

Selecting a Herd Sire

More Particularly of the Holstein Breed

HAROLD McALISTER, in the H.-F. World.

IN selecting a young herd sire we would take three qualities into consideration: breeding, individuality and color. The price of a bull is determined most largely by the seven-day butter record of the dam regardless of whether the cow tested three and one-half per cent. or six per cent., or whether the dam made a good 30-day record or could not finish her test for a month. We believe that this is blind adherence to the record of the dam, because it is 20 or 40 pounds without taking other factors into consideration will in time work to the detriment of the breed and can not too strongly be condemned. While we would prefer the dam of a bull to be a high tester, if she made her high tests in yearly work, we would discount any percentage of fat over four and one-half per cent. for seven days as being abnormal and not likely to be the true indication of a cow's natural test. We would demand that the dam of the bull make a 30-day record and would not buy a bull out of any cow no matter how large her seven-day record if she could not finish out her test for a month. It happens only too often that a cow will test five per cent. or six per cent. for seven days, and will not be giving three per cent. milk at the end of the month and her record is never reported for more than seven days.

If a cow has made a yearly record in addition to her seven and 30-day test it adds just so much more on to the value of the bull, as persistency is one of the most valuable points to look for in a dairy cow.

When Value Increases.

We would prefer to buy a son of a bull that has some great record daughters but this fact is not important providing the sire is in good hands where his daughters will have the proper opportunity. If one buys a bull in one of the leading herds the bull has more chance to increase in value by his dam increasing her record or his sisters making large records than if he were selected out of a small herd where few records were being made.

We would make an important factor of individuality demanding that the bull be straight on the rump and show wood depth and constitution. Under no circumstance would we ever select a bull no matter what his breeding may be if he was not carried out well on his back, for a sloping rumped bull will generally get sloping rumped offspring which will be hard to sell at any price. It is a good plan where possible to inspect the dam of a bull as to her individuality for if she is

"wasp waisted" or carries a poor udder it is likely that her sons will have such daughters also.

Color?

In regard to color it is hard to give a definite answer as the locality in which the breeder is situated is of great importance. Here in California there is a strong demand for white or nicely marked bulls among the grade dairymen, and it is sometimes hard to get rid of a black bull. In other parts of the United States there is little preference between the white and the black.

We have noticed, however, that many of the biggest breeders have taken care to see that their herd sires were nicely marked and have made money by it for the reason that their offspring were easier to sell. There is no doubt but a Holstein evenly marked is a handsomer animal in general than a Holstein that is mostly black and also takes a better photograph. If a bull is black but has fairly white ancestry he should not be discriminated against especially if the herd is nicely marked, but it is well to stay clear of the bull that is black, and that comes from black ancestry unless one has very light females to breed him on to.

The tendency of the breed is generally towards the black and while it is easy to get a herd that will be mostly black it is sometimes difficult to get out of the "rut," and have a nicely marked herd again.

A Good Farm Manager

Makes His Farm Self-Sustaining

"LET the price of wheat go up if it wants to. I have raised enough for my own use and so have my neighbors." This is a statement from a dairy farmer made to Hoard's Dairyman recently. He said further: "I have raised a larger variety of crops this year than in other years, and I will have to purchase very little food for the family and but a small amount of alfalfa hay."

There is a lesson in the statements of this farmer. His situation shows what good farm management means. He has raised the greater part of his food and must buy but little and has raised crops which are suitable for making rations for his live stock. He will have to spend but little for mill or other kinds of feeds in order to provide the very best of rations.

He is not complaining of his lot but has planned to meet the present situation in an intelligent manner. He is not depending upon the feed dealer for all his feeds but is making his farm produce the kind of crops his stock needs. No cows are leaving his farm because of the high prices of feeds and because there is no money in milk.



Coarse Grains are Plentiful This Year.

This illustration shows a grain field on the farm of Chas. Twiss, Halton Co., Ont., that is typical of thousands of fields in Ontario—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

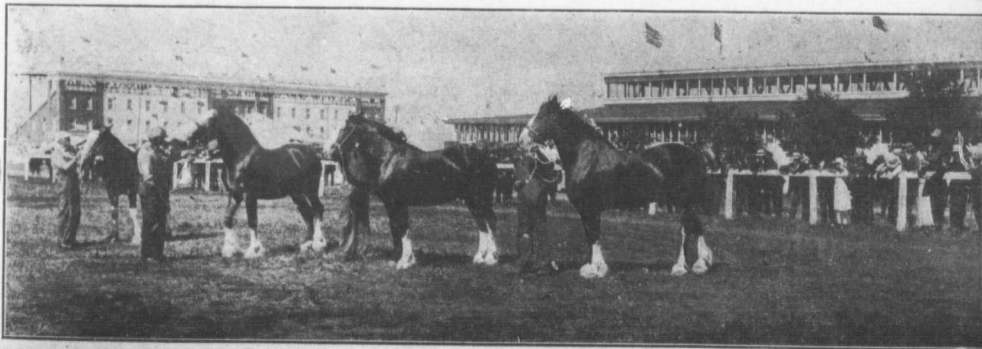
We said to him: "Would it not be more profitable to sell your cows and then sell the feed instead of making milk?"

Cows Utilize Waste.

"Well, I do not think so. In keeping cows I am making use of all my corn crop, otherwise I would lose one-third of its feeding value, for I could make no use of the cornstalks. I realize alfalfa is selling for \$17 a ton, but milk will be sufficiently high in price this winter to pay a profit on hay costing more than \$17 a ton. On the other hand, supposing it would pay me to sell my grain, hay, and the cows this fall. Next year I would have to buy another herd, and that would not be profitable. This year my cows have produced well on nothing but grass. The land which I have in pasture will yield more that way than in any other way, in fact, some of it cannot be plowed.

"There would be no money in dairying if I had to purchase all my feeds or all my meal, but no good farmer does that. He may purchase a little ground feed to supplement what he raises, but that is all. I use my cows to utilize the feeds which would go to waste without them. I know they pay when the right methods of providing for the cows are followed."

The interview with this man was refreshing and encouraging. He sized up the situation of the dairy farmer in a very sensible way, and we know he is making good with the cow.



Fairs in Western Canada are becoming known for their strong horse classes. This line-up was seen at the Brandon Fair in Manitoba.

—Photo courtesy Colonization Branch, Manitoba.