

FINKLE EGG GRADING STATION

Two delightful and busy people who may usually be found hard at work, are Mr. and Mrs. C. Finkle owners and operators of the Finkle Egg Grading Station at 291 Pinnacle Street. In recent months there has been plenty of controversy as to the efficiency or otherwise of the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency and its policies affecting all phases of the industry, but according to the Finkles while there have been grounds for complaint the situation is improving. Consumption did not keep up with production perhaps because of increased prices, imports from other provinces and countries, and the inability of Canada to export normal quantities in the face of stiff competition from other sources. At the same time there was little effort to curb production by Canadian producers so that tremendous quantities of surplus eggs resulted and spoilage almost unavoidable. Today the egg market is reaching stability with increased sales and production down. However although there had been some drop in prices following the revelation of spoilage the public soon saw a return to higher prices. This said Mr. Finkle is inevitable and there will likely be still price increases as producers must comply with new wage rates, increased feed costs utilities, and in almost all other factors contributing to their costs. Mr. Finkle thinks there should be a better way of tying production to actual sales. Imports from abroad should not be permitted and quotas of producers strictly observed.

Speaking of their own egg grading station Mr. Finkle said, they stressed quality through their acceptance of only farm washed eggs and careful grading. He explained that eggs deteriorate rapidly if subjected to temperature changes. Unwashed eggs delivered to wholesalers or chain stores are permitted to cool after laying, then warmed during the later washing, and cooled again in refrigerated cases. In their own business they generally rely on two suppliers who see that the eggs are washed as soon as possible after laying and deliver them promptly to the station where they are handled with expert care and graded. Eggs go first to a candling machine in a room which almost looks like a voter's booth on election day. This darkened room is a cubicle containing a conveyor belt through which a yellow or amber light passes allowing the inspection of the eggs, showing clearly any cracks, blood spots and any other imperfection including age which is indicated by the size of the air sac at the base of the egg. Mrs. Finkle feeds the conveyor by hand and can put through up to 360 dozen per hour. The eggs then go to an automatic grading machine which separates them according to weight. To the uninitiated the eggs look like balls in a pin-ball machine and try to guess into which slot the egg will drop. Extra large, Grade A, or lighter eggs, each operate their own slot, drop into collectors, from which they are removed by hand into specially made containers and then into cases.

In the top photo, Mr. and Mrs. Finkle behind their sales counter, and in the lower photo Cathy arman tends the grader.

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