

The Canadian Dairyman AND Farming World

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THE CANADIAN DAIRYMAN AND FARMING WORLD
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THE TUBERCULIN TEST

Cow owners are and have been in doubt regarding the reliability of the tuberculin test. A few of our best authorities claim that the test is unreliable. The majority, however, come out strongly for it. Those who are against having their herds tested make strong use of the arguments of the former, while all advocates of the test overlook such testimony.

The tuberculin test is by no means as perfect as we would wish, yet, in the absence of something better, we will do well to adopt it and make use of it, the best means at our disposal, to diagnose tubercular diseases in cattle.

Much doubt regarding the action of tuberculin has been engendered in the minds of cattlemen from the fact that the tuberculin test can be so readily doctored and the re-action

wholly gotten over by giving a previous injection of the serum a few days before they are to be tested officially. The animal having reacted to the former test will give no reaction to an injection administered soon after. But this should have no influence on the practical testing of our own individual herds. The test after a little study can be carried out by any person of ordinary ability who may afterwards keep the results in the dark and nobody but himself be the wiser.

How large a grip tuberculosis has upon the herds of our country is difficult to ascertain. One thing is certain, however, that in the majority of herds, occasionally a beast, from some cause unexplainable, has to be taken to the back field or the bush and disposed of, having been run-down from one cause or another or has developed a racking cough which gave a feeling of uneasiness as long as this animal was in with the others. If tuberculosis exists in our herds, we may as well recognize it, the sooner the better, for ourselves and for our herds. If a reacting animal exists in a herd, it may be distributing the "seeds" which will take years to eradicate and may do extensive damage in infecting other members to say nothing of the possibilities of spreading tuberculosis to the family.

The tuberculin test is comparatively easy of administration and costs but little. If doubt exists in the minds of herd owners as to the freedom of their stock from tuberculosis, it will be serving their own best interests by adopting the tuberculin test. Whether the test be reliable or not, there are few of us who would not prefer to own cattle that give no reaction. Where cities demand that herds furnishing their milk supply be tested with tuberculin, the producers would be quite justified in demanding an increased price for their produce. For, in the average herd, such a test would appreciably increase the cost of production. Where such demands have not been made, as yet, dairymen will do well to inaugurate a campaign in their own herds with a view to qualifying for this test should it become compulsory.

UNSOUNDNESS IN HORSES

That many do not realize the value of soundness in horses is plainly evidenced by the many old, broken down brood mares showing with foal at foot at the local fall fairs. That many are incapable of recognizing unsoundness in horses is shown by the large number of unsound horses exhibited. No sane man who is conversant with the horse business would expect to win a prize with an unsound horse, yet year after year, unsound horses are paraded before the judges in the hope of getting a prize. The owners of such horses either are unable to detect unsoundness or they depend for their winning chance upon the possibility of the judge overlooking or being incompetent to discover such defects.

If there is one thing above another that demands great emphasis in the horse ring it is this matter of discounting unsoundness. A judge should

put his foot upon it wherever it is detected. Not under any circumstances should an unsound horse get within the prize money. The exhibiting public cannot be taught too soon that unsoundness will not go in the showing.

It is hard to believe that owners of horses that are afflicted with one or more forms of unsoundness to which the horse is heir, would exhibit them in the hope of being awarded a prize. While we realize that there are exceptions, we must account for such subjects appearing in the ring as being due to the lack of ability on the part of their owners to detect such deformities.

If then we cannot expect farmers, who exhibit horses, to detect unsoundness, how much less can we expect the average farmer who raises a few colts each year to detect such. Surely the need for legislation, calling for a qualified veterinarian's certificate of soundness for each and every stallion that stands for the public service, is apparent.

LACKED TIME BUT LOST A PEARL

Few farmers realize how valuable is the information that is furnished to them, free of cost, when they join one of the cow testing associations being formed by the Dominion Department of Agriculture. In Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and British Columbia there are now over eighty associations, and about 6,000 cows are being recorded regularly under a simple system.

The milk is weighed morning and evening every tenth day, thus giving six weighings on three days per month; while samples are taken of each of these six milkings, and the composite sample is tested every month. This testing is free. From the Dairy Division, Ottawa, is mailed to each member every month, first, the record of each cow for the month, and in her calculated yield of milk and butter fat; and the actual test; and second, a record of her total yield up to date for the number of months that her weights have been sent in. Thus a complete check is possible on each individual cow's production, and comparisons are constantly before the eyes of each herd owner. A summary is compiled, also, of each herd in the association, giving details of the average production of the herd, and the highest and lowest individual yield of milk in each herd. A copy of this summary is also mailed to each member.

This information is invaluable to the man who is seeking for more profit. He is soon in a position to discriminate between the relative merits of each cow under his care, and should be watching for those that seem worth a little extra feed. A recent number of the "Outlook" published a photo of a "champion butter cow" with the following unique testimony in favor of cow testing associations:

"This cow produced 1,000 lbs. of butter in one year. Her present owners purchased her from a man 'who could not find time to test the milk of his herd, nor to keep a 'daily record, and consequently

"never discovered the wonderful 'capabilities of his cow.'"

Note that last phrase. He had no time to estimate the value of the pearl, the jewel of a cow right in his own stable. Many more such animals, probably, remain to be discovered. Dairymen, be up and doing, so as not to let prizes like this slip through your grasp. The Dominion Department of Agriculture is to be commended for pushing this work. The more publicity the Department can give to this work the more will the value of the work be appreciated. It should be extended in every way possible.

THE DEMAND FOR PASTURE

There is a constant demand at this season of the year for good pastures to maintain the ever-diminishing milk flow consequent upon the cool nights and the indifferent supply of fodder on most pasture fields. This fall the call is more pronounced than usual owing to the severe drouth through which we have passed and which was not broken until recently.

To provide good pasture for the late fall months is, in most cases, a difficult matter. Many have solved it by methods that are wholly adaptable to their own conditions only. Where alfalfa is grown, it is frequently used as a late pasture crop by turning in the cattle instead of taking off the third cutting. The advisability of this practice is doubtful as any crows that are bitten off result in dead plants for the coming year. Aside from this objection, alfalfa is an ideal fall pasture crop and may be used as such if one cares to take the chances on looking a good stand. Where one wishes to break up an alfalfa field the following year, fall pasturing, especially with horses or sheep, will effectively clean out the alfalfa and plowing will be an easy matter the following May.

Abundance of the best of late pasture is to be had on farms where seeding is practised with all cereals. Of late, it has entailed considerable expenditure to purchase seed for this purpose. But where pasture is required, the returns from such practice have been ample to justify all expenditure. Aside from the pasture obtained, the fertilizing value of the roots must be reckoned with. This alone should pay the cost of the seed and warrant following up the practice.

In seasons of drouth, however, and where a good catch of clover has not been obtained, much hardship is frequently experienced in providing the necessary pasture for the cattle. Where young cattle or stock other than milch cows are to be provided for, possibly the best solution of the question is a field of rape. Probably no other forage plant gives so large returns per acre and is more relished by stock than rape. Rape sown in July or even as late as August, when sown in drills and cultivated, gives large returns in the shape of fall pastures should the season be favourable. Aside from the quantity of forage secured, no forage plant puts the stock in better shape for the stables than does rape. Many fields of rape-pasturing cattle have been noticed of late and their owners express great satis-