Dairying — Big Business

Dairying, a well established industry in Louisiana, occupies an important place in the economy of the state. The sale of milk by farmers now ranks fourth as a source of farm income. If the value of calf crops and calf calves (approximately $16,000,000) were added to milk sales (approximately $90,000,000) the total income from dairy herds would be about $106,000,000 for 1968. On this basis the dairy farm income would probably rank third.

It can generally be assumed that milk plants pay producers about half of what the consumers pay for the finished product. Further, a slightly smaller portion is paid by the plants for labor and services in local areas. These sums paid by the milk plant together with the income from calf animals and the value of milk used on the farm, means that dairying adds about $122,000,000 yearly to the economy of the state. With this dollar volume plus the investment in dairy farms of about $735,000,000 plus the investment in milk plants of about $40,000,000, dairying is big business in the state of Louisiana. (Photos by Evan Ladune)

Member of Cooperative Association

Walter Garber, a member of the Southwest Louisiana Pure Milk Producers Association, Lafayette, one of the four milk Marketing Cooperative Associations owned and managed by producers, is ready to remove the sterile milk into the cow from a cow which has just been milked. The milk is never touched by the hands of any individual. A special iodine solution is used to sterilize the bag of the cow before and after milking.

Warm, Fresh Milk

The warm, fresh milk flows from sterile glass tubes into a twenty quart jar which automatically empties each time it is filled into a large cooling tank. Two interested spectators view the operation.

Holding Tank

John Luby, the retail sales manager of Bordens, Lafayette, one of the largest milk processing plants in the world, shows the holding tank for the cleaning solution which washes the trucks out after they have unloaded. The motor at the bottom of the picture pumps the solution through stainless steel pipes. The milk is stored in four 6,000 gallon tanks and two lesser tanks until processed.

Quick Peep

Richard LeJoune gets a quick peep from Mr. Garber at the large tank where the fresh milk is stored at 34-36 degrees until the truck picks up the milk to be processed. To prevent the cream from separating and to help keep the milk at an even temperature throughout, an agitator keeps the milk moving at all times until it is picked up by a loading truck.

Flash Pasturizer

From the storage tanks, the milk goes into the flash pasturizer where it is heated to 170 degrees for approximately 12 seconds, then forced into cold plates at the right end of the machine which cools it instantly to 36 degrees.

The Homogenizer

From the pasturizer, the milk goes into the homogenizer, a pressure device which breaks up the globules of the milk fat under 2,000 pounds of pressure per square inch. This process evenly distributes the cream in every drop of milk and causes it to stay in suspension.