



Arnold Brice & John William Butcher

Two farmers from Seend were summoned at Devizes yesterday for selling milk not of the quality demanded. In each case it was proved that water had got into the milk through a leak in the cooling machine. The defendants were Arnold Brice of Seend Bridge Farm and John William Butcher of Baldham Mill Farm, Seend.

Mr E C Mercer, who prosecuted for the Wilts County Council, explained that defendants sold their milk under contract to Rose's Direct Milk Supply Company. In the case of Brice 72½ gallons of milk were sent to Messrs Rose in churns. Samples were taken and the milk was certified by the analyst to contain an average of 5.4 percent of additional water. This amounted to four gallons of water on the whole quantity. The day after the samples were taken from the churns, the farm was visited and samples taken from the cows. That milk was well above the standard demanded. The next day they were informed that a leaky cooler had been found and that it had been replaced by a new one.

In the case of Butcher, 97 gallons of milk in seven churns were found to contain an average of 6.2 percent of additional water which amounted to six gallons of water in the whole bulk of milk. In that case, too, there was found to be a leak in the cooling apparatus, permitting water to mix with the milk before entering the churn.

Mr F J Finch (Westbury) who defended in both cases, pointed out that it was the usual practice to turn on the milk at the same time as the water when using the cooling machine. Once the milk was running over the corrugated surface of the machine it was impossible to detect a leak of water. The cases showed the responsibility which rested on milk producers to test milk coolers by turning on the water tap only and watching for leaks. Both Brice and Butcher were farmers of the highest repute.

The chairman said the Bench were satisfied in both cases that there was no deliberate addition of water to the milk, but it was the farmer's duty to take every precaution to prevent water getting into it. Both defendants would be convicted, but, as the costs were heavy, there would be no fine, and each defendant must pay three guineas towards the costs.

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