The Feeding of Dairy Test Champions

Rations Consumed by Roxie Posch and Miss La Honda when under Test

"THESE are great cows, Jack, great cows!" The speaker stepped this way and that way to examine all the points of Roxie Posch and her stall mate. The card above Roxie told all who cared to read that she was champion producer of the Winter Fair Dairy Test for 1914. "I'd like to know how she was fed," he added.

"If you knew that, you wouldn't think so much of the cow," remarked his companion testily. "They eat their heads off, cows like that. I'd like to know just how many bushels of grain a day that cow gets. I'll bet you her owner wouldn't tell us."

Here were two men, whos conversation we overheard at the last Winter Fair at Guelph, taking exactly opposite views as to the value of high-producing cows, and yet both curious to know something about their feeding. It occurred to us that many of Our Folks might be asking themselves the same question. Accordingly, we decided to interview Mr. Cherry and see if he would reveal some of the feeding secrets that speaker No. 2 had been so positive were not for publication. We also asked Mr. Cherry for information on other points that might have influenced the yield, apart from the milk breeding of the animal.

High Condition Not An Essential

"Most people are carried away with the idea that a cow to be in a condition to win a grand championship at a Dairy Test must necessarily be given a long period of rest before freshening and that she must also be in a condition akin to Christmas beef," remarked Mr. Cherry. "Now there is Roxie Posch. As you see, she made 253.6 pounds of milk, testing 3.6, in the three days. Yet she was not dry on October 7th. She freshened on November 22nd. Six weeks' rest was all she had. Feeding? Why, yes. She was turned to pasture on June 1st, and received no grain nor ensilage thereafter until stabled permanently about October 15th. She was then fed 20 pounds of silage morning and evening, with the addition of three pounds of oil cake, four pounds chopped oats, two pounds of bran, and a few mangels. At noon she had a forkful of hay only. About a week or 10 days before freshening I cut out the oat chop and bran, and gave her one and one-half pounds of oil meal night and morning on her ensilage. That's what she got, with the addition of a little bran until she came to her milk."

"And what about her feeding during the actual test?" we inquired. "The last three days."

"Two pounds gluten feed, one and one-half pounds oil meal, two pounds oat chop, one pound cottonseed, and one-half pound of bran. In all seven pounds," narrated Mr. Cherry. "Then there was 25 pounds of red table beets, with a pinch of salt. This feed was given her while she was being milked, three times daily. Then morning and evening I have been giving her about 10 pounds of ensilage at a feed, and at all times access to all the good, well-cured, first cutting alfalfa hay she cares to eat, and that is no small quantity, as you can see."

"Of course," added Mr. Cherry, "the same care might be given many cows with nothing like the same results. Roxie has great constitution and capacity. She weighs 1,510 pounds in milking form."

The Feeding at Ottawa

Mr. Cherry was even more successful in the Dairy Test at Ottawa the following month than he had been at Guelph. Again we asked him for his feeding ration.

"Princess Abbekerk Cubana, my four-year-old, was fed much the same rations as Roxie, except that she got only 18 pounds of meal a day, as compared with Roxie's 21, and was fed mangel and turnips, instead of red beets. My three-year-old, Mercedes Lady Mechthilde, the grand champion, was fed much the same as was Roxie before freshening. She had nearly two months' rest previous to freshening. As she was very fresh while the test was on, I gave her only a slight ration of bran and a little oil meal with plenty of roots and alfalfa hay."

How Many Cows Would These Feed?

These silos are on the farm of Mr. Chas McFarland, of Texas. An idea of the extent of feeding operations on this farm may be gained from the capacity of Mr. McFarland's silos,—800 and 1,000 tons each. —Photo courtesy Silver Manufacturing Company.

"My cows, as seen at the fairs, are in no better fleshing than the average of the ones that I have at home," concluded Mr. Cherry. "They derive their condition from the good pastures and choice alfalfa grown in Old Haldimand, the banner alfalfa county of Ontario." Cherry always gets in a good word for his own county.

