

is to ensure that spring-made cheese will be sufficiently mature when it arrives in England, because it has to be shipped at an earlier age than cheese made later in the season.

Another regulation requires that cheese shall be held in grading-stores at the following temperatures within the specified periods :—

					Minimum.	Maximum.
(a)	1st August–30th November	..	..	..	52° F.	54° F.
(b)	1st December–28th February	..	..	..	47° F.	49° F.
(c)	1st March–31st July	..	..	..	42° F.	44° F.

The Board arranges to ship the cheese at the same respective temperatures.

Certain difficulties have been experienced in maintaining these temperatures in grading-stores and on ships. Cheese made in the autumn months may still be in store in September, and it becomes difficult to keep the old and new lots in separate chambers at different temperatures. Owing to the wide variation in temperatures in the holds of some ships, a margin of safety should be provided to avoid the possibility of overheating cheese in any part of the hold. In the past numerous claims have had to be met for cheese damaged through being transported at temperatures over 50° F. Further, little advantage is at present gained from the higher temperatures in grading-stores till cheese stocks start to accumulate about early November, since up till about this time cheese is shipped very soon after arrival in the grading-stores.

The Commission recommends that, in order to ensure that cheese will arrive in the United Kingdom uniform in flavour throughout the year, spring-made cheese should be held on the factory shelves for at least one month, and that thereafter the period of holding should be progressively reduced first to three weeks and later to two weeks; and that cheese should be held in grading-store for at least one month thereafter at a temperature not exceeding 44° F., and should be transported at a temperature not exceeding 44° F.

#### 219. Transport of Dairy-produce from Factories to Grading-stores :

It is reported that in warm weather it is not unusual for produce to arrive at grading ports in a state too heated for immediate grading. The Railway Department cannot always supply the correct type of wagons for the transport of butter and cheese. Produce is frequently conveyed by motor-truck, and both boxes of butter and crates of cheese are sometimes inadequately protected from the sun, or are covered by a tarpaulin which is lashed to the load. It should, in our opinion, be obligatory upon the owners of motor-trucks to provide a hooped or ridge-pole type of cover which would permit of an air space and at the same time prevent the produce from becoming heated. These are matters which the Dairy-produce Control Board should take up with the Railway Board and dairy companies.

#### 220. Grading of New Zealand Dairy-produce :

All witnesses made very complimentary references to the present system of grading New Zealand dairy-produce. Several, however, offered constructive criticism. When first introduced, the practice of grading was an instructional service. This still remains an important aspect of its function, since the grader sets the standard of quality which the manufacturer must aim at. The principle of grading is now so universally accepted that the grade is the basis of commercial transactions, but at the same time this practice has given rise to misconception regarding the relation of grade to price and to the degree of accuracy possible in determining shortly after the manufacture of produce, particularly cheese, what its quality will be after a period of storage. In the case of butter, the price obtained corresponds with the grade, and quality reports from inspectors and merchants generally agree with the grade. The grading of cheese, however, presents a greater difficulty. Some witnesses expressed the view that cheese should be at least a month old before it is graded, or alternatively that the grading should be carried out in England. These witnesses argued that cheese changes so much in the process of maturing that the grade awarded to cheese when from two to three weeks old frequently does not agree with the opinions on its quality received from the United Kingdom. It has been shown, however, that there is general agreement between the grade of the immature cheese and that of the product on arrival overseas. Moreover, many dairy factories have insufficient space in their curing-rooms to accommodate a minimum of one month's make of cheese at the period of peak production.

Some witnesses, whilst agreeing with the principle that the grading of cheese should be done in the United Kingdom, considered that the benefits would not warrant the cost, and others considered it impracticable because it would prevent the rapid distribution of cheese to the trade. The problem is not one of supreme importance, and no definite conclusions can be arrived at without a careful survey on the spot of the actual marketing situation.

In regard to standards of grading, all witnesses are agreed that the present first-grade standard should be retained and that the benefit of doubt should be refused to borderline cases. Some witnesses stressed the desirability of not stamping the grade mark on cheese-crates, thereby enabling cheese to be sold in Britain on its merits, but this contention was discounted by others who stated that, as much cheese was sold on grade only, irregular practices would develop if the grade were not stamped on the crate. The latter view is supported by the Commission.

Much attention has been devoted to the number of grades of butter and cheese. All witnesses are agreed that butter should be graded into Finest, First, and Second, but many suggest that there should be only two grades of cheese—viz., First and Second. These witnesses state that, as the difference in quality between finest and the higher-scoring lots of first grade is not sufficient to warrant a difference in price, marketing difficulties arise. They recommend the raising of the lower limit of first grade by, say, 1 point, thereby classifying all cheese grading 92 points or over as “first grade,”