

## AGRICULTURAL.

From "The Complete Farmer and Rural Economist."

## NEAT CATTLE.

Neat Cattle form a very important part of every farmer's live stock. In selecting them, two things are very material: first, the health and soundness of the stock from which they are purchased; and secondly, the quality of the soil on the produce of which it is intended to feed them. Stock for the dairy or the butcher should be selected from a breed of which you know or can ascertain every particular relative to their general health and soundness, and the manner in which they have been reared, including their food shelter, &c.

The Farmer's and Grazier's Complete Guide by C. Lawrence, an English writer, observes, "Much has been written as to what breeds are the best; and a considerable greater stress has been laid on this part of the question than is borne out by any positive result; there are good and bad of all kinds; and provided you select sound and healthy animals from warranted stock, you will, if you treat them properly, have little to care for and less to fear."

"Always purchase cattle that have been fed on lands of a *poor* quality than your own; but you must not too suddenly put them to the richer food or they will be liable to several dangerous diseases. It rarely happens, however, that cattle purchased from rich lands thrive well on poor soils; but on the contrary, those from poorer farms do well on good land. The choice of neat cattle, therefore, for the stocking of farms, must, in a great degree, be regulated by the nature and quality of the soil intended to feed them on."

It is also essential that the cattle should be young, as well as healthy and of sound constitution; for the younger they are, the more likely they will be to do service. Their age may easily be known by the teeth; like sheep, they have no fore teeth in the upper jaw; it is in the lower, therefore, by which this must be determined: the horns also afford some guide in this respect.

The eight fore teeth of the lower jaw are shed and replaced by others which continue through life: the two middle fore teeth fall out at about two years old, and are succeeded by others not so white. At three years old they have two more next to those of the previous year; and thus by the two succeeding years all the fore teeth are renewed, they are then termed full mouthed, and are five years old. At the sixth year the row is even, the last two being completely up. Besides these they have ten grinders in each jaw.

At the age of three years the horns are smooth and even; in the course of the fourth year, a wrinkle or circle forms round the basis of the horn near the head; this is every year succeeded by another, which always seems to move the other forward. At looking therefore at the horns of neat cattle, if the first circle be considered as three years, it will be an easy task to tell the age of the beast at any subsequent period. An imputation cannot, however, be placed on these remarks, particularly in purchasing of strangers, or cow jobbers, such persons have been known to file down some of the animal's teeth and alter the appearance of the horns so as to give them the semblance and marks of young cattle of the most valuable breeds, and pass them off as such to strangers.

*Cows for the dairy.* In selecting cows for the dairy, the following indications should be attended to. Wide horns, thin head and neck dew-lap large, full breast, broad back, large deep belly; the udder capacious but not too fleshy; the milk veins prominent, and the bag tending far behind; teats long and large; buttocks broad and fleshy; tail long, pliable; and

small in proportion to the size of the carcass and the joints short. The Alderney breed, gives a very rich milk. The Durham short horns, however, exceeds them as respects quantity; and we have the testimony of the Hon. Levi Lincoln, late governor of Massachusetts, that the milk of Denton's progeny, a branch of that race, is not only abundant, but of excellent quality.

Cows should be milked regularly morning and evening, and as nearly as may be at the same hours. At six in the morning and six at night is a good general rule, as the times of milking will be equi-distant from each other. But if they are milked three times a day, as Dr. Anderson recommended, the times may be five, one, and eight. He asserted, that if cows were full fed, they will give half as much again if milked three times as if only twice. At the same time, it would prevent too great a distension of their bags, to which the best cows are liable.

The cow which is desired to remain in perfection, either for milking or breeding, should not be exhausted by drawing her milk too long after she becomes heavy with calf. It is paying too dear for a present supply of milk. She should be suffered to go dry at least two months before calving.

The expense of keeping cows of a poor breed is as great and sometimes greater than that of keeping the best. If cows are poorly kept the difference of breeds will be scarcely discernible by the product of their milk. Some have therefore supposed that it is the food alone which makes the odds in the quantity and quality of the milk. This supposition is very erroneous, as may be seen by feeding two cows of a similar age, size, &c. on the same food, the one of a good breed for milk and the other of a different kind, and observing the difference in the milk product. No farmer, unless he is very rich, can afford to keep poor milk cows. He might almost as well keep a breed of "naked sheep," such as Swift mentions in Gulliver's Travels. The farmer who raises a heifer calf that is from a poor milk, or of a breed of little value, is as foolish as he would be if in clearing land he should burn on the ground the birch, maple, and walnut, and save white pine and hemlock for firewood. And yet many sell the calves of the best milk cows to the butchers, because such calves are fattest!

