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Selection, Breeding, Methods Means More Milk

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CIRCULAR 31

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Selection, Breeding, Methods

MEANS MORE MILK

By H. P. DAVIS



The University of Nebraska
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
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Selection, Breeding, Methods, Mean More Milk

H. P. DAVIS

Milk good cows. It pays if you know how. Good dairy cows will always make money. Scrub, poor, or common cows never bring a good profit and usually cause a loss. Why waste feed and labor on inefficient producers, the kind that never make a satisfactory profit? Join a cow testing association. Let the tester keep books on your cows and let the milk scale and the milk sheet point out the money makers. Improvement comes only from selection and breeding.



FIG. 1.—Daughters of King Derby, Lincoln

BUILD BETTER BY BREEDING ¹

Better sires mean better stock. Breeding the best producing cows in the herd to purebred sires of known productive ancestry will certainly bring increased production in the offspring. A good sire cannot raise the production of the cows to which he is mated, but he may cause an increase of fifty pounds or more in the butterfat production of each daughter.

¹ Better Sires—Better Stock, Circular 24, Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station.

A Nebraska-bred sire has raised the production of each daughter over its dam more than 100 pounds of butterfat. You cannot afford to use the scrub bull,— he is too costly. Remember always that the sire is half the herd. Are you breeding for better or for worse? Better sires mean greater production and larger profits for the man who milks.

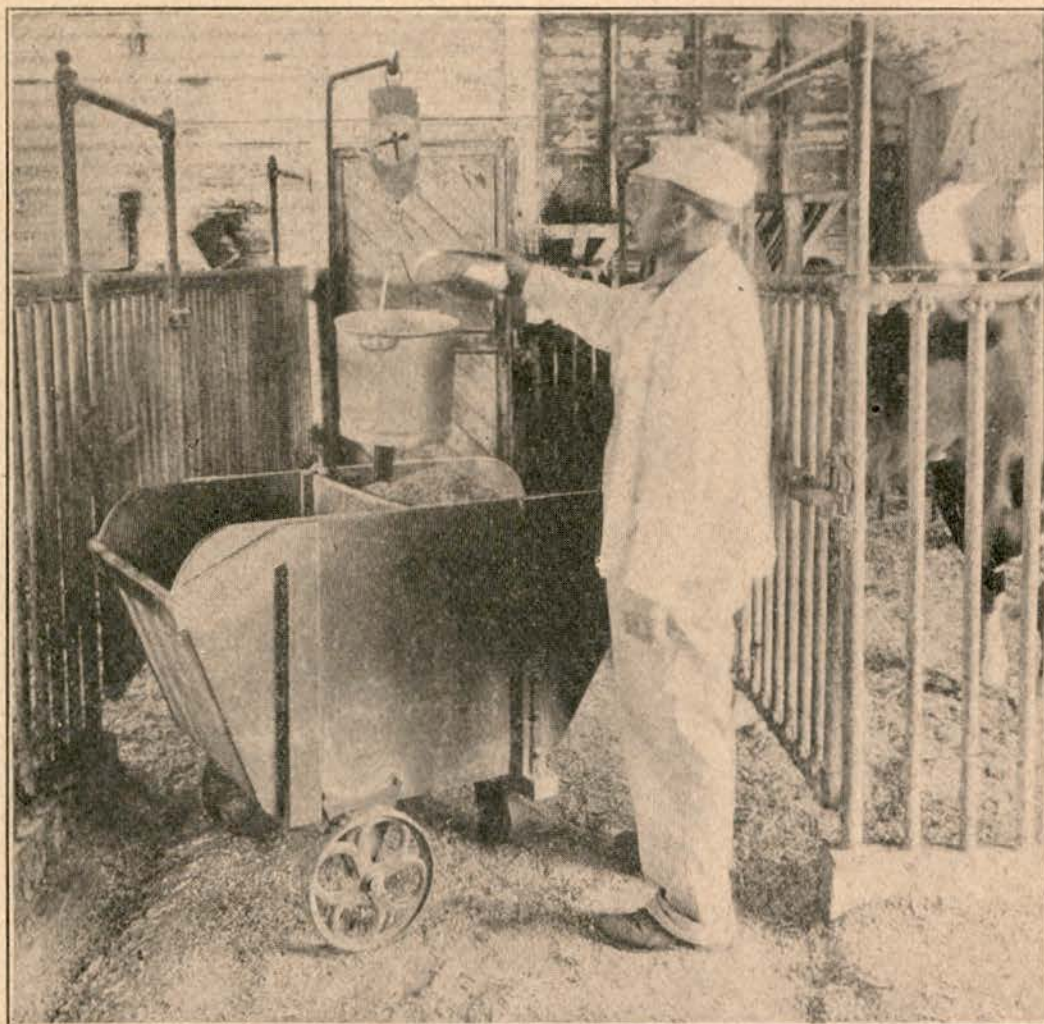


FIG. 2.—Feed grain according to milk yield

MORE MILK BY FEEDING ¹

The cow is a machine that manufactures milk containing golden butterfat from coarse feeds such as grass, hay, and grain. But feed is essential for milk production. Plenty of feed insures plenty of milk. In summer, good pasture is ideal.

