

Will This Truck Revolutionize Juggling?

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During processing, the trailer is connected to the store's water and waste lines. Power to operate the processing equipment is obtained from a diesel generator mounted right on the trailer. Milk is pasteurized and homogenized, additives go in, and the milk is put into plastic bags. Chocolate milk and juice can also be run through the equipment.

After the milk is homogenized and pasteurized it is packaged with the most modern equipment. A rather recent innovation is milk in plastic bags. Used at home, these durable bags are dropped into an attractive plastic pitcher. A corner is simply snipped off the corner of the bag

and the milk is poured conveniently from the pitcher. This is fast becoming a favorite of the homemaker. No deposit, no return — just dispose of the empty bags. However, cartons can be obtained, if desired. Speaking for ecology, the plastic bags take up less space and are easy to dispose of.

There are patents pending on the support equipment. The technology is presently a closely guarded secret, and our photographer was permitted to take pictures of only the outside of the truck.

Plans are to eventually develop more processing trucks. Each truck would be leased to an owner operator, who would buy a franchise for a particular area.

Processing costs to the store owner

presently vary from a high of about 20 cents per gallon to a low of eight cents. Stores that process under 100 gallons pay the higher figure. As the quantity goes up the price goes down.

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture officials are watching the Dutch Farms project very carefully. So are people from USDA and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

"We have given these people a provisional permit," we were told by William Fouse, Chief, Division of Milk Sanitation. "We know they can produce milk that's acceptable. But we'll be scrutinizing them for the next year or even two years. We want to be sure the equipment is durable."

Durability is now the only question to resolve. After a six-month trial with the first truck, the Dutch Farm people are confident their equipment will hold up. They say there were some bugs with the first truck, but most of them were designed out of the second truck. And the third truck will be even better.

It seems reasonable to assume that mobile processors will have some effect on the milk industry. The extent of the impact remains to be seen.

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Milk output is at a five-year high. May's production, for example, at 11.3 billion pounds, is up only 1.1 per cent from a year earlier. But that 11.3 billion pounds is the highest single output for any month since May of 1967.

A further check shows that output for each month this year, prior to May, also has been above that of every corresponding month since at least 1967. For example, February's was the highest for any February since 1965; March was the highest for March since 1966.

The main reason for this continued gain: increased production per cow that continues to more than offset a decrease in cow numbers. Milk production during May averaged 924 pounds. Cow numbers, at 12,236,000 head, were off one per cent from a year earlier, 10 per cent below the May 1967 total.

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