

THE CLEANING OF FARM DAIRY APPARATUS*

THE method of cleaning dairy apparatus on some farms leaves much to be desired and is fatal to the production of clean milk with good keeping qualities. While a bucket or milk can may appear bright and clean to the naked eye, such a utensil may be teeming with bacteria which will badly contaminate the most carefully produced milk that may come into contact with it. Methodical methods of washing and sterilizing are essential, and take very little longer than slipshod ways of doing the work.

The following procedure should be followed :—

(1) Immediately after use and before the milk has had a chance to dry, all apparatus should be rinsed in cold or lukewarm water. If placed into hot water immediately, the milk solids will be baked on to the tinware. If milky articles are allowed to dry, they are much more difficult to clean.

(2) Scrub in water as hot as the hand can stand, using a stiff scrubbing brush and either washing soda or a dairy cleaning powder. A brush is more effective than a cloth and easier to keep clean. Soap should not be used ; it does not dissolve milk constituents, and is liable to leave a fatty film over the utensil in which harmful germs may grow.

(3) Rinse in clean hot water to remove the dirty soda water.

(4) *Sterilize*.—The word “sterile” as used in bacteriology, means the complete absence of germ life. As used in the dairy industry, it refers to the killing of the majority of organisms present. If live steam can be used and a temperature of 180 degrees Fahrenheit maintained for 45 minutes, most of the harmful organisms will be destroyed. This is easily done in a steaming cabinet constructed of wood lined with galvanized iron. Another form of cabinet is a square galvanized-iron tank with a suitable door. A more permanent cabinet can be made of concrete. A concrete cabinet, however, requires more steam to maintain the necessary temperature. In addition to the cabinet, which can be constructed by the farm handyman, a boiler is essential, and there are several on the market suitable for the purpose. Not only will the boiler give the necessary steam for the cabinet, but it will also supply plenty of hot water for cleaning operations.

Failing a steaming cabinet and boiler, the next best thing is to boil the utensils for a few minutes. The water must be boiling. It is useless to rinse the articles with hot water. To put a lot of milk cans, milk buckets, &c.,

* By L. A. Moseley, Lecturer in Dairying, Grootfontein School of Agriculture in *Farming in South Africa*, Vol. XIII., No. 149, August, 1938.

into boiling water, and to boil them, is not an easy matter, and in the long run the farmer will find a cabinet and boiler to be not only more effective but also more economical.

(5) After sterilizing, the articles should be either left in the cabinet until required or placed inverted on a rack in a clean atmosphere to drain and dry. On no account should they be wiped with a cloth. If they are really hot after sterilizing, they will soon dry. Wiping with a cloth only contaminates them again.