

### Are Improvements Profitable?

"The one great and paramount consideration of the farmer is that of profit in dairying is occasioned in nine cases out of 10 by a lack of sound dairy intelligence on the part of the farmer who is behind the cow." In these words does W. D. Hoard, Ex-Governor of Wisconsin and senior editor of Hoard's Dairyman, sum up the results of a series of investigations into dairy farming methods, conducted by himself and extending over a period of 19 years, from 1899 to 1908. This great "cow census" work, probably the most complete cow census ever taken, affords an ample opportunity of judging of

the probabilities of making a profit are nearly three to one in favor of the silage feeder as compared with the average dairy farmer.

2. In the 632 herds, comprising 9,365 cows, reported as being of good dairy type, a cow paid her owner an average annual profit of \$17.38; while 685 herds, numbering 8,104 cows, not of dairy type, returned a profit of \$2.63 cents per head—the word "profits" here meaning the excess of receipts over value of feed.

We find, further, that the ratio of profitable to unprofitable herds is nine times as great among herds of good dairy type as it is among herds lacking good dairy type.



The Basis of a Coming Holstein Herd

The illustration will give an idea of the kind of foundation that H. H. Craig, Howick, Que., has laid for a Holstein herd. His herd is the one illustrated on page six this week. The cows are the deep bodied, low set kind that combine production with desirable type. Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

the value of scientific findings and up-to-date methods as applied to dairy farming. The census embraces many hundreds of herds and many thousands of cows, and the conclusions reached and published in a recent bulletin from the United States Department of Agriculture, cover all the important phases of dairying.

"Wrong inferences might be drawn both from the data upon which this bulletin is based and from the summaries compiled from this data had the reader not been informed in regard to the manner in which the data was collected. We learn, for example, that the average cow of the 639 herds studied comfortably returned the owner an annual profit of \$14.12, while the average cow of the 323 herds in poor stables produced during one year only 23 cents more than the cost of her feed. Here we can not believe that the difference is due wholly to the fact that the cows comfortably stabled that the cows comfortably stabled had better feed and care. Just what proportion of the difference we should credit to any of these con-

3. The owners of 164 herds, numbering 6,202 cows, were registered as readers of dairy papers. This group reported the cost of feed to be \$34.78 per cow, and secured \$1.42 for each dollar spent for feed, or a profit of \$14.54 a cow.

The cow owners whose minds were not illuminated nor their methods improved through the influence of dairy literature controlled 753 herds, composed of 9,122 cows. The feed of the cows cost them a little less, viz., \$35, but they made an average annual profit of only \$1.85 a cow. Of these non-readers, 48 per cent actually lost money in following the dairy business.

The records also show that the ratio of profitable to unprofitable herds is seven times as great among readers as it is among those who do not read.

4. The number of herds reported as occupying good stables was 639, comprising 9,506 head. These returned their owners a net profit of 41 cents on each dollar's worth of feed (\$1.41 for the year, while the 323 poorly stabled herds, containing 3,775 cows, returned to their owners only 23 cents



Another Selection from the Herd of H. H. Craig, Howick, Que.

—Photo by an Editor of Farm and Dairy.

trolling factors we have no means of determining.

1. From the 329 herds reported as having been fed silage, numbering 6,600 cows, \$1.30 was received for each dollar's worth of feed consumed, or \$1.30, the average return for the year. The 323 herds not reported as feeding silage, on the other hand, returned only 23 cents for each dollar's worth of feed consumed. Comparing herds fed silage with those not reported to be so fed (the latter not reported to have silage and which may be regarded as representing the actual common run of dairy herds in the United States), we find that the ratio of profitable to unprofitable herds among the silage fed is to that ratio among those not reported as 2.8 is to 1; or

more than the cost of their feed. The ratio of profitable to unprofitable herds is more than seven times as great among herds in good stables as it is among herds in poor stables.

"It is the strongest confirmation of the trustworthiness of arguments if the methods which they are held to prove work out successfully in practice. It will be a source of assurance to the instructor in dairying to find that his teachings are useful when applied to business; and, on the other hand, the farmer can with confidence put such teachings into practice if he finds that other farmers have done so with profit.

The conclusions are, that what is theoretically sound in dairy instruction is practicable in dairy farming.

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