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HOW MUCH MILK SHOULD A COW PRODUCE TO BE PROFITABLE?*

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Every Cow in the Herd Must Produce 4,000 lbs. of Milk to Pay for Her Feed Before She Starts to Yield a Profit--An Easy Way to Find the Cows That are Not Making Money for Us

It is now fairly generally understood that one fundamental principle of cow testing is that each cow in the herd shall be known to make a profit--surely a most reasonable proposition.

If each does not pay where lies the fault? Possibly a paraphrase of a poetic line explains: "The fault, dear Brutus, lies in ourselves, not in our cows, that we are profit-^{less}." If in ourselves, the remedy is obvious. Surely we are sufficiently alive to our own interest to give cow testing a trial, to profit by its numerous advantages.

C. F. Whitley

Probably we are apt to magnify the effort needed to weigh and sample. The milk from two cows can be weighed in one minute, less than 10 minutes a month for each cow will serve to take samples and keep the records of weights.

FIRST DECISION--THEN SUCCESS

The avenue of success lies through the gate of decision and along the main road of endeavor and persistence. The outlook is so bright for every initiate that our mental vision of the plan should be keen, not hazy; our mental ear un-stopped and alert to this call of modern, common-sense, progressive dairying.

What is this paying basis for a cow? If we agree that it takes \$4 to feed a cow, then with milk at \$1 a cwt. the mature animal must give over 5,000 lbs. before she returns a profit of even one cent. Do all your cows give over 4,000 lbs.? On examining the records of 1,600 cows for last year, I found that 35 per cent. gave less than 4,000 lbs., that is, seven out of every 20 cows scattered over several counties could not be said to yield any profit above the cost of feed.

TABLE 1

CONTRAST BETWEEN TWO ONTARIO HERDS	
11 cows (Lambark).	5 cows (Oxford).
Average yield, 8,794 lbs.	Average yield, 12,066 lbs.
3 test, 131 lbs. fat.	3 test, 400 lbs. fat.
Total yield, 43,737 lbs.	Total yield, 60,340 lbs.
126 lbs. fat.	2,003 lbs. fat.
\$9 profit per cow.	\$80 profit per cow.

Note that the five cows gave nine tons of milk and a quarter of a ton of fat more than the five cows.

Every time the 11 cows filled one factory milk can the five cows filled not one but three similar cans.

The 11 cows gave a large profit over cost of feed, averaging only \$5, but the five cows gave an average profit of \$80, thus one good cow equals 16 of the poorer kind.

These poor cows are the type of cows on which good human energy is being sacrificed. They make huge and quite unnecessary demands on the

*An address before the Eastern Ontario Dairymen's Association at Campbellford last week.

charity of the most generous fellow in the world--the average dairyman.

WHAT DOES YOUR MILK COST?

For a moment notice the loss entailed by keeping these poor cows. The economic instinct imbedded in man cries out against waste; it warns us not to let poor cows waste good feed that better cows with more suitable temperament can convert into milk at a cost of 65¢ a cwt., while others under the same roof run the cost up to \$1.20. What does your milk cost? A little more fuel in the stove than what serves to keep it just light means more heat production, so a little more feed often means more cow comfort and a heavier milk production. Don't save at the epigot and waste at the bung-hole.

Surely dairymen can critically and wisely observe conditions in the business world. A manufacturer knows exactly the cost of his products. But two neighboring milk manufacturers find the cost is 65 cts. one side of the fence and \$1.20



'Notice the Money Maker on the Right

The farmers who will suffer least this winter from lack of feed are those who have well filled silos. Among the fortunate ones is Mr. F. Leeson of Eglon Co., Ont., whose barn and silo may be here soon. All our best dairy farmers appreciate the merits of the silo.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

on the other. Can you possibly conceive a similar situation in the manufacturing world? Would any two makers of paint, bricks or flannel rest satisfied with such a state of affairs if they compared notes and found the goods of one costing practically double as much as those of the other? If such variation did occur, would you not be the first to exclaim: "Something must be radically wrong; the raw material, the machinery or the manager must be woefully astray somewhere?"

DOES THE SHOE FIT?

Take it even in the next stage of handling your own product, milk; imagine three cents a pound for making at one factory, and six cents on the next concession! There would soon be a rebellion! Cow testing is of grand immediate value, because for one thing it enables us to individualize, to detect unerringly the useless animated machine that does not produce milk economically. We don't want the kind that only turns out 25¢ worth, while in the next stall is one kept up to the tune of \$80 or \$100.

In studying economy of production we need to

think if it will cost more, or less, to produce 24,000 lbs. milk from three cows or eight.

BRING IT TO THE INDIVIDUAL

We can therefore grip the present value of cow testing, because one main purpose is the determination and then the improvement of the dairy value of each individual cow. That is indefinite, economical, productive power. This record system ensures more intimate and analytical examination of cows. The unit of measure of value is thus transferred to its rightful place from the herd to the individual. Then with the joyful departure of the unprofitable servant that has worked the confidence trick just a little too long, with the selection of young stock of individual merit from parents tried and tested, there must follow a demand for healthier, better class stock, thus better milk and more of it will be provided. And such milk happily will be produced more cheaply. Our older men are desirous of such results; our younger men are eager to speed the advent of that day.

And still more cordial relations between farmers are being encouraged. This demand for better cows further emphasizes the value of practical cooperation, particularly in the purchase of pure bred sires, and in that matter let us beware of the blind worship of cheapness. We need the best available, for the investment is safe. In this social age we need to act together, to pool our energies. Yet as society is only the one man multiplied, individual action must lie at the base of all great movements. Every citizen is ruler over his own particular self-territory. So when we have whole regiments of reform marching towards the goal of public good let each dairyman join the ranks; cooperate.

GOOD OR GOOD FOR NOTHING

But with these poor cows is there not also serious loss of product? Does each one of your cows give you a generous 6,000 lbs. of milk? Are your good cows or only good for nothing? It has been my privilege to address this convention on this topic of cow testing for seven consecutive years. May I point out that, had the initial remarks been heeded, if indeed only three years ago, any dairy farmer might now be keeping cows giving at least 300 lbs. of butter or 6,000 or 7,000 lbs. milk.

That has been accomplished in many instances where men have awakened to a knowledge of what rich freight this argosy of cow testing brings for their unloading. Some men only hope vaguely for such results, making but puny efforts towards their achievement. The grass grows long in the cemetery of feeble aspirations; we have to be up and doing to make cow testing of present value.

30,000 LBS. MILK WASTED

There is another serious waste that has been almost entirely ignored. I refer to the fearful waste of human energy in handling these poor cows. Taking the one operation of milking, 10 hours a cow for 10 months, then, so as not to make out too staggering a case, cutting down that 35 per cent. of poor cows just mentioned to only 20 per cent., it means that there is a waste every year of the stupendous total of 30,000,000 hours just in milking these profitless cows.

This is hard to grasp, so let us digest it this (Concluded on page 4)