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WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

The Selection and Management of the Dairy Sire

By

F. G. SWOBODA

Agricultural Representative, Langlade County, College of Agriculture

**GOOD BREEDING BRINGS
THE
DOLLARS
ANOTHER KNOCKOUT
FOR THE SCRUB BULL**

YEARLY RECORD

HERD OF _____ COUNTY
COWS HIGH GRADE JERSEYS EXCEPT NO 6 (A SCRUB)
NO 6 OFFSPRING OF GRADE JERSEY & A NEIGHBORS
SCRUB BULL (RUNNING AT LARGE)

BREED	AGE	WTS. AT BIRTH	MILK POUNDS	FAT POUNDS	GROSS RETURNS	COST OF FEED	PROFIT	RETURNS IN % OF FEED
1 JERSEY	13	11	8115.	399.5	111573	+4859	6720	+239
2 "	6	12	8563.7	414.6	111739	+4712	7014	+249
3 "	4	11	6638.1	349.8	10392	+4532	5770	+217
4 "	4	11	6992.2	346.9	110039	+4970	5052	+222
5 "	6	11	6473.9	333.	8964	+4424	4559	+299
6 SCRUB	3	9	3510.9	169.5	5027	+3942	1069	+129
7 JERSEY	4	12	6458.9	333.2	9665	+429	5400	+217
8 "	5	11	7241.	312.5	8722	+3555	5183	+245
9 "	3	9	7147.6	338.9	9121	+3720	5473	+243

"STUDY THE FIGURES - THINK"

Above record brought to light by one year in a cow testing association.
Owner has used pure bred sire for fifteen years.

File this bulletin where you can find it

Distributed by

Wisconsin Bankers' Association

W. A. von Berg,
Chairman Agricultural Committee,
Mosinee

George D. Bartlett,
Association Secretary,
Pabst Building, Milwaukee

The Selection and Management of the Dairy Sire

Very much of all the improvement made in our live stock is due to the use of pure bred sires. Even the native cow with a record of good production, owes this quality to some more or less removed good ancestry.

While some of Wisconsin's four hundred thousand boarder dairy cows are boarders because of poor feeding most of them are boarders because of poor breeding.

With the increase of cow testing associations and keeping of private records, evidence piles up against the poor bull. At the bar of the thinking farmer he has long since received the death sentence. But still he flourishes. If every live stock owner who breeds to poor sires realizes that every time he does so he robs his own pocket book, the scrub would soon go.

"Life is too short for a man to expect to improve his stock by the use of any but pure bred sires."

Where Economy is Waste. The fifty cent service fee, has been the greatest boost to the boarder cow. The use of the common or scrub sire cannot fail to produce the scrub cow. The sad fact is, that many a good native cow, profitable producer, mated with this type of sire because the service fee is fifty cents is producing inferior offspring.

Why shouldn't we look ahead to the much more valuable offspring of the pure bred? Fifty cent fee a \$3 to \$5 calf; \$1 to \$3 a \$10, \$15, \$20 to \$25 calf. Fifty cent fee a \$40 to \$60 cow; a \$1 to \$3 fee a \$75 to \$125 cow.

What is a Good Sire Worth? "A good sire is half the herd," is a common sales ring expression. "A poor sire is the whole herd," is another. When it is considered that every calf dropped in a herd carries half the blood of the sire the importance of having at least this half of good quality is very plain. It is claimed on good authority that a good sire will increase the production of his daughters 10 per cent above the production of their dams.

Granting this fact to be true and starting with a good sire on cows producing 200 pounds of butter fat a year, the following would be the result:

Product	Butter fat per year
First year, dam	200 pounds
Fourth year, daughter	220 pounds
Seventh year, grand daughter	242 pounds
Tenth year, great grand daughter	266 pounds
13th year, great great grand daughter	292 pounds
16th year, great great great grand daughter	321 pounds

After fifteen years of such breeding, providing all went well and the first calf that each heifer produced was a heifer, the production of the great, great, great, grand daughter would exceed that of the original daughter by only 121 pounds. This amount looks small, but if one were to take the 1,700,000 cows in the state, the increase at the end of 15 years at 30 cents per pound would be worth \$61,200,000.

Know a bull by his offspring. Don't "beef" the good producer.

The little country of Denmark, as the result of this practice of better breeding and cow testing, raised the production of its cows from 112 to 234 pounds of butter fat in twenty years. Individual Wisconsin dairymen have done as well and better. In no state has the farmer who wishes to select a pure bred sire a better opportunity than in our own.

Use of Pure Bred Sires Within Reach of Everyone. There may have been a time when high purchase price or the high service fee made the general use of the pure bred sire impossible. Not so today. For hundreds of high class pure bred bulls are annually sold for beef. These bulls often proven individuals, could be purchased, used and

passed on with no cash loss to the purchaser and a real benefit to the herd on which used.