Those cows which give the greatest quantity of thin milk are most profitable for suckling calves, for rich milk is said not to be so proper food for calves as milk which is less valuable for dairy purposes. Milk which contains a large proportion of cream is apt to clog the stomachs of calves; obstruction puts a stop to their thriving, and sometimes proves fatal. For this reason it is best that calves should be fed with the milk which first comes from the cow, which is not so rich as that which is last drawn.

Mr. Russell Woodward, in the *Memoirs of the New York Board of Agriculture*, says, "I have found that young cows, the first year that they give milk, may be made with careful milking and good keeping to give milk almost any length of time required. But if they are left to dry up early in the fall, they will be sure to dry up of their milk each succeeding year; if they have a calf near the same season of the year; and nothing but extraordinary keeping will prevent it, and that but for a short time. I have had them dried up of their milk in August, and could not by any means make them give milk much beyond that time in any succeeding years."

\* I have two cows now that were milked the first year they had calves till near the time of their calving again, and have continued to give milk as late ever since, if we will milk them.

A writer in the *Bath and West of England Society's Papers*, states that if at any time a good milk cow should go dry before her milk is gone, get a young calf and put it to her in order to preserve her milk against another year; for it is well known, if a cow goes dry one year, nature will lose its power of acting in future.

Cows should be treated with great gentleness and soothed by mild unges, especially when young and ticklish, or when the paps are tender; in which case the udder ought to be fomented with warm water before milking and touched with great gentleness, otherwise the cow will be in great danger of contracting bad habits, becoming stubborn and unruly, and retaining her milk ever after. A cow never gives down her milk pleasantly to a person she dreads or dislikes. The udder and paps should be washed with warm water before milking, and care should be taken that none of the water be admitted into the milking pail.

The keeping of cows in such a manner as to make them give the greatest quantity of milk, and with the greatest clear profit, is an essential point of economy. Give a cow half a bushel of turnips, carrots, or other good roots per day, during the six winter months, besides her hay, and if her summer feed be such as it should be, she will give nearly double the quantity of milk she would afford if only kept during the winter in the usual manner; and the milk will be richer and of better quality.

The carrots or other roots, at nineteen cents a bushel, amount to about eighteen dollars; the addition of milk, allowing it to be only three quarts a day for three hundred days, at three cents a quart, twenty-seven dollars. It should be remembered, too, that when cows are thus fed with roots, they consume less hay, and are less liable to several diseases, which are usually the effects of poor keeping.

The keeping of cows is very profitable. Allowing one to give only six quarts a day, for forty weeks in each year, and this is not a large allowance, her milk at two cents a quart will amount to upwards of thirty three dollars; which is probably sufficient to purchase her and pay for a year's keeping.

A farmer some years since kept eighteen cows on a common, and was often obliged to buy butter for his family. The common was inclosed, and the same person supplied his family amply with milk and butter from the produce of four cows well kept.

Great milkers seldom carry much flesh on their bones, but they pay as they go and never retire in our debt. The difficulties in cow keeping are these: the expense of their food is considerable, more especially with respect to any which must be purchased, and if the produce be inconsiderable it may be a losing concern. You may be feeding a spring milk-er into flesh, and if you stint her or allow her only ordinary food you get neither flesh nor milk.

Amateurs in this line should procure the largest milkers, and I had almost said give them gold, could they eat it. In this case it may be depended on, milk is always of more value than the best cow-food; and a cow, the natural tendency of which is to breed milk, will convert all nourishment, however dry and substantial, into that fluid; in fact will require such solid kind of nourishment to support her strength and induce her to take the bull.

Keep no more cows than you can keep well; one cow well fed will produce as much milk as two indifferently treated, and more butter; and if the cow be wintered badly, she will rarely recover, during the succeeding summer, so as to become profitable to the feeder. Cows

\* Farmer's Assistant. † Mowbray on Poultry, &c.