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AN INVESTIGATION INTO SHORT PRODUCTION
RUNS IN SPRAY DRYING PLANTS
OF THE NEW ZEALAND DAIRY INDUSTRY

A thesis presented in partial
fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in Industrial
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THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Robert Frost

ABSTRACT

The features of short production runs in spray-drying plants of the New Zealand Dairy Industry were examined and some methods developed to help improve productivity in dealing with them.

In particular a survey was carried out of the managers of all spray-drying plants in order to establish quantitative and qualitative information on short production runs. It was found that short production runs could be classified into those caused by interruptions to runs, such as mechanical breakdown, those caused by specification changes, and those caused by the decision to run the plant for a limited period, usually as a result of the limited milk available for processing.

The effect of capacity utilisation on spray-drying plants and the costs of smoothed milk flow were examined and it was found that smoothed milk flow could not be justified on economic grounds alone.

The occurrence of short runs due to specification changes in other industries is documented as are methods to overcome their costs. It was concluded that the major effects in spray-drying plants were likely to be through set-up cost and learning behaviour. However, it was found that neither of these seriously affected cost of powder manufacture, short production runs due to specification changes were dealt with without excess costs over normal manufacture.

The relationship between run length and energy consumption and run length and processing rate were examined and quantified. A computer based management information system was developed to assist in the control of costs in general and short production runs in particular in spray-drying plants.

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1. New Zealand Dairy Research Institute

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
ABSTRACT	i
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	ii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	ix
GLOSSARY OF MILK POWDER SPECIFICATIONS	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 1)	7
CHAPTER TWO: THE SHORT PRODUCTION RUN IN HISTORY	8
2.1 The commonality of methods of management of production	8
2.2 The occurrence of short production runs	10
2.3 Classification of manufacturing systems	11
2.4 Batch production	14
2.5 Mass production	19
2.6 Short runs in spray drying plants	27
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 2)	30
CHAPTER THREE: THE OCCURRENCE OF SHORT PRODUCTION RUNS IN SPRAY DRYING PLANTS	34
3.1 Preparation of the survey	34
3.2 Results of the written questionnaire	39
3.3 Results of the interview questionnaire	51
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 3)	68
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF THE OCCURRENCE OF SHORT PRODUCTION RUNS	69
4.1 Introduction	69
4.2 Interruptions to production runs	69
4.3 Short production runs caused by specification changes	72
4.4 Short daily running time	76
4.5 Additional information	77b
4.6 Summary	78
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 4)	80

	page
CHAPTER FIVE: THE EFFECTS OF SOME ASPECTS OF DAIRY INDUSTRY INFRASTRUCTURE ON THE SHORT RUN PROBLEM	81
5.1 Introduction	81
5.2 The determinants of New Zealand's pattern of agricultural production	81
5.3 Comparison of costs of seasonal milk production with smoothed production	83
5.4 Pressures causing a higher peak milk supply	84
5.5 The market for milk powders	85
5.6 The New Zealand Dairy Board's effect on short runs	86
5.7 Conclusion	87
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 5)	89
CHAPTER SIX: THE EFFECTS OF SHORT PRODUCTION RUNS IN THE SPRAY DRYING PLANT	90
6.1 Introduction	90
6.2 Spray drying factory cost structures	92
6.3 Cost of start-up and shut-down in a spray drying plant	96
6.4 Learning effects in spray drying plants	99
6.5 Capacity utilisation in spray drying plants	105
6.6 Cost effects of seasonal milk flow in spray drying plants	109
6.7 Simulation of smoothing milk supply	116
6.8 Conclusion	120
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 6)	121
CHAPTER SEVEN: CONTROL OF THE EFFECTS OF SHORT PRODUCTION RUNS IN SPRAY DRYING PLANTS	122
7.1 Introduction	122
7.2 Determination of the relationship between energy consumption and daily run length	123

	page
7.3 Factors affecting the rate of milk processing in a spray drying plant	137
7.4 Computer based management information system	162
7.5 Conclusion	166
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 7)	167
CHAPTER EIGHT: THE EFFECTS OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE ON SHORT PRODUCTION RUNS	168
8.1 Introduction	168
8.2 Mechanical vapour recompression	168
8.3 Reverse Osmosis	169
8.4 Energy developments	170
8.5 Computers and control	171
8.6 Evaporator cleaning	171
8.7 Changes in the size of spray drying plants	172
8.8 Conclusion	175
LIST OF REFERENCES (Chapter 8)	176
CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION	179
APPENDIX 1: THE SPRAY DRYING PLANT	187
APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE LETTERS AND WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE BOOKLET	189
APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE OF "TEN DAILY" REPORT	190
APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE OF DAILY REPORT	196
APPENDIX 5: BACKGROUND TO THE EFFECTS OF SOME ASPECTS OF DAIRY INDUSTRY INFRA-STRUCTURE ON THE SHORT RUN PROBLEM	200

