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WHAT COW TESTING IS DOING FOR THE FARMERS OF SOUTH LANARK

F. C. Nunnick, Perth, Ont.

It is emphasizing many facts of importance, chief among which are the difference between thinking and knowing, the value of supplementary feeding while on pasture, and the wide variation that exists in the production of individual cows

In order to be able to see marked changes and benefits accruing directly from the work of a cow testing association one must see the results of an association which has been in existence for some time. The benefit a farmer receives and which he is able to make of practical value to himself does not come from one summer's testing, but from many years of careful weighing, testing, weeding, breeding and feeding. As the South Lanark Cow Testing Association has been in existence for but a short time, this being only the second season, the greater results have not as yet been obtained.

There have, however, been emphasized many facts of great importance. One of the first things we have learned is that without the actual weighing and testing there is a good deal of uncertainty and guess work in connection with our dairy operations. Very often the cow which we think the best in the herd is by no means deserving of this distinction.

KNOWING VS. THINKING.

One man while in conversation with the secretary a short time since, stated that he was very much surprised to find how mistaken he had been in his idea of which cow gave the most milk. Now this is an all important point, for many farmers are apt to breed from the cow which they think but do not know is best. When the farmer knows which are his best cows, he can then begin to weed out the poor ones, breed from the best ones and build up a herd which will not consume any more feed or take any longer to care for, but will produce more milk; in fact the increase may be just the difference between profit and loss, or if his herd was a paying one before, the increase will be clear profit.

There is already evidence of great interest being taken in this process of selecting out the best. In a few years there will be a great improvement in the averages of the dairy herds of this section, resulting from such selection.

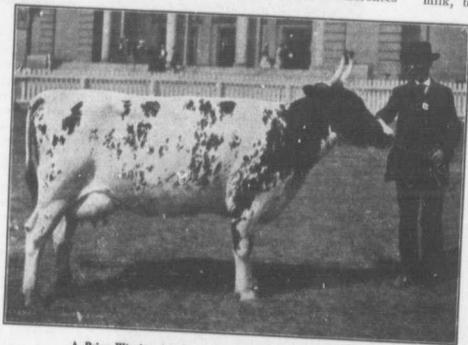
VALUE OF SUMMER FEEDING.

Another very important point to which we had our attention called is the value of summer feeding. Here are some figures taken from the July sheets. The first figures are 50 lbs., 23 lbs., 28 lbs., being the weights of milk for the 9th, 19th and 29th of July, respectively, of a cow belonging to a man who did not have a silo and did no summer feeding. Now here are some figures taken from the July sheets again of a man who has a silo and saved some silage for summer feeding, when the pastures were short. The figures are 92 1/2 lbs. for the 9th, 80 1/2 lbs. for the 19th and 30 1/2 lbs. for the 29th. July, for the most

part was very dry, there being scarcely any rain until the 22nd, when we had a general three days' rain.

NOTABLE VARIATIONS EXPLAINED.

It will be noticed that in the first instance the milk yield fell from 30 lbs. on the 9th to 23 lbs. on the 19th, then increased again to 28 lbs. by the 29th after the rain. In the second instance it will be seen that there was very little fluctuation in the yield right straight through the month, due entirely to the fact that the pasture was supplemented with silage. Now, some may think that these are extreme cases, but they are not. They are neither the highest nor the lowest, nor do they show the greatest variations existing, but rather they show just about what the differences



A Prize Winning Ayrshire at the Canadian National Exhibition

This four year old Ayrshire cow, Annie of Warkworth, E. H. Co., owned by Hume & Co., of Menie, Ont., won third prize at the Toronto Exhibition last week. As a two year old she qualified in the Record of Performance class record of 5,670 lbs. of milk, testing over 4 per cent.

are throughout the association between those receiving silage or green feed and those depending entirely upon the pastures. This will no doubt forcibly illustrate the fact that summer feeding pays and pays handsomely, for very seldom will the milk flow come up again to what it was before a big drop, caused by dry weather and short pastures.

SECOND SILOS FOR SUMMER FEEDING.

There are already in the County many silos, and a great many more are going up this year. Some of these being built this year are for farmers who before had none and a good number of farmers are putting up second silos on their farms as one will not contain sufficient silage to winter feed and summer feed as well.

Quite a number sow oats and early corn for feeding when the pastures are short. This is a

splendid practice and one which can be followed by almost every farmer.

BENEFITS FROM THE ACTUAL TEST.

We have spoken chiefly of the benefits derived from a correct knowledge of the weight of milk produced by each cow, being able to see the period of falling off in weight, etc. Now let us briefly outline the benefits derived from the actual test. The cheese factories here run for about six months in the year and pay by the pooling system, hence the importance of keeping up the weight of milk turned in. On the other hand there are several months when the milk is made into butter. This is when the amount of butter fat is of most importance. Here let us again look at some figures. In a herd of 18 cows one cow gave 900 lbs. of milk during May testing 2.8 per cent fat, making a total amount of fat for the month of 26.88 lbs. Another cow in the same herd, during the same month, gave 880 lbs. of milk testing 4 per cent. fat, or a total for the month of 35.20 lbs. butter fat. Some might be tempted to breed from the cows giving the most milk, but we must take into consideration also the fat producing qualities if we are to select most intelligently and profitably. Then, having the records in both weights of milk and butter fat, and they are great guides, we must combine patience and care in selection in order to build up and establish herds which will make the greatest returns. A herd averaging a good yield of milk testing say 3.5 per cent fat is more profitable than a herd of extremes and there is no reason why the average of every herd in the Association cannot be raised, and the belief it will be raised.

A CONCLUDING WORD.

Now, just a word to those contemplating the organization of a cow testing association or the joining of one. Do not expect results too soon. Have patience. Be willing to spend some of your time towards raising the standard of your herd and incidentally to the raising of the standards of the dairy products of your whole community.

Succulent Feed for Winter

T. H. Dinwiddie, B.S.A., Carleton Co., Ont.

Pasture is the cheapest and most economical food we have, but it has been rather scarce at times this past summer, besides it is of very little use in winter. It should be the aim of every farmer to grow some succulent crop for winter feeding so that the grass, to a certain extent, may be replaced. There is nothing that can equal corn well sowed in the silage form for this purpose. True, roots are succulent and are very good, in fact excellent, but as factory men dare not feed turnips. Mangels are excellent and do not taint the milk, but unless the tops are left on the land they deplete the soil.

Corn gives us a larger yield per acre than do roots, and with corn we get the grain, which is very valuable and increases the feeding qualities of our silage.