¹ Feeding the Dairy Cow, Circular 29, Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station.

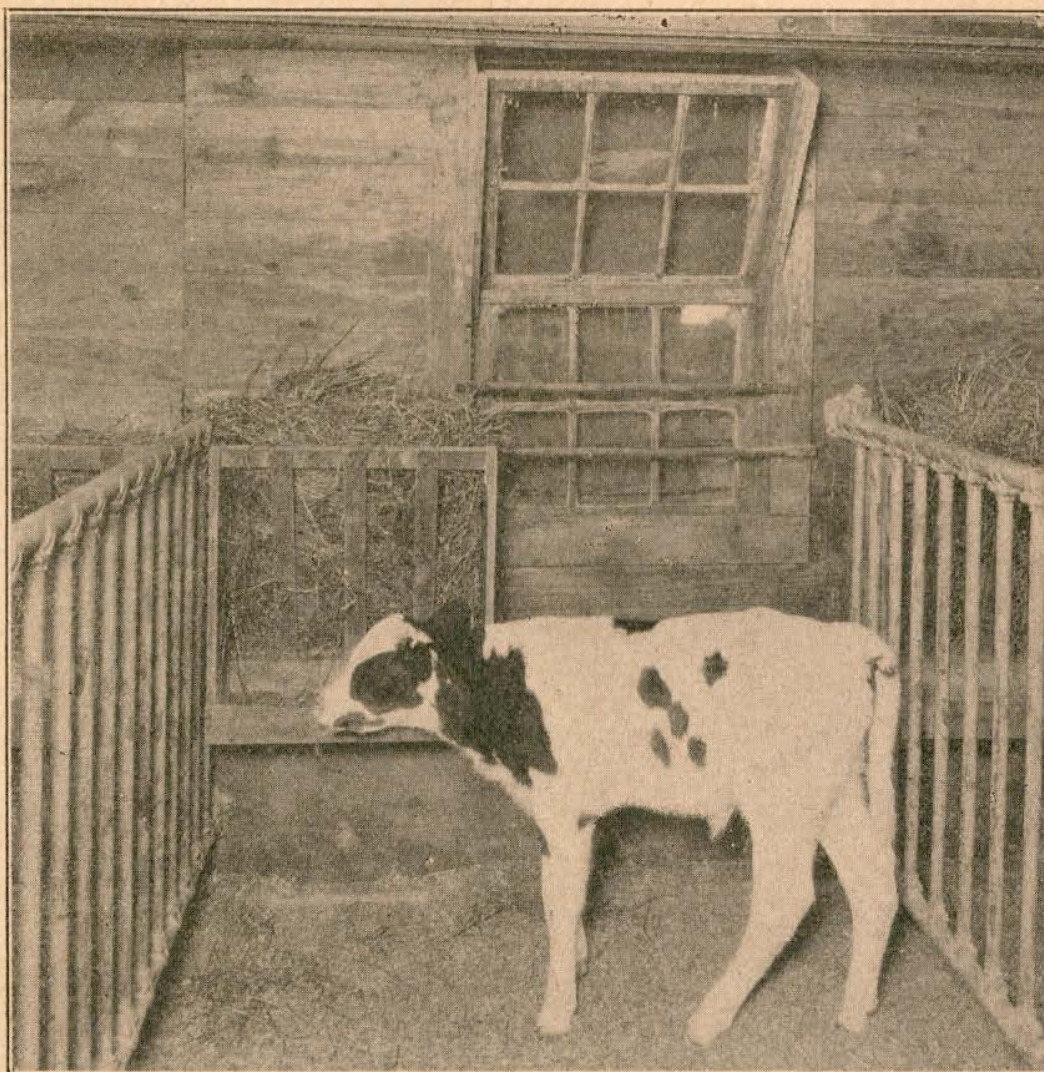


FIG. 3.—Calf pen, showing tilting window, hayrack, and manger

When short or very dry, supplement it with soiling crops, silage, hay, or grain, or with a combination of roughage and grain. Do not stint the feed,—reduced feed means reduced milk flow. In winter, roughage is the basis of feeding. With good legume hay (alfalfa, clover, etc.) and silage, but little grain need be fed to the medium- or low-producing cow. Always feed grain in direct proportion to milk yield. One pound of grain for each 3 to 3½ pounds or pints of milk produced is a safe rule. The milk scales make good feed scales. Make up a grain mixture that will balance with the available roughage to supply all the cow's needs for both body upkeep

and milk production. In making the mixture, utilize the home-grown corn and oats and add such other feeds as are needed to insure sufficient protein at lowest cost, and in addition, bulk, palatability, physiological effect, and proper mineral content. Don't forget to give the cow a vacation every year on full feed. Sane and satisfactory feeding means full feed for the good cow, a ticket to the stockyards for the boarder.

