

before arriving at its final determination. In this draft the definition of "preservative" would, it is believed, include bicarbonate of soda, which is so frequently utilized for the partial neutralization of acidity in cream for the manufacture of butter. A protest in this connection from the Department was cabled to the High Commissioner for presentation to the Ministry of Health, and a satisfactory reply has been received to the effect that it is not intended to debar this neutralizing agent. At the time of writing the final decision has not been received.

DAIRY-PRODUCE EXPORT CONTROL.

The Dairy-produce Export Control Act, passed in August, 1923, set up a control Board which has since duly functioned. During the year a delegation of three of the Board members, consisting of Messrs. Grounds (Chairman), Motion, and Thacker, visited the United Kingdom, Denmark, Canada, the United States of America, and Australia. The delegation furnished a comprehensive report to the Board, which has since decided to adopt complete control so far as its functions may be operative, as provided by the Act. It has been decided by the Board that such control shall commence in August, 1926. The policy of the Board has been outlined by the Board's Chairman to meetings of dairy-farmers in numerous districts, and further meetings are to follow. It would appear that the policy outlined includes factors which are likely to be far-reaching in their effect, and it is believed that some are likely to provide a great stimulus towards the improvement in quality in New Zealand butter and cheese. This should prove to be in the direct interest of milk-producers.

The Board has already done useful work in a number of directions. Reductions in shipping freights and insurance premiums have been secured.

A national brand is now under consideration by the Board—the suggestion being that this shall not be allowed on butter or cheese scoring below first grade. This suggestion includes the instituting of a higher class than first grade for our higher-scoring qualities. There is also the suggestion of a modification of the system of payment to dairy factories, which will attach additional importance to the grading at this end. If these suggestions become operative in practice, the position which will obtain, and the increase in volume of the Dominion's exports, will necessitate the considering of adding to the inspection staff of this Division in the United Kingdom. Mr. Wright, Inspector of Dairy Products in London, has already too much to look after in this connection.

DAIRY LABORATORY AND EXPERIMENTAL FACTORY.

The suggested erection of a dairy laboratory has been discussed from time to time over a protracted period of many years. The need for such an institution has been continuously growing more urgent as our production of dairy-products increased in such enormous quantities as has been experienced during the last decade. That the Government have approved of the erection of these buildings, and the undertaking of the work for which they are intended is appreciated in all dairy districts. Plans are in course of preparation, and it is understood that the erection of the buildings is to be proceeded with at an early date.

Very great progress has been made in the manufacture of New Zealand dairy-products in the past. A number of factors have contributed to this end, and amongst these should be mentioned the manufacture of improved plant for dairy factories. The art of manufacturing butter and cheese has been studied by those concerned, and the position to-day is that our dairy-products probably represent a greater uniformity than do similar products from any other country working under comparable conditions.

The work of the laboratory and factory will probably, in the first instance, be largely devoted towards the solving of difficulties at present confronting the makers of butter and cheese. There is considerable work awaiting in this connection, and, as such work will be in the direction of increasing the returns to the dairying community, it may be considered as of more immediate importance.

The erection of the miniature factory for the manufacture of butter and cheese was considered essential so that the investigators might see their experiments carried out under satisfactory conditions of control. It is accepted that the best method of attacking our problems is that there should be collaboration between the bacteriologist, chemist, and a trained manufacturer of the product which is the subject of investigation.

CERTIFICATE-OF-RECORD TESTING OF PUREBRED DAIRY COWS.

The financial year under review has shown a slight decrease in the number of entries for certificate-of-record testing. The highest number of cows on this test for any one month during the past season was 1,093, which was for the month of November, 1924. This compares with 1,185 for November, 1923, the highest month for the 1923-24 season. The number of cows per breeder was 3.45, as against 3.56 for the previous year. From the 1st April, 1925, the fee for the first cow to be entered on each farm has, with the sanction of the Hon. Minister, been reduced from ten guineas to eight guineas. It is expected that this may have a favourable influence on the number of entries for the approaching season.

ASSOCIATION TESTING OF ORDINARY HERD COWS.

For the season 1923-24 some 151,214 cows were tested under this system. Figures for the 1924-25 season are as yet incomplete, but statistics collected to date show that there is likely to be a marked increase in all branches of the work. Officers of the Division have again carried out a proportion of the testing-work, and returns for thirty-five associations, including 13,748 cows, have been figured in the Division's head office. The total figures for cows tested and returns figured by Dairy Division officers are sixty-two associations, comprising 29,736 cows.