

The Simmental originated in Europe in the Middle Ages. As the breed spread throughout Europe it acquired a variety of names such as Pie Rouge, Fleckvieh, Austrian Fleckvieh, and Red and White. In Canada they are all considered Simmental cattle and are registered in the Simmental herdbook. The breed's universal popularity, due to its ability to produce meat and milk efficiently, resulted in its being introduced into Canada in 1967.

Currently there are about 7 000 breeders of registered Simmental cattle in Canada and pedigrees issued annually now exceed 20 000. Exports have been solely to the United States.

Birth weights of calves average about 42 kg (92 lb) for males and about 38 kg (88 lb) for females. In 1984, Simmentals on the ROP Home Test Program had

adjusted yearling weights of 462 kg (1 019 lb) for males and 370 kg (815 lb) for females. Bulls on test station rations have recorded yearling weights over 635 kg (1 400 lb). The average daily gain of animals on test was 1.1 kg (2.46 lb) for males and 0.75 kg (1.65 lb) for females.

Following are the characteristics for which the Simmental in Canada is most noted:

- 1) large size and docile nature;
- 2) heavy muscle structure;
- 3) high growth rate and high milk production; and
- 4) easy adaptability to wide variations in environmental conditions.

## BREED SUMMARY

In summary it can be stated that all the breeds of cattle described have unique qualities which make them appropriate for use under specific environmental and market conditions.

Success in beef production is achieved by the use of the kind of animal that harvests and converts the available forage resource efficiently, reproduces regularly, and yields in the end a product that best suits the requirements of the human population it serves. The pure breeds are widely adaptable, but it is not

unrealistic to think in terms of combinations of breeds and characteristics. Whatever approach is taken, it is imperative that the genetic material used at the outset be carefully chosen. Its influence will be felt throughout the life of the enterprise. Canadian breeders offer the results of many years of selection based on sound practical judgment, scientific principles and, above all, the need for economic efficiency in the total enterprise from conception to carcass.