Why Not to Use a Grade Sire. In answer to the argument often advanced by the man who wants better stock but thinks he can accomplish it as well by using a grade as a pure bred, the following account of a Canadian experience given by Hoard's Dairyman, is worthy of serious thought.

"In the dairy record center at Farmers' Union, Ontario, were fourteen herds. Seven of these had been improved by the use of pure bred sires and the other seven had always used grade sires. The first seven herds with 82 cows had an average production of 7,901 pounds of milk a year. While the second seven herds had an average of only 4,712 pounds a year. The difference in production per cow of 3,187 pounds of milk per year divided among the seven owners made a total of \$2,646.87 or \$387.12 to each man. How long would it take to pay for a pure bred sire?"



Bull exercising with punching block.

How to Select a Sire. Important points to be taken into consideration in selecting a sire are, breeding, individual excellence, record and individuality of dam, individuality of sire, production and prepotency of ancestry. In sizing up the sire as an individual the following points should be considered: his capacity, conformation, temperament, disposition, size and health.

Points of a Good Sire:

1. Good depth of body with well sprung ribs.
2. Back straight to tail head (avoid dropping rump).
3. Good breadth of chest, with good heart girth (avoid droop back of shoulders).
4. Good length of neck and clean cut intelligent head. Wide nose and large nostrils.

In selecting the dairy sire, be careful not to choose an animal showing tendency to beefiness.

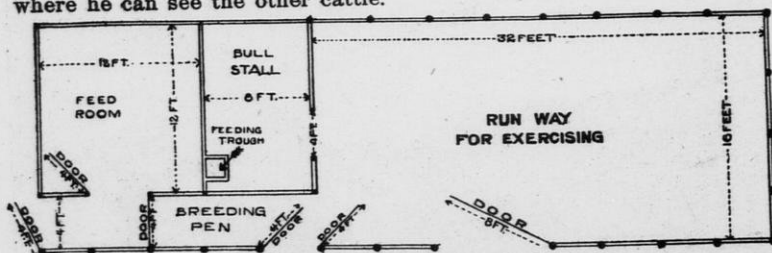
Under the head of pedigree, the breeding of the bull must be considered. What of his sire? What of his dam? What of the grand sires and grand dams? Have the females in the pedigree records of production of milk and butter fat? Are these records high or just ordinary? Have the sires produced any daughters with records? Quite apart from individuality the records of the ancestry are im-

portant factors in determining the figure at which an animal is sold, both in the sales ring and at private sales.

Remember that a bull is a bull. Don't be careless in handling him.

What Price To Pay. The question of what price to pay was submitted to a number of Wisconsin's best breeders in the following form: "At present prices of stock, what price ought a farmer with 12 to 20 cows, grade or native, be willing to pay for a sire to use in his herd, a young sire ready for service?" The replies to this question varied, but generally covered a range from \$100 to \$300, \$150 to \$300, being the figures most often given. The main idea brought out was to get a good bull with individuality and strong backing of yearly records.

Care and Handling of the Sire. It is a serious mistake to use a sire before he is a year old. Give him a chance to make a good growth. Be careful not to breed too heavily the first year. Never allow a sire to run with the herd. Keep him in a box stall, if possible, where he can see the other cattle.



Plans for bull stall and paddock.

The Bull Stall and Paddock. The accompanying picture gives an excellent idea of a good stall and paddock. The stall permits of exercise, makes it easy to care for the bull and subjects the owner to no risks at any time.

By using a stall of this kind many valuable bulls which are annually discarded because they are growing ugly could be retained for service for years. The buildings are not difficult of construction nor expensive.

Feeding the Bull. For roughage, clover, or clover and timothy hay, corn stover, a limited amount of silage. Some of our best breeders prefer to leave out the silage. For grain ration various mixtures are used. A mixture of oats and bran in equal parts is recommended, six to twelve pounds per day, depending on extent of service. Another ration consists of two parts bran, two parts ground oats, two parts corn meal and one part oil meal. The cost of feed for a bull for a year varies with the breed and size of the animal. Leading dairymen place the cost of \$50 to \$75 per year.

Exercise the Bull. To be kept in good condition a bull should have exercise. Too often bulls are kept tied in a narrow stall month after month with no exercise whatever. Confined in a box stall a bull has a little chance to get exercise, but not enough. A few good dairymen use the bull in a tread power to pump water and run the separator, others have him so well broken he can be driven. A heavy block suspended by a stout rope or chain is good.

Handling the Bull. Carelessness in this matter results each year in many deaths and serious injuries in the state. "He has always been so gentle," is a common explanation. While a bull should not be abused, he must be handled with firmness, yet caution.

Every bull should have a ring in his nose and be handled and led with a bull stick or staff. All bulls should be dehorned. While this does not entirely result in subduing a bull, it does help. Remember always that a bull is a bull. While he may have a perfect record for gentleness as a bull he is liable at any time to a very sudden revulsion of sentiment.

Profitable dairying means good pure bred bulls, properly raised calves, and well fed, well kept cows.