

THE OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTERSTATE MILK SHIPMENTS¹

D. B. WHITEHEAD

Mississippi State Board of Health, Jackson, Mississippi

The slogan adopted by the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments is "The Best Possible Milk Supply for All The People". This slogan expresses very simply the results hoped for if the objectives and purpose of the Conference are realized. The National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments was a natural outgrowth of circumstances and necessity. The milk industry in the United States was slowly being bottled up and restricted to relatively small and limited trade areas by sectional complacency and differences of ideas.

The sanitary quality of milk shipped interstate, as well as intrastate, varied considerably, and I believe I can say truthfully was of considerable concern to both the receiving areas as well as the responsible department supervising these supplies in the producing areas. There had been from time to time attempts on a limited interstate basis to reconcile differences in laws and codes that tended to set up interstate barriers, but the lack of a uniform approach to this problem made it exceedingly difficult to accomplish very much on a nationwide basis.

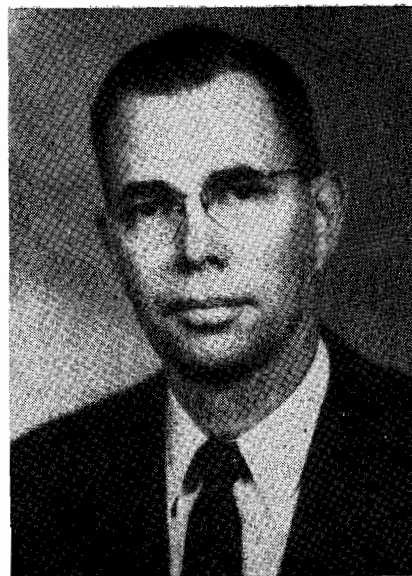
As a result there developed considerable misgiving and apprehension, particularly in the receiving areas, as to what kind of milk they would get when it was necessary to import milk. Ignorance also played a part in the problem; for example, since I did not know how the milk supply in Wisconsin was supervised I had natural misgivings. Today that is not so! In some regions a high percentage of milk processed the year round is received as interstate milk. In some of the states a high percentage of import is required only during a relatively short period of emergency.

Many of the receiving areas have insisted on making personal inspec-

tions of all milk supplies coming into their state, or city, or area of supervision. This, of course, is costly, multiplies inspection problems and naturally creates some personal problems between the two inspecting agencies. Also, in some instances the receiving areas were obliged to do their own inspecting because there was no proper supervision by the producing area. Unfortunately, in a few cases the regulatory agency used their regulations as a means of restricting the flow of milk into their areas and thus it constituted in itself a trade barrier. For the most part, however, the supervisors in the receiving area were merely trying to "get the facts" and assure an acceptable milk supply for its population.

There had been numerous requests following the war to do something about this situation in a way that would be agreeable, economical and afford free distribution of high quality milk. The level of supply in all areas then could be maintained on a satisfactory consumer level without the usual confusion in securing good milk equal in quality to the normal supply for areas during seasonal shortages. It was felt that a proper solution would afford an acceptable quality of milk for all and would permit greater utilization of the milk supplies available throughout the country and would also materially increase the incentive for greater production of really high quality milk. Due to the more economical administration of interstate traffic of milk, it would reduce the actual cost of the supervision as well as reducing the complexity of maintaining satisfactory supervision of interstate milk supplies. This being done the necessary confidence would be afforded to provide a good working agreement between the States.

As a result of these conditions and this thinking a request was made, in 1946, by the Conference of State and Territorial Health Officers to the Public Health Service requesting that some sort of a



Richard B. Whitehead received the B. S. degree in Agriculture in 1935 and the M. S. degree in Bacteriology in 1946 from the University of Missouri. The following five years he spent with industry in milk and ice cream plants. Since 1940, with the exception of a four year period in the Armed Forces, he has been employed by the Mississippi State Board of Health and now is Supervisor of Food and Milk Control, Division of Sanitary Engineering.

plan be devised that would facilitate certification of interstate milk supplies. This same year there was a plan outlined by the Public Health Service which was submitted to the various States and local milk control authorities. In 1949 a further request by the State and Territorial Health Officers was made to the Public Health Service to assist the States in developing some working agreements. Many States that had been successful in developing individual interstate agreements also requested further assistance from the Public Health Service to expand these agreements in order to cover emergency shipments of milk and to assist them in the seasonal periods when local shortages were experienced.

