

Feeding

THE IMPORTANCE of good feeding cannot be overemphasized. It may easily be the difference between winning and losing, provided the animal has the inherited ability to do so. There have been many instances where an animal could have placed higher if it had been in better condition, with more bloom, a smoother appearance, and a deeper middle that would indicate a larger feed capacity. On the other hand, there have been many animals that have been over conditioned, losing the refinement about their shoulders, head, and neck, and becoming too heavy in their hind quarters.

Ration

There are several highly satisfactory fitting rations on the market, produced by commercial companies. They are well balanced, fortified with minerals and vitamins, palatable, and save a considerable amount of time and labor in mixing.

Home-mixed rations also will produce excellent results if some thought and care are given to their mixing. Of course everyone who mixes his own ration for show cattle probably has found a ration that is a little different from the others and one that has given

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the best results for him. However, the rations of the leading showmen probably are somewhat similar, in being light, and not too high in protein or the heat producing carbohydrates.

The following is an example of a good ration for show cattle:

Oats (ground or preferably crimped)	150 pounds
Wheat bran	100 pounds
Corn (ground)	50 pounds
Linseed oil meal	50 pounds
Salt	4 pounds

The above ration, as well as the commercial mixtures, should give the desired results if carefully and prudently fed. In certain cases it may be desirable to alter these rations. Barley may be substituted for the corn quite readily. In extremely hot weather it may be advisable to reduce or entirely remove the amount of corn. This will have a more cooling effect on the animal. On the other hand, if an animal is in very poor condition and the time is short, it may be better to add more corn to its ration. A double handful of corn will be enough in most instances.

For cows that are in milk and on test, where it is desirable to hold up their milk production, a small amount of linseed oil meal may be added — say a single handful or two at each feeding, depending on the size and condition of the cow. This will raise the protein content to more nearly meet the demands of production. For rough coated animals, additional linseed oil meal

AGED BULL



Royal's Intrepid of Lee's Hill

Grand Champion, International Dairy Exposition, 1950; Junior and Reserve Grand Champion, Dairy Cattle Congress, 1948; 1st Senior Yearling, Indiana, Kentucky, 1948; 2nd Senior Yearling, Wisconsin, Minnesota, 1948; 3rd Senior Yearling, Illinois, 1948; Member, 1st Produce, Dairy Cattle Congress, 1948.

Here is an aged bull showing many of the points looked for in selecting the bulls for the show string. Notice his head, clean, long neck, very smooth shoulders, fine withers, and the long, deep ribs and straight hind legs.

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should be given to promote a smooth, glistening coat of hair with lots of bloom.

It is doubtful if anyone except the person feeding the cattle, or the person in charge who observes them closely from time to time, can tell how much to feed a particular animal. Certainly no hard or fast rule can be set down in a book. For instance, yearling heifers may get from 0 to 8 pounds of grain per day, depending on their condition. The heifer getting 8 pounds per day probably will have to be cut down on grain as she approaches show shape, and leveled off on an amount that will keep her in the proper condition.

Pay particular attention to the animal while it is eating. If it is slow in cleaning up its feed or doesn't eat it all, cut down the feed heavily for the next several feedings, and then build back up slowly to the amount that the animal should get.

Generally speaking, Holsteins, Aryshires, and Brown Swiss carry more flesh than Jerseys and Guernseys. The experienced feeder can tell at a glance whether an animal is in the right condition. The beginner, by mentally comparing his animal with the ones of the same breed that have won at the state and national shows, can keep in mind some idea of the shape in which he should have his animal. It may also help to study the pictures of winners in the breed magazines.

Beet Pulp

Soaked beet pulp usually can be fed in liberal amounts as it does not tend to fatten the animal to any great extent. In some sections of the country, citrus

pulp will replace the beet pulp because of its availability. The nutritive content of the two is approximately equal.

The right amount of beet pulp for one feeding should be put into a basket or tub and enough water added to just barely cover the pulp. This should stand long enough to soak thoroughly; but not longer than from one feeding to the next, or it will sour — especially in warm weather. If a small amount of molasses is added to the water used to soak the beet pulp, it makes the feed more appetizing, and the cattle will eat better. Also, it may help produce more gloss to the coat.

