

Issued
Each Week

FARM AND DAIRY

RURAL HOME

Only \$1.00
a Year

Vol. XXVIII.

FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 30, 1909.

No. 52.

DOUBLING THE MILK PRODUCTION OF A DAIRY HERD

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How one young man built up a High-Producing Herd of Dairy Cows from Common Grades. History of this Herd, its Management, and a Summary of Profits Produced

PREVIOUS to the Holsteins now kept, our cattle were for the most part, grade Shorthorns; some possessed a little Jersey blood. These were cows kept by my father until eight years ago. At that time, these cattle were thought to be very good cows. They gave from 3,000 to 5,000 pounds of milk a year. For 12 cows, the average was 4,500 pounds. At that time, I was quite a young fellow just in my 'teens. I had a particular fancy for working with the cows to see how much I could make them give in a year when fed on the average coarse fodders grown on the farm. I was not allowed to feed much grain; it was thought to be very foolish to feed grain profit. Eight or 10 years ago many dairymen were of the same opinion. Perhaps they were partly right, when we consider the class of cow the average dairymen was keeping, the majority only giving 2,000 or 3,000 pounds of milk in a year.

THE PLAN ADOPTED

We, who are feeding grain to-day would hesitate to feed grain to such worthless cows, too. What we want is better cows, and more careful feeders. Our old grade Shorthorn cows could average their 4,500 pounds, but I felt that there was room for lots of improvement as other men were making great headway by introducing good blood into their herds through some good bull. As I could not afford high priced cows, I adopted this plan of grading up with a good sire.

The first year that I used my bull, I got 10 fine heifer calves; four others I got from neighbors who had brought their very best cows to my bull, making in all 14, all calves of the same Spring. These I raised well, not keeping them fat, but feeding them to make good bone and muscle, also teaching them to eat and digest many of the coarse fodders that we expect our good cows to feed upon. At from 15 to 18 months old all these heifers were bred, bringing them into milking at 24 to 28 months old. After milking my heifers for one year, I could easily see that I had made a very marked improvement in my herd. Their average production was 6,500 pounds milk, just 2,000 more than their mothers that were milked cows.

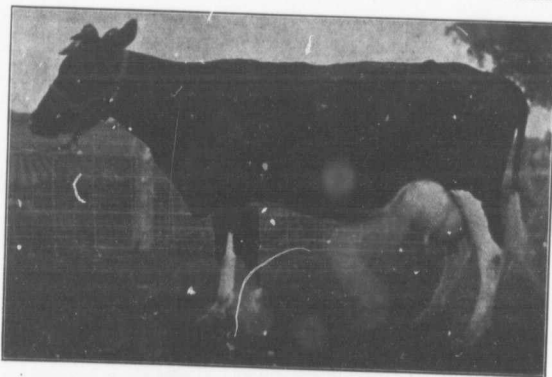
COST OF INCREASED PRODUCTION

These heifers did not cost me a cent more to

feed for the year than did their mothers. As these young cows grew older, they gradually increased their average until now I have a herd of 20 grade Holsteins, which are averaging 9,144 pounds for this year. This is after five years of breeding up the herd. You will notice that the heifers beat their mothers by 2,000 pounds. But at the end of five years they had 4,644 pounds to the good, a little over twice as much as the total production of their dams. The average test for these cattle was 3.8 per cent. fat, 388.1 lbs. for the year.

METHOD OF FEEDING

While introducing good blood into one's herd is one thing, to produce the proper kinds of feed



Another Cow that bids fair to become a Record Breaker

De Koe Plus, No. 783, owned by S. J. Foster, Prince Edward Co., Ont., has to her credit for seven months in 1909, a yield of 15,276 lbs. of milk; April, 2,029 lbs.; May, 2,354 lbs.; June, 2,452 lbs.; July, 2,375 lbs.; August, 2,275 lbs.; September, 2,085 lbs.; October, 2,004 lbs. How would you like to own such a cow? What efforts are you putting forth to make the milk production.

stuffs and to feed them properly is quite another proposition. The best of feeders are learning from experience each day better ways of feeding. If you will follow me I will give you my method. I will take you back to the time when the cow is just dry and we shall begin to feed her, say eight or 10 weeks before freshening.

After milking for 10 months, we often find a cow a little run down in condition, some more so than others. Now is your opportunity to build her up, and also help her to produce a well developed calf. To do this, you must not follow the old method of feeding her nothing but straw three times a day, sending her to some creek with a hole out in the ice to get her water, and allow-

ing her to come to her stall again after drinking a large quantity of ice cold water, shivering, perhaps for a half hour afterwards.

In order to have a cow freshen in good shape, I would aim to feed a variety of bulky foods with some concentrates, depending on the condition of the cow. The bulky foods can be made up of good oat straw and a few corn stalks, some clover hay, ensilage and a few roots. For concentrates use bran, oil-cake, and oat chop.

RATIONS FED

In feeding these foods, I would say feed five lbs. straw; eight lbs. cut dry corn; clover or alfalfa, six lbs.; ensilage, 20 lbs.; roots, 15 lbs.; concentrates composed of one pound bran, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. oil-cake, $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. oat chop, two pounds. A few days before freshening, I would cut out some of the bulky foods, such as the straw and dry cut corn and feed lightly on the other foods, as they will keep her in the proper condition for freshening.

After freshening cows are generally very thirsty and a little weak. To brace her strength and quench her thirst, get about three pounds of good wheat bran and pour enough scalding water on this bran to cover it, let stand a few minutes, then add cold water until it is like water with the chill taken off, and give it to the cow. There are very few cows that will refuse this kind of a drink after just having calved, and it just seems to set them on the way for doing well. For the next few days, feed very light until the cow gets over all udder swelling and her appetite has become quite normal. Many men make the mistake of feeding too heavily on the start. I find it is always safer to underfeed a little for the first four or five days, and then very gradually add the different foods, pound by pound until you have her to the quantity at which she pays the best.

THE DAILY PRACTICE

In other words, feed for rather do better on one kind of food observe for himself. It is when he can observe the cows' likes and dislikes and is guided by them in his feeding, that he will get the best results. My method for feeding the average cow is as follows: At five in the morning, four to five lbs. of alfalfa hay is fed; after milking, 10 to 15 lbs. of roots, 15 lbs. ensilage. On top of roots and ensilage is given eight to 12 lbs. meal according to amount of milk given. My rule is to feed one pound of meal for every four to five pounds of milk produced. After this is cleaned up, a little oat straw is thrown in the manger; the cow often enjoys picking over this until her