Late in 1949 and the early part of 1950 several small conferences were held, the result of these con-

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ferences being the first meeting of the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments which was held in St. Louis in June of 1950.

The work of this Conference as an organization has been successful because there was a real need for its existence.

In order to expedite proceedings and to make possible the proper consideration, discussion and presentation of all the problems involved, the entire Conference was divided into discussion groups. There were seven primary groups. Each group was responsible for a complete exploration and recommendation for the subject assigned. These discussions covered Certification, Supervision, Laboratory, Education, Promotion of Interstate Program, Manufactured Milk Products, and Channels and Forms for Reporting.

Participation in the Conference included representatives from universities and colleges, Army, Navy, Air Corps, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Milk Industry Foundation, Council of State Governments, allied Industry Associations, Industry, State Departments of Agriculture, local and State Health Departments, local control agencies other than Agriculture or Health, and the U. S. Public Health Service.

Through this system of task forces, the problems and proposed solutions were brought before the Conference as a whole for consideration, modification, rejection or acceptance as a possible means of bringing into reality a free flow of high quality milk to all parts of the United States without restrictions, so long as the actual sanitary quality of the milk supply and the standard of supervision was on a basis acceptable under standards equivalent to Grade A for milk and milk products.

Since it is the only widely adopted standard, the U. S. Public Health Service Standard Milk Ordinance and Code and the U. S. Public Health Service sanitation rating methods were adopted as basic standards by the Conference. There is no intention by the conference, implied or directed, to indicate that the U. S. Public Health Service Code is perfect; but it is a good standard and if properly enforced will assure the quality of milk and milk products desired.

Based on the conclusions and recommendations of this 1950 Conference the objectives and purpose of the Conference were outlined and brought into focus, so to speak. The result of the work of this Conference, I am sure, opened the eyes of many regulatory people to their many shortcomings, as well as pointing out their assets, and pointed toward the need of doing a better and more cooperative job all the way down the line. As a receiving State it meant that if we were to demand milk of the proper quality when it came into our State we would most assuredly, unless we had no conscience or sense of responsibility, have to *put* as well as *keep* our own "house" in order.

As a shipping State it focused attention on the absolute necessity that all Certifications must be as complete as records permitted and be a true and accurate statement of the milk supply and proficiency of supervision.

There were, however, many problems the solutions for which were somewhat vague and there were some who doubted that the recommendations were such as to make the objectives of the Conference felt in day to day business transactions. But a good foundation had been laid. This foundation meeting in 1950, reinforced as it was with a sincere purpose and definite need, had caught the interest *in*, and had promoted a better understanding of the magnitude of the problems.

The second conference in 1951 resulted in further consolidation of problems with greater understanding between State control agencies and considerably more confidence was developed between the various sections of the country relative to the type of job that was being done in those areas. Quite naturally the personal association of the individuals responsible for the milk control programs in both the receiving and shipping areas resulted in a better understanding of the individual problems.

Following the 1951 Conference there developed a need for certain certification forms and uniform methods of reporting that would expedite and implement the purpose of the Conference. To me this was the first real sign that

the Conference recommendations were being tried and actually accepted. These forms have been worked out, I think, on a very satisfactory basis.

The 1952 and 1953 Conferences dealt particularly with perfecting the mechanics of carrying out the recommendations of the previous Conferences and in making changes where experience indicated they were desirable.

The foregoing discussion I felt was necessary to give those of you not thoroughly familiar with the Conference activities some background and insight into my following discussion.

The Conference properly viewed is essentially one of planning and coordinating. It is striving to reach sound basic conclusions to be used as *guides* in the organization and administration of State Milk Control Programs that will be in reasonable agreement with one another.

Therefore we see that the purpose of the Conference is to formulate a plan for the control, supervision, and administration of Milk Programs that are adequate, practical, and reasonable and thus provide "The Best Possible Milk Supply for All The People".

This is understandable enough but unattainable in any degree unless certain basic objectives are reached. Very briefly I would like to point out what I consider the basic ones.