LIST OF FIGURES, GRAPHS AND TABLES

Figures

2.1 The manner of action of production management	9
2.2 Production systems	12
2.3 The production continuum	14

	page
List of figures (cont)	
6.1 Examples of computer printouts from simulation	118
A1.1 Diagram of spray drying process	188
 <u>Graphs</u>	
4.1 Monthly average daily running time	77
6.1 Theoretically expected result of learning behaviour	100
6.2 Number of failures per day vs day of run	103
6.3 Number of failures per day as percent of all days of that number vs day of run	103
6.4 Utilisation index versus cost per tonne	107
7.1 Example of scatter plot of daily total oil consumption vs daily milk volume (for spec 607)	125
7.2 Rate of oil consumption per kilogram of product vs production volume per day	129
7.3 Rate of oil consumption per kg of product vs raw milk volume	130
7.4 Rate of electricity consumption per kg of product vs raw milk volume	131
7.5 Tukey plots of processing rate and processing time versus day number	139
7.6 Moving average plots of processing rate and processing time vs day number	141
7.7 Cumulative sum plots of processing rate and processing time vs day number	142
7.8 Regression lines of processing rate on $1/\text{time}$	150
7.9 Predicted processing rate vs processing time	151
7.10 Processing rate vs processing time, days 69 to 92	156

	page
Graphs (continued)	
7.11 Processing rate vs processing time, days 106 to 142	157
7.12 Processing rate vs processing time, days 173 to 210	158
7.13 Production rate vs processing time, days 69 to 92	159
7.14 Production rate vs processing time, days 106 to 142	160
7.15 Production rate vs processing time, days 172 to 210	161

Tables

2.1 Illustrative estimate of cost and scale in car manufacture	20
3.1 Interview questions and information sought	51
4.1 Occurrence of interruptions to production runs	70
4.2 Factories with short run lengths	72
6.1 1978-79 season, average costs in dollars per tonne and percent	94
6.2 Overall average percentage cost structure	95
6.3 Spray drying factory inflation rate	95
6.4 Results of examination of various runs for learning behaviour	102
6.5 Summary of results showing relationship between cost per tonne and capacity	106
6.6 Results summary - Equal groups of at equal periods	119
6.7 Results summary - Two herds at various separations	119
6.8 Results summary - One third of herd calves later	119
7.1 Summary of results of regression analysis	127
7.2 Yield of product per litre of raw milk	128

Tables (continued)

7.3	Values of co-efficient of determination (R^2) for various regressions of processing rate on processing time	147
7.4	Summary of results of regression of processing rate on 1/processing time (hr)	149
A5.1	Estimated gross margins 1981-82 season, Manawatu region	204
A5.2	Expenditure on average town milk and factory supply farms for 1978-79 season	205
A5.3	Percentage of New Zealand dairy products by weight sold in United Kingdom	210
A5.4	The ten principal milk powder markets for selected years since 1960	211
A5.5	Market sales of powders for selected years since 1960	212
A5.6	Quantities of dairy products given access to the U.K. market during the transitional period	213

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.M.P.	Buttermilk powder
C.I.P.	Clean in place
Co-op	Co-operative
E.E.C.	European Economic Community
hr	hour
kg	Kilogram
k.w.h.	Kilowatt hour
M.V.R.	Mechanical vapour recompression
N.S.P.O.	Non-standard purchase order
N.Z.C.D.C.	New Zealand Co-operative Dairy Company Limited
N.Z.D.B.	New Zealand Dairy Board
N.Z.D.R.I.	New Zealand Dairy Research Institute
R.O.	Reverse Osmosis
R.P.D.	Rangitaiki Plains Co-operative Dairy Company Limited
S.M.P.	Skim milk powder
Spec	Specification
U.K.	United Kingdom
W.M.P.	Whole milk powder
W.P.N.I.	Whey protein nitrogen index
N.C.	Numerical control

GLOSSARY OF MILK POWDER SPECIFICATIONS

Skim milk powder	{	600	}	Medium heat
		633		
		M301		
	{	602	}	Low heat
		607		
		662		
	{	672	}	High heat Heat stable
Whole milk powder	{	800	}	Basic, conventional
		801		
		802		
	{	803	}	Limited bulk density range
		821		
		823		
Special (whole milk) products	{	900	}	Vitaminised
		930		
		934		
		SMA		