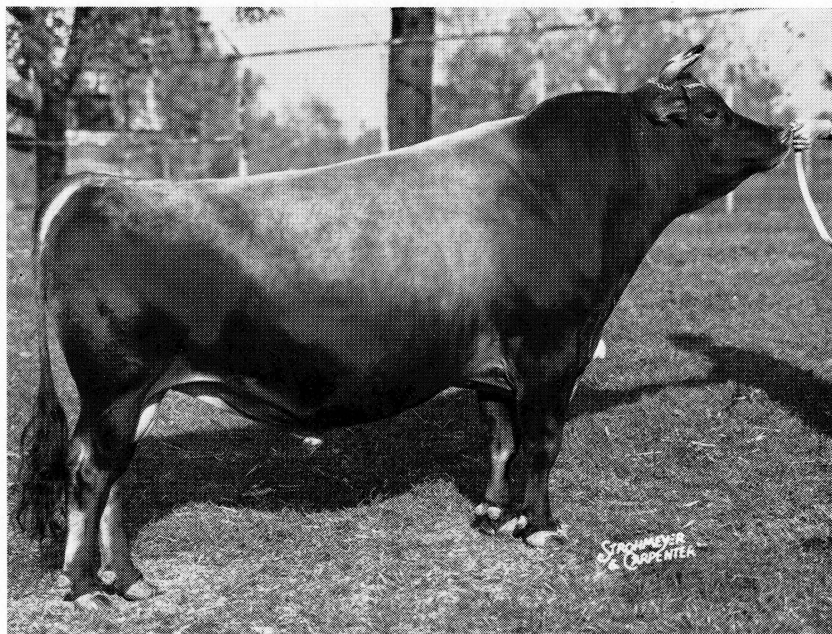
The amount you feed, of course, will depend on the size and age of the animal, and the amount of grain being fed. Senior calves, when fed in half-bushel buckets, may take about a half bucket of the soaked pulp. Yearling heifers may take from three-fourths to a full bucket. Cows can get from one-third to one-half of a bushel tub (they are getting more grain) depending on their size and appetite, while larger bulls may take from three-fourths to a full tub. The grain is mixed with the wet beet pulp at feeding time.

Beet pulp is a good appetizer and helps build a deeper body. Fairly large amounts can be fed without putting on a great deal of fat. In fact, you can carry along heifers or bulls that are on the verge of getting too fat with a small amount of the beet pulp and a little linseed oil meal.

Kind of Hay To Feed

You should choose the hay fed to the show herd with considerable care, for some kinds of hay are more

AGED BULL



Brampton Medallion Basil

Grand Champion, Illinois, Wisconsin, and International Dairy Show, 1951;
Three times champion at Royal Winter Fair, Toronto, Canada.

This bull shows a fine head with lots of breed character, sharp smooth withers, a very deep chest, and a long deep rib. Notice too his straight hind legs.

suitable than others. The hay should be palatable, have a good color and aroma, and should not be too coarse or improperly cured. It should be cut before it grows rank and coarse, and cured well — but put up before it dries out too much or weathers badly. A mixed hay, such as timothy with a little red clover and alsike, is highly desirable. Brome grass with a small amount of a legume, such as alfalfa, will work in many cases provided it has been cut early. It is important to cut the hay in the early bloom stage, for the cattle will eat it with relish — and more important — it will stay with them.

Feed alfalfa with caution, for it has a tendency to make the cattle somewhat loose. However, for milking cows a feed of alfalfa once a day or every other day will help keep up their milk production. A change of hay occasionally for any of the cattle will help stimulate their eating.

Frequency of Feeding

You can usually feed bulls and heifers their grain and beet pulp twice a day, and bring them along gaining as they should. You may have to feed some individuals that are quite thin three times a day for a while to get them into condition.

Cows that are on test will naturally have to be fed at the time they are milked, whether they are milked two or three times a day. Sometimes you should milk cows that are not on test three times a day also. This is done when the cow is milking heavily and you want to protect the udder from overdistension with its resulting harmful effects. Also, with cows that are not

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producing heavily, milking three times a day may help hold up their production, or increase it, in order to do a better job of bagging on show day.

Cattle should be watered after they have finished eating grain, and normally they may be allowed to have all they want. However, if allowed to, some animals will drink an excessive amount of water which will distend their stomachs, or cause pot bellies in the young animals. Too much water also will tend to make an animal loose and show signs of diarrhea.

Cows that you milk three times a day should be watered after each meal. Bulls and heifers that you feed twice a day and cows that are milked twice daily also should be watered three times a day. Feeding liberal amounts of good hay is quite important. Feed hay in liberal amounts after each watering, and the cattle will eat more if fed four or five times a day. You can feed slightly smaller amounts at each feeding, but the day's total feed consumption will be larger.