1. The Certifications and the accompanying survey information should be sufficient for a supervising agency in an importing State to determine the acceptability of a milk supply. For this system employing certifications to be workable, it is imperative that there be established complete confidence in the integrity and honesty of the supervisory agency. At the present time, the success or failure of the Conference rests on the honesty and validity of the information supplied by the responsible agency in the producing State. If the responsible certifying agency in the producing State will supply information honestly and as promptly as circumstances permit, leaving the decision of accepting or rejecting a supply up to the importing State, I feel sure that the proper consideration will be given and

there will develop mutual respect so important in these matters.

The U. S. Public Health Service surveys are made only on request by the States. Since the Survey Ratings play so important a part in establishing acceptability of supply, the U. S. Public Health Service quite naturally shoulders a major responsibility in training and standardizing the personnel who will be eligible to make official surveys. The proficiency and attitude of survey officers reflects directly on the value of Certifications. Only the best qualified and properly trained men in the State organizations should be considered for survey officers. Standardization of both U. S. Public Health Service as well as state survey officers should assure complete confidence in Survey results.

2. We all know that satisfactory milk supplies cannot be realized without an adequate and efficient system of supervision. There are some differences of opinion as to how much supervision is needed and where it is most important. These differences are not, in my opinion, significant if the minimums of the Standard Milk Ordinance and Code are met. The objective of the Conference in the matter of supervision is to assist all states in putting into effect milk regulations equivalent to the Standard accepted by the Conference and having these regulations properly enforced so that they could supply a satisfactory Certification on its milk supplies needed for interstate shipments.

3. The objectives relative to the laboratory examination of interstate supplies resolved themselves principally to a question of uniformity of procedures and adequacy of equipment used in the *authorized* laboratories. It has been felt that milk shipped interstate should be examined either by Standard Plate Count or by direct microscopic count. This poses a problem in some of the larger producing areas, but nonetheless the objective is a good one and I feel that all who participated in the discussion felt that ultimately this may be accomplished. Due to the difference in various states and municipal laws and codes, departure from old established methods

takes a little time and patience. It is felt by the participants of the Conference that the purpose of the Conference will allow sufficient time for accomplishment of its objectives and overall purpose. These individual circumstances and difficulties due to differences in laws and codes is well understood by all. "Standard Methods" is used as a basis of acceptability relative to laboratory procedure, and if we all meet these standards we can be assured that a good job will be done and that the laboratory results will correctly reflect the bacterial and chemical quality of the milk. Through the system of laboratory certification set up at the Conference, every State can be assured that reasonable and proper examinations are possible if a laboratory surveyed has a satisfactory rating and is so certified. The details of methods of rating and procedures for States requesting certification of their laboratories is fully explained in the summary of the 1953 Conference as reported in the *Journal of Milk and Food Technology*. It is expected that bacteriological and chemical examinations be made at least as frequently as required by the Standard Milk Ordinance.

4. Concerning education, it is hoped that through continuous education relative to the Conference activities and application of purpose will develop a more cooperative endeavor and understanding of mutual problems between milk producers, distributors, and regulatory officials. This program of education is aimed at developing the belief in the minds of milk producers and plant employees that sanitation is essential to the individual as well as the milk industry.

Through education we feel it will be possible to expedite and coordinate the activities of regulatory officials and industry with the requirements and necessities for quality milk production and processing. In order for the purpose and objectives of the Conference to be realized a sound educational objective is necessary. I feel that our objective of attempting to simplify procedures, regulations and methods is gaining ground and that each one who attends the Conference goes away better satisfied and

better informed. We all have a job of putting our best foot forward in order that each one with whom we do business may fully understand our differences in regulation and be willing to compensate for differences that may actually have only a bearing on a local situation.

5. By way of promoting the Interstate Program, the Conference is making every effort to extend to all states the program for cooperation in the regulation of interstate shipments of milk. We feel that states now cooperating will be successful in demonstrating their improvement in quality and more economical administration, in addition to rendering a valuable service to both the shipping and receiving State. Through the personal efforts of the members of the Conference much understanding and good will can be engendered, particularly in those neighboring States which are not now participating. Where legislation or other action is needed the Conference will extend a willing and sincere assistance to anyone desiring the encouragement or advice gained through the experience of others.

6. With an eye to the future the Conference continually explores the manufactured milk products field. In line with the objectives and purpose of the Conference, the problems are being approached in a very cautious but forward-thinking manner. The Committee on Dry Milk Standards has completed what I feel is a very reasonable and workable set of standards that will further the progress of the industry as well as further amplify the conference slogan "The best possible milk for all the people". This approach is further in line with our thinking that 'milk is an essential food but it is essential that it be good milk'.

