

Chatty Letter From Alberta

G. E. White, Lacombe, Alta.

Lacombe and the surrounding district has been well known in the past through the fine horses and cattle that it has produced. Formerly the dairying conducted here has been mostly with grades. The dairy breeds have been gradually working their way in until at present there are several herds of Holsteins and Ayrshires in the vicinity. Amongst the Ayrshire herds might be mentioned those of W. R. Window, north of Lacombe; F. H. Duckett, northwest, and Col. Gregory, southeast of the town. Amongst the Holstein herds are those of Dr. Peat, east of the town; T. H. Newman's, and my own, the Cold Springs Farm herd, west of the town. The experimental farm, here, has some Jerseys, and there are others who have individuals of these breeds as well as grades of the different dairy breeds.

During the last year there has been an unusual demand for pure bred dairy animals in Alberta and breeders have had difficulty in keeping females enough for their own breeding herds. Excellent prices have been received at the different sales, and a number of purebreds have been brought from the east. Even good grade cows bring from \$70 to \$80 at sales, and it seems as if anything that has four teats is snapped up at good prices.

EXCELLENT MARKETS

The whereof of this great demand is found in the high prices being offered for dairy produce. There is a good market at Lacombe for all dairy produce and a creamery that runs the year round and gives good satisfaction. As for other markets in the province, parties from both Calgary and Edmonton have been scouring the country this fall trying to locate new supplies of milk and cream. Milk is bringing \$2.40 a cwt. delivered, while

sweet cream brings 45 cents a pound butterfat at our own station. The Laurentia Milk Co. of Red Deer have been paying as high as \$2.60 for milk for their special trade.

The climate here is very favorable for handling milk during the summer, as the nights are always cool. The winters are not so severe but that cattle can be kept comfortable without large outlay for buildings. The principle roughage is prairie hay and green out sheaves, although some cultivated grasses are being grown and more will be grown in the near future. Roots grow to perfection and are a great asset in keeping cattle in shape through the long winters.

DAIRYING ON THE INCREASE

Improving markets and more attractive prices are causing more people to go into winter dairying. We find that here as well as in the east the best time to have cows freshen is in the fall. They will give more milk during the year, if properly fed and cared for during the winter, and it gives you a better chance to give the calves a good start.

From our own experience we have found that it doesn't pay to try to dairy with scrubs, for it is too uncertain. It takes just as much room and almost as much feed and care to keep an unprofitable cow as one that will show a good profit. With pure bred cows there is a greater certainty of getting profitable producers.

We have found that the only way to improve our herd is by testing and weeding. Some breeders have a cow tested once, and if she tests low turn her down when perhaps that same cow would make a good showing in a yearly test, and better than another that tested high in a short test. The yearly test is the best way to determine the value of a cow, and this test can be made quite elaborate or very simple and good results obtained by either method.

COOPERATE WITH THE GOVERNMENT

I would much like to see the government take up the testing of grade cattle and if any one in Alberta is interested in doing some testing we would advise them to communicate with Mr. C. Marker, of Calgary, Provincial Dairy Commissioner.

Our great difficulty is the help problem. Most men would rather work on a grain farm, and it is very difficult to get good milkers. The milking machine will be a solution of the question for those who can milk enough cows to pay to get a machine. One of our town dairymen has installed a Sharples machine and he tells me he is well satisfied with it.

After all, here in Alberta as elsewhere, the result in dairying, whether be success or failure, lies with the individual and depends largely upon the interest he takes in his work, and with what thoroughness he carries it out.

The Feed of My Flock

Jno. Simpson, Hutton Co., Ont.

I feed 15 ewes one and one-half gallons of oats, one-half bushel of mangolds and a little clover hay in the morning, hay at noon, and mangolds and hay at night. I keep water in the pens in the day time. I let the ewes out for exercise when it is not stormy. Ewes should not have all the hay they will eat just before lambing.

After the ewes lamb I give double the amount of oats and all the hay they will eat, but I don't give them many more mangolds than they got before they lambed. I keep plenty of water in the pens.

I believe the first essential to a comfortable stable is perfect cleanliness. A thorough grooming in addition will be conducive to the health and thrift of the dairy cow.

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