

## Professor Dean's Opinion.

To the Editor of FARMING:

It is quite possible to have "A ten days' milking competition," such as you suggest, in connection with the Industrial Fair of 1899, but it would mean a great deal of extra work to do it properly as compared with the present method of conducting tests. It means that either a chemical laboratory would have to be set up on the grounds, or else the samples of food and milk would have to be sent to an established laboratory, such as those in Guelph or in Toronto.

The greatest difficulty would be to get the feeders to agree on the foods which shall be used, and the values which shall be placed on these different foods. We have such a diversity of opinion and practice in reference to feeding that it would be no small matter to harmonize these.

If all those interested were to meet, possibly an agreement could be reached in less time than anticipated. If at all possible let us have such a test, but it would require much care, and considerable expense.

Yours,

H. H. DEAN.

Ontario Agricultural College,  
Guelph, Oct. 15th, 1898.



## A Food Test is What is Wanted.

To the Editor of FARMING:

I intended writing you early concerning a ten days' milk test as seen in your issue of Oct. 4th. I think that such a test would be a proper one as the amount of milk received from a cow is not what we are after but the profit, or in other words, the largest return for food consumed. Such tests are a fine thing if carried on properly.

I think it would be a good idea to have the competing cows in a stable by themselves. There should also be hurdles behind them so as to keep people from disturbing the cows. It takes very little to disturb a nervous cow, and our best are of that character. A seven days' test would perhaps suit better as it would give a chance to have the test over so that visitors would have an opportunity of seeing the cows and hearing the results before the fair was over. Trusting that such a test will be conducted next year.

I am respectfully yours, etc.,

N. DYMENT.

Clappison, Ont., Oct. 18th, 1898.



## A Milk Test is the Only Proper Method of Judging Milch Cows

To the Editor of FARMING:

In regard to the article in Oct. 4th issue, "A ten days' test for dairy cows," to which your letter invites our attention. If such a test should be held I agree with you that Toronto is the proper show at which to hold it as it is first on the list. I do not think the promoters of the Omaha test were alive to the conditions under which that test was held, it being so late, at the end of the circuit of shows. Anyone who gives the matter any thought will readily understand that a cow that has been showing for a month or more will not be in the best of condition to make a test, and if a cow is brought in fresh from home, and in the pink of condition, she would have a great advantage, and doubly so when the cost of production is considered. A dairy cow can and will take a lot out of herself if allowed to do so. As cows vary greatly in per cent. of fat from day to day, and especially so in a show ground test, it is fairer to have the test more than one day and take the average. But two or three days is sufficient for this. The only object in having a ten days' test then is to get at the cost of production.

It would be necessary if value of food is to be considered to have men watch the cows night and day during the

whole period of ten days. Then there is a great deal of other work, and those of us who have had to do with testing can well imagine that there would be some tired people around before such a test is finished. And what would all this work prove: not, perhaps, which cow was the most profitable producer, but which cow was in the best condition at that particular time and able to take the most out of herself. As we know a cow in the pink of condition could go through a ten day test on a very limited ration at the expense, of course, of her yearly production. I find it best to feed liberally when a cow is fresh, not but what she would give about as much or less, but knowing full well that a cow liberally fed when fresh will give a great deal more six or eight months after—but that is another story.

Of course, some cows produce more cheaply than others. Two cows standing side by side, of the same breed, and fed on the same feed, one produces 60 lbs., the other 80 lbs. But stranger to some the same cow on the same feed, quality and quantity produces one year 60 lbs., or 2½ lb. butter daily, and another year, on the same feed, produces 80 lbs. and 3½ lbs. butter daily. Why? Simply owing to being in better condition. As an extensive dairyman said to me at the Ottawa fair: "A cow is something like an apple tree, she produces more one year than another. And like the apple tree the year she produces most she does it at the least cost." The largest producer is invariably the cheapest producer if the two cows are in like good heart. And that brings us back to the question, Will a food test not be more likely to show which cow is in the best condition at that time than anything else? Or which cow has the best "jockey" to put her through?

I am well aware that some who cannot take a test themselves give as an excuse that such tests are simply the results of heavy feeding. I would like to have an opportunity to demonstrate that it is more owing to a superior cow. But, "shake a monkey off one limb and he will soon be on another," so will the critics and "doubting Jacobs" ever be with us. Give me the large producer, and I will risk the cost of production. And the degree of cheapness will be largely in proportion to the niceness with which the wonderful machinery possessed by a dairy cow is kept in good running order. A cow that, for some reason (and there are many) gets out of sorts at calving time, is a good deal like an engine with steam down going uphill.

There are so many things to consider when we take in the cost of production that a ten day test will not settle the question, but, by all means, let us have some kind of a test. Ten years in a show-ring, before so-called expert judges, is enough to ruin any breed. Where form is set before performance the shine of the cow's horn may outweigh the depth and spring of a cow's ribs, although the latter is the most essential point about a cow. That is where her machinery lies, and without constitution and capacity a cow cannot work and wear. A cow don't make butter with her horn, not even country-store butter; but a goat may make (a) butt(h)er with his.

My idea is that cows should be judged by test rather than by score. If such a plan were adopted the best would have a chance to win, and some of the dairy breeders would not have to deplore the fact that their breeds were not so good as they formerly were.

Let cows giving milk be judged the same as in the Provincial Dairy Test: each class separate, with a grand sweepstakes to make it interesting. There could be another class for cows long in milk or dry. There should be two classes any way; as it is a hard matter to judge fresh and dry cows in the same class. Let the Great Industrial lead the way; progressive and up-to-date in this, as in other things. Each Breeders' Association should contribute liberally towards such a test. I know of nothing that would raise the standard of a dairy breed so much. Experience shows that with a test it is up, up, up, and that with the show ring it is down, down, down. Breeders have a great chance by means of the test of shaking off the leach that is sapping their life blood.

GEO. RICE.

Curries, Ont., Oct. 17th, 1898.