7. As in all businesses that require correspondence as a means of contact there arise difficulties in expediting matters of urgency without letting the barriers down on quality. Due to the fact that the U. S. Public Health Service is acting as the balance wheel in this enterprise it is important that they be properly consulted and informed concerning the individual States' activities. This matter of keeping everyone properly informed in order that there be no misunder-

standings concerning any interstate activity is one of the basic objectives of our Conference. As each member of the Conference becomes better acquainted with the problems in States outside his own the understanding of problems outside of his own State has made the matter of accepting certification seem very much more plausible.

This entire matter was clarified nicely at the last Conference and for our part is working very satisfactorily at the present time. The fondest hopes of the Conference in regard to the part the Public Health Service plays have been justified by their excellent cooperation. The Public Health Service is looked to for training, for interpretation and for counsel in all phases of the Conference activities. My personal feeling which, I think, is shared by many others in the Conference is that the Conference is still a baby and a pacifier will do the job up to a point but that on occasion, figuratively speaking, a well placed hand is necessary. None of us who are in earnest should resent honest criticism and advice from any source.

In summing up the principal objectives of the Conference we might point them out in the following manner:

1. That we will recommend the adoption of uniform ordinances and regulations that will permit and assure a free flow of high quality milk between States and areas.

2. That we might dissolve the small differences in some local ordinances that will not interfere with quality milk shipments.

3. That provided a shipping State is making available supplies having a satisfactory rating and abiding by the rules of the Conference agreement that even though there is some detail relative to supervision that this supply will be readily acceptable in a State needing quality milk to supplement its own that may be in short supply.

4. That the efficiency of both the official agency, whether it be State or local, and the industry cooperating with the regulatory agency will provide more quality milk for the consumer.

5. That interstate barriers, whether they be intentional or unintentional, will be eliminated through cooperation and better understanding and effective supervision.

6. To inform everyone in the milk industry, whether they be industry or regulatory in nature, to the point that there will be a mutual understanding and respect for the problems in each others State.

7. That further by education that

where a lack of adequate regulations and effective control curtail interstate shipment of milk that such regulations and control be improved to the point that supplies will be available from all producing areas.

8. That effort be continued to simplify as much as is consistent with adequate control the procedures and records involved in handling interstate milk supplies.

9. That confidence and faith in certification be developed to the point that it will no longer seem necessary for any receiving area to personally observe conditions in a producing area.

Already at the Conference great strides have been made toward accomplishment of these many objectives. By personal contact and better understanding, the handling of the interstate milk programs has become very much more business-like, the records are more complete and the quality of milk shipped interstate has improved materially. The continued work of the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments will, I am sure, continue to be a deciding factor in the improvement of the overall milk industry and in making it possible that everyone may have available the very best and safest milk supply when and where needed.

NEWS AND EVENTS

HORTMAN NAMED CHAIRMAN OF INTERSTATE MILK SHIPMENTS CONFERENCE

Mr. H. L. Hortman was elected as Chairman of the Executive Board of the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments during the recent conference which was held at Memphis, Tennessee, March 29-30, 1955.

Mr. Hortman began working for the Louisiana State Department of Health in 1936 and in 1949 became Director of the Division of Milk and Dairy Products. He also is a member of the faculty of the School of Public Health, Tulane University.

Dr. K. G. Weckel of the University of Wisconsin, retiring Chairman was retained on the Executive Board for the next two years and Mr. H. J. Barnum, Denver Health Department, and Mr. Harvey

Weaver, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, were appointed Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, of the Executive Board.

Other members of the Executive Board are:

M. R. Fisher, St. Louis Health Department.

C. H. Mattson, Land O'Lakes Creameries, Inc., Minneapolis.

Dr. M. P. Baker, Iowa State College, Ames.

J. A. Stalbird, New York State Department of Health, Albany.

H. C. Goslee, Connecticut Department of Agriculture, Hartford.

H. E. Mills, Washington, District of Columbia, Health Department.

Everett Loab, North Dakota State Health Department, Bismark.

J. E. Mapes, Foremost Dairies, Inc., Dallas, Texas.

V. R. Layton, Kansas State Board of Agriculture, Council Grove.

C. J. Babcock, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

H. B. Robinson, Public Health Service, Washington, D. C.



H. L. HORTMAN