Dollars in dairying. Bulletin no. 5 December 1913

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WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

DOLLARS IN DAIRYING

BY

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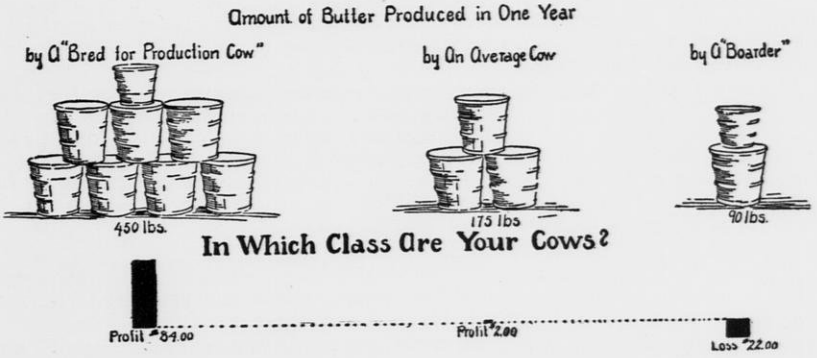

The "average" cows and "boarders" are, in most cases, the daughters of "scrub" or indifferently bred sires, whereas the profit producers represent "bred for production" families.

It takes about as much time to milk and care for an average cow or a boarder as for a profit producer. The milk and money maker may require more feed, but profit is what counts.

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DOLLARS IN DAIRYING

A well managed dairy herd returns good profits to the owner, increases the value of his herd and of his farm from year to year and gives pleasure to the business.

Four Things Which Make Dairying Successful.

Knowledge, skill, and success in the dairy business are acquired by practicing four things, namely: intelligent care, systematic feeding, selection of profitable cows, and breeding to get improvement in cows from generation to generation. It may be said that dollars in dairying are like apples on a tree. A comparatively few are within easy reach of all, while the greatest number requires a special effort to secure them. In dairying the man who puts forth the most intelligent effort secures the greatest reward. To become skillful and successful in the care, feeding, selection, and breeding of dairy cows means to be successful in the business of dairying.

That there is a vast difference in dairy animals is shown by the record of the annual production and returns of three classes of cows in the University herd, the better class of which is worthy of every effort put forth to excel in the dairy business.

Production and Returns of Three Classes of Cows.

Class A shows the average annual production and returns for four years of the best four cows of a given herd. Class B shows the same data for the four poorest cows kept for a period of four years. Class C shows the average annual production of four cows which were too poor to keep in this herd for a longer period than one year.

	Class A		Class B		Class C	
	Amt. Lbs.	Value.	Amt. Lbs.	Value.	Amt. Lbs.	Value.
Milk, lbs.	9,984.0		7,478.0		4.929.0	
Skim Milk, lbs. @ 20	7,987.0	$ 15.97	5,982.0	$ 11.96	3,944.0	$ 7.89
Butter Fat, lbs. @ 30	426.9	128.07	301.8	90.54	195.8	58.74
Total Value per Cow per year		$144.04		$102.50		$66.63
Feed Cost		73.40		60.32		47.62
Return over Feed Cost		70.64		42.18		19.01
Cost of Purchased Feed		23.18		18.30		10.47
Return over Purchased Feed		120.86		84.20		56.16

Feed Prices per ton—Hay $20, Silage $3.50, Soilage $3.00, Sugar Beets $4.00, Bran $25, Oats $30, Corn $24, Oil Meal $40, Distiller's Grains $30, Miscellaneous $30. Pasture per season $10.

The average annual production and returns for four years of the best four cows was $144.04 per cow and of the poorest four cows was $102.50 and of the four cows that were too poor to keep more than one year was $66.63. Only by eliminating the poorer cows of the herd can one keep up a high herd average. The University herd referred to, numbering about 25 cows, has for the past four years averaged over 350 pounds of butter fat per cow annually. There are many cows in Wisconsin represented by each of the above classes, and it may be said with pride in our progress as a dairy state that there are many cows better than the best cows above described.

CARE OF THE DAIRY COW.

Care is an important factor and the following suggestions are made:

In Winter Time. Feed cows daily 1 pound of grain for every 3 pounds of milk produced, 25 to 40 pounds of corn silage, and whatever clover or alfalfa hay they will eat. Do not keep them out in the cold for a longer time than they appear to enjoy such an outing. Allow them to have water which is not colder than that from a deep well twice or three times daily. Keep them in clean, well lighted, properly ventilated stables at a temperature of about 50 degrees and brush the cows daily if you can possibly find the time, for it pays better than does the grooming of horses which as a rule is never neglected.

In Summer Time. Do not save feed by turning to pasture too early. Provide plenty of pure fresh water, shade, and protection against flies during hot weather. Supplement poor pasture with corn ensilage or green soiling crops like rye, peas, oats, green corn fodder, cabbage and other available feed. Silage is the more economical feed with which to supplement pasture and produces equally as good a milk flow as soiling crops. Feed grain the same as in winter when pastures are scant and need to be supplemented with other feed.

