PROGRESS IN BULK FARM TANKS AND TANKER PICK UP

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Recently on a Saturday afternoon at Ft. Wayne, Indiana, my telephone rang. Answering it the voice said, “Hello, Bill, this is John. I am at home in Vermont. Monday we are sending two of our bright young men on a two weeks trip West to visit Farm Tank installations east of the Mississippi.” He added, “We are now one hundred percent on farm tank operation at three of our cities and will push forward toward a similar goal at all points.”

One week later, on a Friday evening when I was at Corvallis, Oregon, again my telephone rang in my hotel room. Answering a voice said, “Hello, Bill, this is Herman at Minneapolis, Minnesota. I am leaving Monday for the Northwest Pacific Coast. I want to visit Cooperative and Independents who have ‘Bulk Farm Tank Operations’ which might be quite similar to what we might experience up here should we extensively go into such a program”. (They have an operation now of over 100 Farm Tank patrons.)

On the evening of March 25th, at Lancaster, Ohio, I was the speaker, with my movies, for the Annual Banquet of Deeds Bros. Dairy, who thus yearly entertain their producers and families. Bill Deeds, the manager, was one of the early pioneers for 100% operation of “Bulk Farm Tanks with Tanker Pick Up.”

One hundred ten persons were in attendance. All were owners of Bulk farm tanks, having had experience with them for over one year. Several present expressed their feelings. All were most enthusiastic about this new method over the old. Many had small herds of 10 to 15 cows, and during some months were milking as few as 8 cows. Among these dairy farmers were those who have what might be termed ordinary general farmers, raising a family and paying off the mortgage. A few had excellent tiled milk rooms—milking parlors, continuous stainless steel or glass pipe line equipment with good size herds. As the Deeds Bros. Dairy is one hundred percent bulk farm tank operation, the receiving room is eliminated. These people operate among the rolling hills of southeastern Ohio.

The tanker truck goes over narrow old farm type roads. Our passenger auto, without chains, could not get up their snow-covered, icy hills when I took my moving pictures. At one place we had to back down the hill and go around. The tanker truck, with dual wheels and a two tank compartment to distribute the milk load for traction, without chains went right up over the same hill we could not get over. The driver informed me he formerly when driving a milk can truck also had difficulty making this and similar hills.

PROGRESS IN NORTHWEST

My travels and observations have indicated to me that possibly fastest progress toward this new system of handling milk at the farm has taken place in our Northwest. They possess certain natural facilities that assist their action. The dairy farms are generally larger—good hay and pasture, with rich soil and plenty of rainfall well distributed over the year. Most milk haulers are employees of their milk organizations and do not personally lose a patron turning from milk can haul to a tanker truck, therefore this Northwest dairy industry has very rapidly been converting itself to this newer system. Evidence of this is my February information given me by Mr. Sam Graham, Director of Transportation for Portland, Oregon, Dairy Cooperative Association. They now have over 400 farmer patrons Grade A having bulk farm tanks. They are now also operating nine “Stub Nose” tanker pick-up trucks. These they find to be most economical for their type of hilly terrain and farmer lanes and drives.

Mr. Oscar Mock, Superintendent of Whatcom County Dairymen’s Association at Lynden, Washington, spoke of new tanker trucks being equipped with “power take off” from their truck motor to the milk pump on the truck so that this is the power for all pumping of the milk from bulk farm tank in farmer’s milk house to the tank on the truck. These have no electric motor on truck with electric cord to plug in at each milk house to operate the milk pump on the truck.

In this area it was experienced that when tanker was at farm electric power might be temporarily off, delaying hauler. During a 24-hour period electric current is not off sufficiently to affect cooling of milk in the bulk farm tank. My observations in other sections of the United States has been that seemingly this is no problem. However, this illustrates how “necessity is the master of the occasion” when progress and economy are at stake. At a recent meeting March 2nd at the Manufacturers’ Short Course of the State Agriculture College of Utah at Logan, Utah, Mr. Rowland answered two most vital and interesting questions—the first: “Were the dairymen signed up for this added expense of change to farm tanks
prior to Secretary of Agriculture Benson's announcement of future parity to 75% as of April 1st?" His answer was yes. My second question: "Have any of these farmers asked to cancel or have cancelled their agreement for their Bulk Farm Tank, etc., since Secretary Benson's announcement?" The answer was no. So the dairymen of long years standing who are the backbone of our industry evidently have faith in the value of progress and that which is proving of labor appeal and general economics to them.

