

STATUS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE FLORIDA QUALITY MILK COUNCIL

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During the past year several individuals representing various segments of the dairy industry here in Florida have discussed with interest some of the recent programs and developments in the areas of quality milk production, abnormal milk screening programs, and mastitis programs. Those of us here at the University are vitally interested in these programs since they are of major importance to the industry that we hopefully represent with effective teaching, extension, and research programs.

Quality milk programs are receiving increased emphasis and consideration nationwide. A great deal of this increased interest has been brought about by activities of the National Mastitis Council, as well as the Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments. During an April, 1967, meeting of the Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments a three-phase program was adopted to add some definite requirements concerning milk quality for milk to be moved interstate. Abbreviated points of this three-phase program are as follows:

Phase I--Effective July 1, 1967

This first phase consists of regular routine laboratory inspection and screening procedures for the presence of unwholesome, altered mammary secretions, whether of an inflammatory, infectious, physiological or environmental origin in bulk raw milk at the farm level.

Phase II--Effective July 1, 1968

After this date only those interstate milk shippers that are certified to be following an indicating test program shall be listed in the quarterly publication, "Sanitary Compliance and Enforcement Ratings of Interstate Milk Shippers." When a herd milk sample tested by an approved laboratory indicates the presence of 1.5 million or more leucocytes per milliliter the dairyman shall be notified and suggestions made for improving this condition. If subsequent counts remain at this level or higher inspections by an official sanitarian, as well as other helpful suggestions, will be made.

Phase III--Effective July 1, 1970

After this date a penalty clause shall be added for non-compliance with leucocyte standards. Milk supplies having 1.5 million or more leucocytes per milliliter on three out of five of the last tests and continued violations of applicable items of sanitation shall have their permits suspended and/or court action shall be taken in accordance with the Grade "A" Pasteurized Milk Ordinance.

Presented at the Fifth Annual Florida Dairy Production Conference, May 7-8, 1968, Gainesville, Florida

On November 20, 1967, a group of approximately 25 people representing dairy farmers of the state, the Veterinary Medical Association, dairy equipment companies, the State Department of Agriculture, the State Board of Health and the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences met and recommended that a Milk Quality Council be formed. The major objective of this Council would be to give leadership and coordination to the various groups, individuals, and programs throughout the state concerned with quality milk production. In addition, the Council should be responsible for drawing up guidelines and recommendations for various quality milk programs and helping to outline the dairy industry an effective program of information and education regarding quality milk production. The Council will operate strictly on an advisory basis primarily as an educational organization.

We are pleased that the important dairy organizations in the state, as well as the State Board of Health, the State Department of Agriculture--Dairy Division, and others concerned with the dairy industry have indicated their belief in the importance of this activity and their willingness to participate in the Council activities. Representatives from the Department of Veterinary Science and Department of Dairy Science from the University of Florida, of course, will participate in the program.

At a Council meeting May 8, 1968, C. B. Browning, Chairman of the Department of Dairy Science, University of Florida, was elected to serve as Chairman of the Council, with Mr. Bud Ward, dairyman from Astatula, elected as Secretary.

We are hopeful and optimistic this Council can be an effective means of helping coordinate various activities concerned with quality milk production and a meaningful program for the dairy industry of our state.