At All Times. Treat cows gently and avoid excitement. Weigh the milk of each cow at milk time for at least a sufficient length of time each week to know her average daily milk production. Test the milk with a Babcock milk tester at least once each month. Discard the cow which has failed at the end of the year to pay market price for the feed she has consumed. Replace the poorest cow of the herd with a better one at every opportunity there is to do so. Belong to a dairy cattle breeders' association, a cow testing association or any other organization that will help you to keep posted and in touch with the best and most up-to-date methods of managing a dairy herd. Salt cows regularly or provide salt in such a manner as to give the herd free access to it.

Feeding Dairy Cows. Cows should be fed according to their capacity for feeds and to their ability to produce milk. An underfed cow never earns for her owner all that she is capable of earning, and a cow that is fed more than her production pays for is a source of loss to her owner. When a cow has access to an abundance of good grass pasture she is capable of feeding herself and will usually produce milk up to her full capacity, but when pasture is scant, it will pay to feed corn silage or soiling crops, grain and hay to keep up a good milk flow.

The following suggestions are made for feeding a dairy cow in winter:

Calculate a complete ration which preferably should consist of corn silage, clover and alfalfa hay, and a mixture of concentrates. The mixture of concentrates should consist of three or more feeds, at least one of which should be higher in protein than the ordinary farm grown grain. Wheat bran, dried distillers grains, gluten feed, oil meal, and similar feeds when added to farm grown grains improve their efficiency for milk production. Feed each cow one-fourth to one-third as many pounds of grain daily as she produces pounds of milk. Cows yielding milk of high per cent butter fat require the larger amount of grain. In addition to grain, feed corn silage and hay in such quantities as cows will eat without waste. In case corn silage is not available feed roots or other succulent feeds in quantities of from 25 to 40 pounds daily. Corn meal corrects a tendency to become too thin, and high protein feeds like dried brewers grains and oil meal correct the tendency to become too fleshy.

Selection of Dairy Cows. **Breeding**—The chances of securing good dairy cows are best when one selects cows which have 50% or more of the blood of some one of the distinct dairy breeds. The higher the per cent of pure dairy blood, the less chance there is for a mistake if other things are favorable. Holsteins, Guernseys, Jerseys, Ayrshires, Brown Swiss and Dutch Belted are recognized as distinct dairy breeds.

Individuality—Select cows having: first, a large body, indicative of good feed capacity; second, marked refinement about the head, neck, hind quarters, and through the body, indicative of a disposition to make milk rather than lay on flesh; third, a large well developed udder extending well up behind and well forward beneath the body, the quarters evenly developed and in perfect condition, indicative of large milk flow; fourth, a hide of oily and pliable texture with fine, smooth coat of hair, and a development of large, crooked mammary veins extending well forward and entering the body through large orfices, or milk wells, all of which are indicative of health, constitution, and a strong circulation of blood to all parts of the body.

Performance—Every dairyman should weigh the milk of his cows and test it. It is the only sure way of determining which cows are the most profitable producers and it will enable him to know which cows he wishes to retain and which to sell.

Breeding Cows.

Every dairyman will find it profitable, as far as it is possible to do so, to breed and rear his dairy cows. Where one depends upon buying cows he must expect to pay good prices, and as a rule it is difficult to secure cows which are not defective in some respect. A carefully selected herd of cows bred to a pure bred registered dairy bull is the only system of breeding that will insure heifers which will be equally as good if not better than the original herd. **To disregard the kind of a bull one will use at the head of his herd results in a great loss of "dollars in dairying."** This is demonstrated in the following figures:

The Difference in Value of 2 Bulls of Different Character Based on the Butter Fat Production of 30 Daughters.

	Scrub	Bred for Production
Fat production per cow per year	175 lbs.	300 lbs.
Total for 30 cows	5250 lbs.	9000 lbs.
Total for 5 years	26250 lbs.	45000 lbs.
Value at 30c per pound	$7,875.00	$13,500.00
Based on Sale of 30 Grade Daughters.		
30 cows @ $60.00	$1,800.00	
30 cows @ $100.00		$ 3,000.00
Difference in favor of bred-for-production bull		$ 6,825.00

Community Effort Valuable.

In the selection and use of pure bred bulls, and in the development of improved dairy herds, community effort will be of great help. Bulls which have proved themselves capable of producing daughters of uniformly good dairy type and profitable producers of milk should be retained and used in a community as long as serviceable. The exchange of such bulls in a community will overcome the necessity for inbreeding, which practice cannot be generally recommended. Community effort aids in the disposal of surplus stock at uniformly good prices and in many instances in the purchase of better bred for production animals.

In conclusion it is urged that a greater effort be put forth to care for cows in the best possible manner, to feed them better rations, to improve their individuality, and to breed to insure a large number of offspring which will develop into profitable cows. This will insure more dollars in dairying to increase the wealth of each owner and the wealth of Wisconsin as a dairy state.

Suggestions for feeding rations and grain mixtures may be obtained by writing to the College of Agriculture, Madison, Wis.

Subject for January Bulletin: *"Business Methods on the Farm".*

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