for seeing that price to producers is to some extent linked with the quality of the milk they supply requires provision of testing-facilities either by the Dairy Farmers' Co-operative Milk Supply Association or by the treating-houses in co-operation with the Milk Council. It is a recommendation of the Commission that all milk should be sampled for quality daily, and tested for butterfat content on a composite ten-day sample.

DISTRIBUTION

The Commission's recommendations regarding distribution deal mainly with the organization necessary to ensure maintenance of the high standard of the milk until it reaches the consumer and the securing of maximum economy in costs of distribution.

The distributing of loose milk, either pasteurized or raw, is condemned by the Commission, and a point to which attention should be drawn concerns Regulation 42, section 6 (a), of the Sale of Food and Drugs Act, which defines pasteurized milk as

"Pasteurized milk shall be milk which has been retained at a temperature of not less than 145° F. for at least thirty minutes, and immediately cooled to a temperature of not more than 55° F. and protected from recontamination. The milk shall not be so heated more than once and shall not be otherwise treated by heat. It shall not contain any living coliform bacillus in one-tenth of a cubic centimetre."

In the opinion of the Commission this regulation should be so construed as to require all pasteurized milk to be bottled, and not left open to recontamination during the process of distribution. The Commission is satisfied that a considerable danger exists in distributing milk by the can-and-dipper method, and that such milk may be, and in many cases has been, infected with diseases of human origin. The work of the producer in producing milk of high standard can be completely negated if the milk is distributed loose and infected with disease during distribution.

In the interests of economy the Commission has recommended that consumers should pay for the bottles in which the milk is distributed, so as to avoid unnecessary loss to the treating firm. Practically no objection has been raised to this suggestion by consumers' witnesses or consumers' representatives at any of the Commission's hearings.

In order to avoid accountancy expenses of recording purchases of each consumer and collection of accounts by roundsmen, the Commission recommends the introduction of payment by means of the token system as in Wellington. Supervision of this would be best effected through the local Milk Council.

Other means of rationalizing distribution are also discussed, including the continuance of zoning, front-gate delivery, and so on.

There are many of the Commission's recommendations which will require further consideration as to detail by the Central Authority. Such a course is unavoidable in view of the magnitude of the problems confronting the Commission and the fact that these changes must be adapted in one or more particulars to the local conditions prevailing in each centre.