

HOW TO GET STARTED RIGHT IN DAIRYING

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HOW much should I pay for a bull? A great many men have asked themselves that question. Many have asked why they should spend very much at all for one. The cows give the milk so why pay a small fortune for the bull?

THE REASON WHY

The reason is based upon a fact well known to breeders. The heifer calves inherit their characteristics from their sire and the bull calves from their mothers. Hence the very quickest way to develop a profitable herd of cows is by buying the best bull circumstances allow. He will transmit the milking powers of his mother to his daughters. So that by securing one good animal every member that comes into the herd after that time will be better for it. Our fathers did not always recognize this fact. They believed the cows were of most importance—and their sons are poorer because of it.

But there are mistakes that we are making too. A general survey of the dairy industry of the country proves that almost all the bulls used for breeding purposes are immature. A bull cannot be at his best until he has fully grown and developed in all ways. Yet such animals are scarce indeed. Bulls are usually kept until two or three years of age, only; whereas they are at their best at six or eight. I grant that they may become cross and are always treacherous. But if this is borne in mind constantly, they may be watched and practice of keeping against. Until the accider is guarded during their first few years becoming general, the dairy industry will not flourish as it should.

The bull should always be judged by his masculinity. He must have a strong rugged constitution as indicated by a full deep chest and a strong square body. He should give the impression of great strength and vitality, which he can transmit to his offspring. The pretty, weak, over-fine male is not desirable anywhere. Strength should be the ruling factor.

RIGHT UP AGAINST IT

But the bull is only part of the battle that leads to success. The cows must be skilfully selected. It is a deplorable fact that many thousands of cows are milked every year at a loss. If you don't believe it, just start a cow-testing crusade among your neighbors. In one of our most favored localities one man discovered his cows were averaging a yearly net loss of over \$9 each.

That made him sit up and take notice, I can tell you. Perhaps if you start such a test you will too. He is now laying the foundation of a herd that will pay. He can do it too, for his neighbor, just next door, averaged a net gain of over \$30 each from his cows. But if he hadn't applied the test, he might still have been traveling the road to the poor-house. A man can keep a free boarding establishment for cows only for a certain time.

A CROOKED GAME

Some tests will not give much information, however. The three and seven-day tests are becoming more unpopular each year—and deservedly so. Before, these, a cow may be fed heavily until she's in splendid condition. But when the test is applied if her feed is changed and shortened, she is thrown into a nervous, feverish condition. She is then capable of consuming the fat of her body and of producing a heavy flow of rich milk for a few days. But this does not indicate her ability as a milker throughout the year. Some tests of heavy production is required and this can only be secured accurately with the

scales and Babcock test. The scales alone, however, will indicate to a certain degree, the relative merits of members of the herd. A standard of individual should be one that produces at least 5,000 lbs. of milk from each cow.

Having done this the next thing is to look around for new blood. You may be surprised at how much you will require. Unless you have an idea of just what you want, and know how to tell it, when you do find it, your task is difficult.

The question of which breed to choose troubles some. Frequently men ask "Which one is best?" "But there is no 'best' breed." They are all good in their places. The principal thing is to choose one breed and to stay by it. One of our greatest faults is our mongrel stock. There are few herds that do not show a mixture of breeds. Any breeder knows what a scrub bunch of cattle will result from a confusion of characters that very often conflict. Yet this fact still stares us in the face; the country is filled with mixed herds.

Whether our cows be pure-bred or well-bred is of less importance. A herd of well-bred grades sired by a pure-bred bull will probably pay us as much as the pail as pure-bred stock. But it always pays to add a pure-bred heifer at times, as there is a ready sale for good blood.

HOW YOU CAN TELL

After all there is but one way to judge a dairy cow—that is by her performance at the pail. A cow should be a record-breaker, according to her books, as recorded in the herd she is confronted by a spring scales. There are, however, certain desirable features that are fairly safe in looking for in her nervous and physical structure. If she possesses them we may feel comfortably sure she will not disappoint us—but there are always a few surprises.

First of all she should be in good condition. If she is not, much valuable food that should be turned into milk will be needed to place her there. This desirable condition of body is shown by a soft, pliable skin, that will slip smoothly when pinched with the thumb and finger. Her hair should be fine and soft—never dry or hard. She must have a strong nervous system to enable her to perform the work of turning food into milk. She also must have a very strong constitution and the capacity to eat a great deal of food. She is simply a machine working under high pressure and you must regard her as such. To possess these qualities she requires a deep chest with a wide spring of rib indicating lung power, and one that has a deep wide paunch and should be open ribbed.

Her milk vessels require special attention. The udder should be large, square and evenly balanced. The teats should be large and set well apart. The larger and more twisted the milk veins the better. The walls should be of good size and well shaped.

These points are by no means an infallible standard, but they indicate fairly well the value of the cow as a milker. Dairying is rapidly reaching such a stage that not every man can all phases of the game, and unless he is, the other fellow will come out on top. A knowledge of what dairy animals are, and the ability to judge, test and select them, are the chief essentials for success in the business.

The hardest blow that we could give to the dairy industry would be to establish a ventilating system in every



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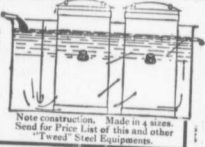


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