All who are a part of this rapidly growing enterprise are very intelligent people. None have stood still or gone backward. All have progressed and have evidently answered all new questions which have arisen. Most manufacturers have made such progress that at the moment few important changes are being made. So it would seem that no organization or individual need hold back because of any anticipated distinctly new models. In fact, in re-visitations back to places photographed five years ago, I find old models of bulk farm tanks yet doing a fine job in protecting at the farm high quality produced milk.

IN-PLACE CLEANING

Going hand in hand with the Farm Tank and being rapidly installed in all sections of the Nation is the continuous pipe line system and milking parlors. These have labor appeal." I have, because of popular demand, edited a 15-minute amateur color movie reel on this subject from my extensive library of film. This shows the continuous pipe line, both stainless steel and glass, in stanchion type barns as also installations in various kinds of milking parlors. Several different makes of releasers are included. Special attention in recording these scenes was given to the in-place cleaning equipment and action under operation. At several places with stanchion milking barns, I have photographed installations of glass and stainless steel having as much as 250 feet of line. I have shown the action and turbulence of rinsing water and sanitizing solutions being used. At all places (many in number) all have testified to their complete satisfaction and that of their official city inspection of leaving the lines up for cleaning and sanitizing. This is one labor appeal feature. In fact, in one large fluid milk market where this system is very extensive and has been in use for several years, it is not unusual to hear regulatory authorities say, "Leave the lines up, and properly clean and sterilize them. Take them down and contaminate them."

With this continuous pipe line system we have observed and taken in action color movies of several in-line filters, these filtering the milk of the entire herd, in some cases numbering 15 to 150 cows. Where a tubular, or so-called sleeve or sock filter is used, the dairy farmer may be tempted to use it again, usually not realizing that it may be the source of future bacteria contamination. There are now ready for the market, and I have photographed them in color movies, stainless steel metal holders using a large diameter single service fibre-bonded disk. This filter medium being single service and not a woven fabric destroys itself with one using. When placed in a milk line beyond a woven fabric used in the sleeve filter it seems to catch fine extraneous matter which may have passed through the former. This single service fibre-bonded disk, when mounted after using, is the dairymen's Self Sediment Test, and when clean it is truly his "BADGE OF MERIT".

Even when milkers are very careful and do an extra fine job of rearing cows for milking, these disks show some sediment. It is also a safety factor in having a continual check to stimulate carefulness for watching one's self as well as his employees. This is equally desirable where the usual milk strainer formerly used on the milk can is now used on the cover (hole provided) of the bulk farm tank. Several milking parlors, having filters for each milking machine unit, use single service fibre-bonded filter disks. These are very adequate for this at-home sediment examining purpose.

SEDIMENT TESTS ON TANK MILK

At all meetings questions are asked as to how sediment tests are taken of the farm tank milk; and how this compares with the well known off-the-bottom of the milk can test made at the milk company's receiving dock. The state of Wisconsin has been informed of the work by Dr. H. E. Calvert, of the Dairy Division of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, and I believe a bulletin on the subject is available. I have photographed the dairy farmer in his own milk house, at the side of his bulk farm tank, witnessing a sediment test being taken by a sanitarian. This has a most pleasing psychological effect. Now the dairy farmer for the first time may see this important quality check, same as he experiences now the measurement of his milk, and the taking of the butter fat and bacteria sample, with the all-important thermometer temperature reading of the cooiness of his held milk, temperatures ranging 40° or lower.

PRODUCER REACTION

I have now visited 360 dairy farms in many states from coast to coast and from Mexico to Canada, which have bulk farm tanks. On each of these calls I have asked each dairymen the same three questions. They are: First, what interests you most in this new system for handling your milk? All have immediately (without exception) taken me to the measuring stick and replied, "The weight of our milk established right here in our milk house."

Second: What is the next important value to you? Again I have had a unanimous answer: "The butter fat sampling being taken for our milk right out of our tank here at the farm. We feel it is the most satisfactory way."

Third: What interests you next? Here there were a few different reasons given, but for the majority the answer was: "The temperature as shown by their thermometer on the tank." They add, "We know we are keeping our milk of high quality well protected." At these 360 farms I have recorded the temperature at all 40° or lower except two, and on these the temperature was 42°.

So throughout our great nation progress toward new findings and new equipment go forward, continual improvement being made in learning by doing. Today all audiences everywhere include persons who are a part of this system and contribute much (because of being a do-er) to general discussions. Less than two years ago this was rare. So the parade goes by, adding daily to its ranks by onlookers from the sidelines, falling in line and in step.