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A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ?

Dr. Charles F. Brooks,  
Secretary, American Meteorological Society,  
says:

THUNDER DOES NOT SOUR MILK

It is often said that a thunderstorm sours milk. The lightning and thunder, however, really do not affect the milk at all. It appears, rather, that hot, moist weather which produces heat thunderstorms, also favors bacterial growth and the spoiling of food. On a hot day the ice box temperature will probably be higher than usual, unless particular care is taken to replenish the ice. During the day the lactic acid bacteria in the milk will multiply more rapidly than usual, so that by evening milk which tasted all right at noon may be distinctly sour. Now heat thunderstorms commonly occur in the late afternoon, therefore, we may say that the milk was soured by the thunderstorm, and jump at the wrong conclusion. The process of souring had been going on all day, favored by the thunderstorm conditions, not suddenly evoked by the storm itself.

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(Tomorrow: How to Take the Temperature of the Air.)

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