The grand champion cows at both Ottawa and Guelph are supposed to have broken any similar record previously made in the world. But the winter of 1914-15 was an unusual one for record-breaking, and the world's record was broken a third time and a new one established by Miss LaHonda, the grand and good cow owned by Samuel Dickie & Sons, Central Onslow, N. S. The most enthusiastic Holstein member of the firm, Mr. Arthur Dickie, recently attended the annual meeting of the association in Toronto, and being a boyhood friend of one of the editors of Farm and Dairy, we felt at liberty to ask him, too, for some of his feeding "secrets."

The Ration of Miss LaHonda

"No objections in the world to telling you all about it," responded Mr. Dickie. "We haven't any secrets, when it comes to our feeding methods. During the three days of the test Miss LaHonda was fed 90 to 100 pounds of turnips, four pounds cottonseed, three pounds oil meal, five pounds oat chop, five to six pounds of bran, two pounds of middlings, and as much good mixed hay as she cared to eat. You will notice that this ration comprises a lot of heavy grain feed. This could be fed safely, because Miss LaHonda was eating so many roots. We first fed her the meal, then the roots, and then the hay. We fed three times a day, as we milked her three times during the test. At home, when milking four times a day, we divided her ration into four feeds."

We asked for additional information. Said Mr. Dickie, "Miss LaHonda was dry nine or 10 weeks previous to freshening. She calved the first of October on pasture. At the time she was getting bran and a little oats and oil meal, a few pounds a day. About five pounds, I should say. She was on good marsh pasture. After she calved we gave her all the turnip tops she would eat and what meal she would eat along with it. Here again we could feed almost any quantity of meal and consider it safe because of the turnip tops. We always watched her closely to see that she didn't get more than she would clean up rapidly. She seemed to prefer the turnips when

The majority of breeders who are making good records with their cattle, we have found, are just as frank in giving their feeding methods as are Mr. Cherry or Mr. Dickie. Finally, does it pay? Twenty or more pounds of grain a day seems like heavy feeding, but when a cow is capable of giving 80 to 100 pounds or more of milk a day doesn't she pay for it? A little arithmetic computation will show that the returns on the profit side are altogether satisfactory.

The Why of a Stand of Clover

The Quantity of Seed Influences Largely the Crop Yield

THE hay crop has been light for the last two years. It seemed almost impossible to get a catch of clover. I notice that my neighbors who make a practice of seeding down often seem to have better luck than the majority of us. But a few years ago I came to the conclusion that thin seeding was, in a large degree, the cause of light clover crops.

I had purchased a new seeder. Setting the grass seed attachment for what I thought was my usual rate, I started sowing in a five acre field. But before I had the field half finished I ran out of grass seed. I got some more and changed the drill. I made sure this time that it was sowing at the rate of 10 lbs. The seed was red clover and timothy, half and half.

A Victory For Heavy Seeding

The next year the difference between the two parts of the field was remarkable. Where the clover had been seeded thickly there was a good stand. The clover plants grew thick and fine. On the other side of the field there was an occasional coarse clover plant and a thin seeding of timothy. I have forgotten the number of loads, but when haying time came the thick seeded part gave fully three times the amount of hay yielded by the thinly seeded portion. While visiting a friend in another county, I chanced to call on a German farmer noted for his ability to grow great crops of clover. During the course of conversation my friend asked, "Say, is it you always get a catch of clover, no matter how unfavorable the season, when the rest of us fail?"

"It's like this," was the answer. "You sow after a clover seed here and there, and say 'God bless that clover seed.' I open my seeder as wide as I can and really give the Almighty a chance."

—Harry M. Stevenson, Renfrew Co., Ont.

We want to-day greater executive ability among the men in agricultural production. It is very well to talk about hiring men but it takes good ability to make money out of the labor we employ. Let us study the financial side of the farm.—Nelson Montcith, Perth Co., Ont.