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No. 4

THE WORK OF THE DAIRY RECORD CENTRES IN 1912

By Chas. F. Whitley, Dairy Division, Ottawa

How Progressive, Business-like Dairy Farmers are Discovering their Cow Boarders—How the Government is Helping in the Good Work—Its Financial Value.

It is beginning to be recognized that a cow is kept not simply to consume roughage and concentrates, but to produce milk and fat in abundance. Further, not only is a large production necessary from each, but a good profit must be made. That is the essence of modern business-like dairying. The profit made depends largely on the cow's inherent ability to convert feed into these products economically. It is evident that if the production is \$80 worth of milk or fat at a feed cost of \$55, the net profit is only a bare \$5 bill, and is not a good return for her \$5 work. But \$50 worth of product at a feed cost of \$30 makes another cow, with her \$20 profit, just four times as profitable. Such study of dairy economics is only possible when dairy records are kept, and it is to this laudable end—a large profit from each cow—that the Dairy Division at Ottawa works through the recommendation of systematic cow testing, the bedrock principle of dairy herd improvement. Our wide-awake and progressive men appreciate it.

Unless figures are actually before one, the variations in production found in the same herd seem almost incredible. For instance, in three Ontario herds, the difference in yield between the best and the poorest cow, runs actually at 8,100, 9,100, and 10,900 pounds of milk; the two extremes are 3,600 and 17,615 pounds. This proves immediately that neither an occasional sample tested or pailful weighed, nor a hasty figuring of the herd's average yield can possibly give any measure of justice either to the abundant or to the economical producer, so that the knowledge requisite to building up a good herd has still to be sought. That knowledge can be found in dairy records.

ONE COW MAY REAR LOSS OF 10

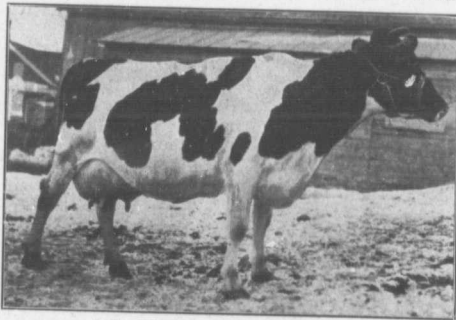
The more the question of net profit per cow is looked into, the more singular are the discoveries. A common showing in many districts is that one-third of the total net profit in a herd of eight or 10 cows is made by only one, the best cow. That one good cow, earning \$43 profit over a feed cost of \$37, sometimes makes as much profit as to combine the profit and loss of the six poorest cows. Such a heavy burden is not fair play to her.

A cow giving \$41 worth of milk at a feed cost of \$37 makes only \$4 profit; the cow with \$43 profit noted above makes as much profit as 10 cows of that kind. Such comparisons abundantly prove the necessity of studying each individual. Let us cease this unsatisfactory, unenlightening talking of the herd "average." It is rapid Socialism, steam-rolling to one dead level independent of strong individuality and ability.

The following chart illustrates the startling difference between average and individual profit or loss.

WHAT PROFIT PER COW DO YOU MAKE?					
Herd No.	No. Cows	Lbs. Milk	Lbs. Fat	Feed Cost	Average Profit
1	10	6,238	231	840	\$22.90
2	6	3,662	129	833	8.35
3	9	10,133	361	950	\$61.33

POOREST COW.			BEST COW.		
Lbs. Milk	Lbs. Fat	Profit	Lbs. Milk	Lbs. Fat	Profit
4,346	157	\$ 3.45	7,665	275	\$ 36.65
3,176	78	\$11.24	5,360	191	\$ 20.60
		(loss)			
7,672	292	\$26.72	17,615	619	\$126.15



A Test Winner that has Won Deserved Fame

Rhoda's Queen, the fourteen-year-old cow here illustrated, has had a notable career, being champion two-year-old in the Ottawa Dairy Test, champion cow in 1910, champion milker in 1912, making over 100 lbs. of milk a day, and grand champion at Ottawa last week. Notice the grand constitution and splendid capacity of this cow. She is an ideal producing type.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

This photograph in figures shows three herds in strong contrast. The yield of milk in Herd 3 is almost three times that of Herd 2, but the average profit is 14 times as great. This is despite the feed costing \$17 a cow more.

Note the difference in the average yields of milk from 3,600 to 10,000 pounds a cow. It would be just as sensible, perhaps more so, to say that the three herds average 6,700 pounds of milk, as to say that your own herd averages so and so. We must study individual performance. It is just a suicidal policy to average good and poor cows, blinding ourselves to the deadening influence of low yields and invisible profits.

The average profit in Herd 2 is just one cent for each day in the year; but the individual returns vary between \$11.24 loss and \$20.60 profit. A consideration of averages without selection on records simply means stagnation. The poorest cow in Herd 2 is a four-year-old, type of a kind we ought to be without. The searchlight of record-keeping reveals them as dangerous to dairy navigation.

The poorest cow in Herd 1 is a long way below par, or the average profit of the herd—how frightfully unfair it is, therefore, to the best cow in this herd with \$36.65 profit to have the poor one hauled up to the same level in a grossly misleading "average."

THIRTY-SIX TIMES AS GOOD AS POOR COWS

Among the best cows note the excellent record of 17,615 pounds of milk from this seven-year-old grade. Even at a feed cost of \$50, her profit is \$126.15; or, compared with the \$9.45 profit from the poorest in Herd 1, actually 36 times as much. The great economy of the really good cow is here manifest.

Investigation at five centres last year showed 3,183 cows giving an average profit of only \$13.28; no princely return for 12 months' work. It is such figures as these that the work of the Dairy Record Centres aims to thrust upon the attention of our dairymen so that intelligent and rapid herd improvement may result.

The recorders, these consulting dairy specialists, are within the dairy herd and call of the inquiring dairymen in their respective districts, despite distance or weather, and absolutely free of charge. Not much wonder, surely, that there were 14 such Recorders last year in place of six the year before, and that more are being appointed. They bring to the farm in their capacity of dairy advisers a wealth of real encouragement, useful suggestion and practical help; each Recorder proves the value of adding figuring to farming so that a simple record may assist materially in the dairymen's main endeavor to make each cow pay. That is the keynote thought in the chorus of cow testing.

Hence it is dawning on the indifferent patron and sceptic that his is the responsibility more than the cows, his brain must make deductions from his record of figures, his intellect must plan and guide the building and development of the profitable dairy herd. That natural right since the beasts of the field were assigned to his control at creation's dawn, should be both his pleasure and joy today.

The Recorder, the man with a mission, shows that each individual cow has a mission; not simply existence at the expense of her unsuspecting owner, but the making of a handsome profit. Thus, farms and districts are now in the transition stage from general to special purpose animals. Record sheets and sample bottles are giving each cow a square deal where before simply reigned mere guess work, palpably unjust to the aristocratic producer as well as to the habitual loafer. Fresh energy and determination are manifest as the benefits of a simple business proposition are taken to heart. Out of chaos and confusion of idea evolve order, system, satisfaction and profit.

The unmasking of some poor cows, shirkers of their responsibility, does not condemn dairying as a business, it has not led to gnawing misgiving of a dairymen as to his chosen voca-