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AN EXPERIENCE WITH FEEDING CATTLE

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Beef breeds are the most profitable to feed. The best results have been obtained from feeding in Stalls rather than in Loose Boxes. Cattle-feeding gives a home market for our farm produce and frequently returns a nice profit as well.

IN converting stockers into finished cattle, there are four points I have in mind always: First, the quality of the cattle; second, the quantity and cheapness of the feed I have in store for them; third, the price I am likely to get for the finished product; and, fourth, but by no means the least important, what the cattle leave on the farm in the manure to retain and build up year by year the productiveness of the land.

I feed from 30 to 40 head in my stables each year. I do not purchase all of these. My herd of 16 dairy cows, mostly grade Shorthorns, on which I use a pedigree sire, gives me nearly that number of fine growth calves. These I raise on skim milk. The number not needed for breeding purposes, are fed off when from two to two and a half years old. The balance of the number required for feeding, I purchase through a drover. This drover knowing the class of cattle I want, is on the lookout for them. This system of leaving the buying in the hands of the drover I have found to be more profitable than leaving the farm and driving over the country looking for the stockers.

FEED ANIMALS OF BEEF BREEDING

If I can avoid it, I will not feed anything but thrifty, breezy Shorthorn grades. I do not object to a Galloway or Hereford, but I keep away from the dairy breeds, for I find after they are finished, they have not put the beef where it is most valuable, as do the beef breeds. The cattle that I buy average about 900 to 1000 lbs., and cost from 3 to 3½ cents a lb. The last four years I purchased them in the latter part of August, or early in September, at which time they seemed easier to obtain. When brought home they were turned into a field of alfalfa, from which two crops of hay had been taken, the last crop being cut about the first of August. By September 1st this alfalfa had grown to nearly full height again, and furnished nearly a month of excellent pasture. The cattle produced wonderful gains on it. The alfalfa could not be pastured after the heavy frosts came, as it was neither good for the plants nor for the cattle. From this field they were turned on to other meadows, either old or new, until I felt it was time to put them into their winter quarters.

LOSSES THAT OCCURRED

Just here is where I have frequently made some serious mistakes. In the pressure of work in the autumn the cattle were left to feed on the frosted grass, and roam about in the cold, damp nights, thereby losing flesh in a few days that had taken a month to put on, and that required probably more than that time to replace. Thus a loss of two months or more of the cheapest feeding resulted. This took away a large profit that might easily have been retained.

The cattle were placed in the stables about the first of November, or earlier, if they were to

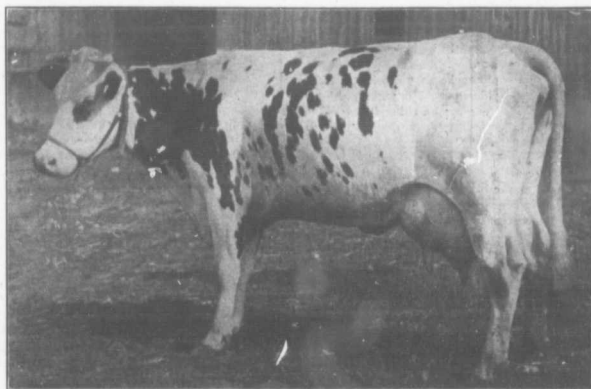
be finished for the mid-winter market. At this time they were in prime condition for the local butcher trade. They responded at once in gains when liberally stall fed. They were all tied in pairs, and graded down the row according to size, giving them a uniform appearance. They were only turned out about half-a-dozen times during the feeding period for a short run, and a rub around the stack, if there happened to be one.

A TRIAL OF LOOSE FEEDING

I have fed two bunches of cattle loose at different times, but they were not a success. I

I began feeding ensilage quite freely as soon as the steers were tied in the stalls. This plan overcomes the change from the grass to stall feeding. At the beginning of the feeding season the ensilage and chaff, and a little salt, were mixed together in the forenoon for the feed of the afternoon and the next morning. After feeding this a small quantity of the chopped grass was given to each beast. When this was eaten up a small quantity of clover hay, just what they would clean up, was given them. About the time the hay was finished, and they had taken their morning drink, the stables were cleaned, and fresh straw was put in for bedding; then the feed was mixed for the afternoon and the following morning's feeds. At half past four the evening feeding operations were performed.

As the feeding period advanced their feed was gradually changed. The chaff was reduced until the mixing was dropped out entirely. The hay



SARA JEWEL HENGERVERELD 3rd

This cow, referred to in our issue of August 12, has recently made a phenomenal record. She gave 91 lbs. milk in one day; 60.1 lbs. milk and 26.37 lbs. butter in seven days; 203.1 lbs. milk, 121.57 lbs. butter in 30 days. These are the largest butter records ever made in Canada. This cow and her dam Sara Jewel Hengerveld, a photo of which appeared on our front cover for August 19, are owned by Brown Bros., Leeds Co., Ont.

cleaned out their boxes only every two or three weeks. It took a large quantity of straw to keep them clean, and after they had been in for two months they would gain very little. My stabling, therefore, is all arranged in stalls, with water constantly before each pair of cattle.

The winter feed for the cattle consisted, for the most part, of well matured corn ensilage, alfalfa and red clover hay, wheat chaff, together with a grain ration of a mixture of oats and barley, with a few peas grown as a mixed crop. For eight years, since growing corn in large quantities for the silos, I have dropped the roots out entirely, and since growing alfalfa I have not purchased any mill feed. I grow all the grain I require for my dairy herd, for my steer feeding, and for finishing four to six litters of pigs annually.

and grain rations were increased, however, the grain feed was never a heavy one. I will not give any exact ration, because every feeder must decide on that for himself, according to the kinds and quantities of feed he has stored in his stables. If I had an abundance of ensilage I fed heavier with the silage, up to a certain limit, and not so much hay. Sometimes the hay was not stored in good condition, owing to bad weather at the time of cutting. At such times, if the grain was plentiful, the grain ration was increased to make up for what was lacking in the hay. I tried to use judgment, according to the number of steers I had in, and the kinds and quantities of feed I had for them. I never felt that my ration was an expensive one, because of the large quantity of hay I was able to store away from a small acreage, and the abundant crops of