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MILK HYGIENE

Hygiene in Milk Production, Processing and Distribution

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Processing and Distribution

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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Preface</i>	7

DISEASES TRANSMITTED THROUGH MILK

Diseases transmitted through milk— <i>M. M. Kaplan, M. Abdussalam & G. Bijlenga</i>	11
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MILK HYGIENE ON THE FARM

Dairy-farm buildings and installations in temperate climates— <i>Stewart Swift</i>	77
Dairy-farm buildings in tropical climates— <i>R. O. Blodgett</i>	125
Water supply on the dairy farm— <i>Robert Newton Clark</i>	143
Pest control— <i>R. C. Bushland & Carroll N. Smith</i>	159
The handling of milk— <i>L. F. L. Clegg</i>	183
Cleaning and sterilization of milking equipment on the farm— <i>L. F. L. Clegg</i>	195

HANDLING AND PROCESSING OF MILK IN THE DAIRY

Milk control on reception— <i>C. K. Johns</i>	223
Payment according to quality— <i>J. Ekman</i>	239
Clarifying, cooling and storage of milk — <i>R. J. MacWalter</i>	249
Pasteurization: outlines of procedure and control— <i>H. D. Kay</i>	257
The sterilization of milk— <i>Th. E. Galesloot</i>	269
Hygienic control of fluid milk— <i>Franklin W. Barber</i>	303
Evaporated and condensed milk— <i>J. C. T. van den Berg</i>	321
Dried milk— <i>E. L. Crossley</i>	347
Hygienic aspects of the processing of butter, cheese, flavoured and fermented milks, and ice-cream— <i>Franklin W. Barber</i>	405
The use of hydrogen peroxide in milk and dairy products— <i>H. Lück</i>	423
Residues of disinfectants and antibiotics in milk— <i>A. Jepsen</i>	449
Hygienic control of dairy equipment— <i>E. B. Rice</i>	457
Water supply and waste disposal for milk processing plants— <i>Robert Newton Clark</i>	499
Health control of dairy workers— <i>W. Chas. Cockburn</i>	531
Hygiene of dairy workers in the USSR— <i>B. Vladimirov</i>	537

Milk collection centres— <i>M. Anquez & B. Tiersonnier</i>	545
Cans, tankers and containers— <i>J. Ekman</i>	557
The packaging of fluid milk— <i>Jacques Casalis & Jacqueline van de Putte</i>	569
Milk distribution— <i>E. Capstick</i>	595

REGIONAL AND SPECIAL PROBLEMS

Milk hygiene practice in India— <i>K. K. Iya</i>	611
Milk hygiene practice in Norway— <i>Peter Solberg</i>	625
Milk hygiene practice in Egypt— <i>M. S. El-Rafey</i>	635
Milk hygiene practice in Kenya— <i>I. Mann</i>	647
Milk other than cows' milk— <i>Jean Mittaine</i>	681
Augmenting milk supply through toned milk— <i>D. N. Khurody</i>	695

ADMINISTRATION AND TRAINING

Milk hygiene: administration and legislation— <i>W. A. Lethem</i>	703
Advisory and training services— <i>P. Kästli</i>	719
Education and training in countries developing their dairy industry — <i>Hans Pedersen & Jean de Martini</i>	733

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Code of principles concerning milk and milk products.	747
Annex 2. Definitions of and notes on some milk products	757
Annex 3. Milk pasteurization under bush conditions — <i>I. Mann</i>	764
INDEX	771

PREFACE

The idea of publishing this monograph originated in an Inter-Agency Working Group on Milk and Milk Products, a body set up by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which meets periodically to co-ordinate the efforts of the three organizations in the field of milk hygiene.

The importance of milk as a food needs no emphasis. Most people are aware of the enormous wastage to which, because of its high perishability, milk is subject unless it is early and effectively processed; and also that milk provides an admirable culture medium for bacteria, and can and does serve as a vehicle for these and other disease-producing micro-organisms. For both economic and health reasons, therefore, it is essential that the animals giving milk should be protected from disease; that milk and milk products should be handled, transported, processed, and packaged in the most hygienic conditions possible; and that at every stage of their journey from producer to consumer such products should be subjected to the most vigilant control to prevent the entry of harmful organisms, destroy those already present, and guard against early deterioration. Modern practice in relation to these requirements is described in this monograph.

But conditions vary in different countries. Milk production and distribution present an entirely different picture in the less developed countries and in the highly developed countries. Many of the former are in hot climates where the milk deteriorates rapidly unless properly processed; where the conditions in which the animals are kept and milked may be exceedingly unhygienic; where animal diseases communicable to man are common; where dairies are few and trained staff in short supply; and where the distribution of milk may be uncontrolled, haphazard, and wasteful. At the other extreme are countries where production, processing, and distribution are carried out efficiently and even the climatic conditions are favourable. An attempt is made in the monograph to describe milk hygiene practice not only as it is but as it could and should be in countries of very different climatic and technological conditions. A chapter is devoted to milk other than cows' milk, which assumes great importance in some of the less developed countries.

It is hoped that this monograph will give a clear picture of the various ways and means of ensuring that the milk and milk products reaching the consumer are both harmless and wholesome. Some of the chapters deal with the advancing

fringe of the subject, with processes that are not yet widely used or firmly established; a full description of these processes, it is felt, will be welcome, since it will enable those imperfectly acquainted with them to make up their minds about them.
