

Analytical work has increased during the season because of the grading of processed cheese and milk-powder products. Considerable extension to the laboratory facilities at Auckland and an increase in the technical staff have been necessary as a result of the analysis and grading of milk-powder products.

Though the grading and some of the testing have been done at Wellington and New Plymouth for the factories shipping through these ports, the more detailed analytical work has been done at the Wallaceville Laboratory. However, provision has been made for additional testing accommodation at the Wellington stores, and this port should be able to undertake all the analytical work next season. It is also intended to provide equipment at New Plymouth for essential analysis and grading to be done there.

*Finish and Packing of Butter and Cheese.*—The finish and appearance of the bulk of the butter and cheese exported have been mainly satisfactory. These are watched closely by the grading staff, and any defects are promptly brought to the attention of the offending factory.

There is a tendency for the " Fernleaf " brand on the surface of the butter to become defaced, which is partly caused by the carton container. However, a little more care on the part of the factory operator would make for improvement.

The finish of the cheese has generally been of a good standard ; some cases of defective lips and cracked crowns and rinds have been noted, but in the main the cheese have been clean and free from mould.

*Butter and Cheese Packages.*—Although a small quantity of butter from the South Island and Gisborne factories is still packed in the sub-standard white-pine box, the fibre-board container is now universally used in other districts. This container is proving satisfactory, and very little complaint can be found with this box when it is made from suitable material.

Experience has shown the necessity for a high wet-bursting strength factor, and recently the specifications covering the strength of the board used in the manufacture of containers have been changed to give higher standards. The question of the colour of the material and the tape used for binding was also considered with a view to avoiding the variations in colour which exist to-day.

The new specifications and the arrangement whereby all board must be fully laboratory tested not only for strength but also for odour and taint before receiving approval for its use in the fabrication of butter-boxes should ensure butter being packed in the best container of this type obtainable.

The space allotted in the design of the impressed brand for the brand and registered number of the factory is insufficient for a long name ; consequently some brands and numbers are placed on cartons in an irregular manner, which, besides making them unsightly, causes them to be unreadable.

There does not appear to be any reason why the impressed design could not be slightly enlarged to allow sufficient space for brands and numbers, thereby leading to neater and more legible branding.

The *Pinus radiata* crate makes quite a serviceable container for cheese, provided it is made of sound timber free from knots and finally wired and stapled in the prescribed manner.

In the South Island some beech timber is still used for cheese-crates, but *Pinus radiata* is gradually replacing it, particularly in Canterbury and Otago.

*Grading-store Facilities.*—The facilities for the grading of produce are mainly in line with requirements and are of a good standard. Cool-store authorities are usually co-operative to the extent of providing suitable accommodation and also effecting any additions or improvements necessary.

*Storage Conditions.*—The storage of butter at the various stores usually receives proper care and attention. The question of butter temperatures has caused some concern at Auckland, where butter was arriving at the wharf high in temperature and delivery was consequently refused by ships' officers. The matter was taken up with the freezing