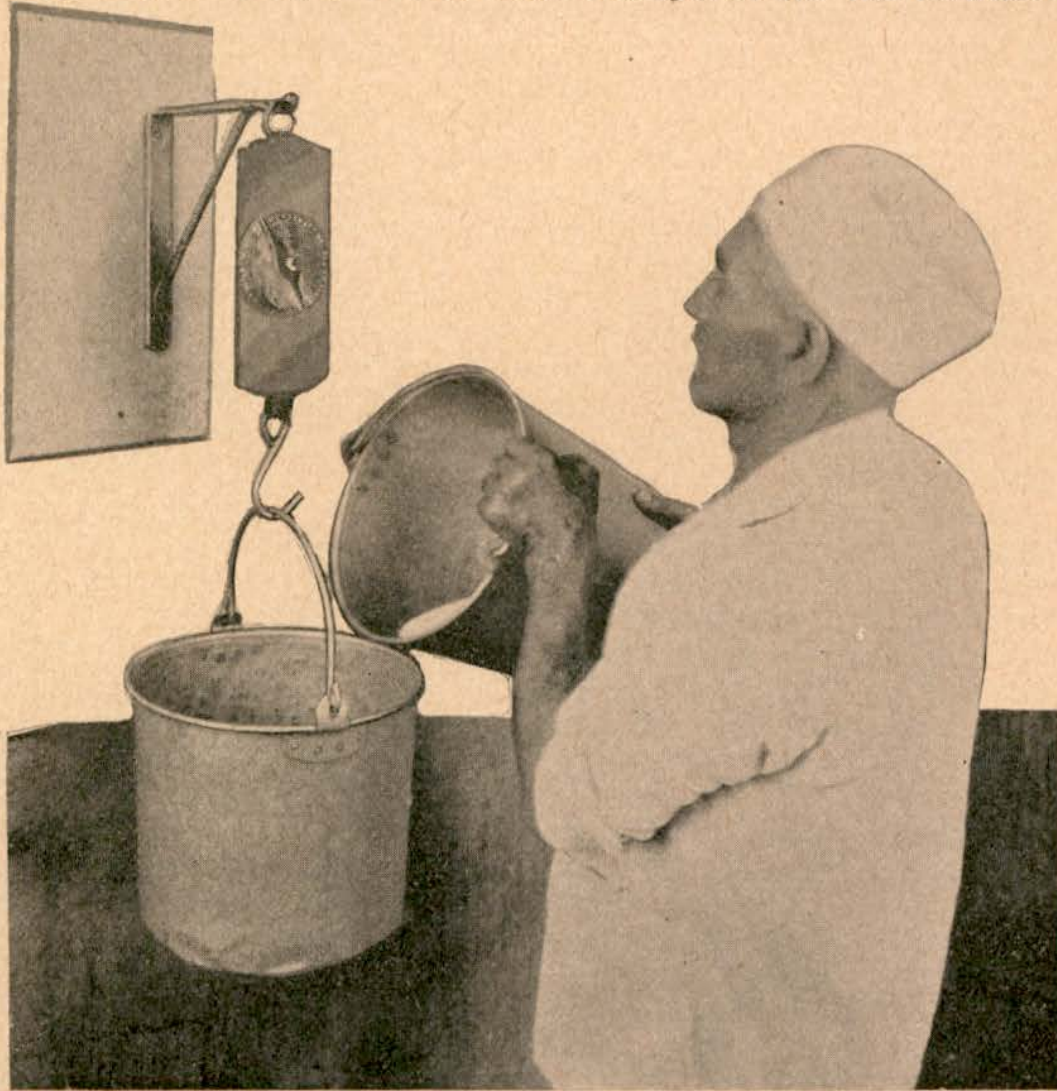


FIG. 4.—Weigh the milk for calves

CARE OF THE CALF MEANS FUTURE CASH FROM THE COW¹

Good cows only from good calves grow. Liberal feeding and good care of the cow when dry usually insures a calf

¹ Dairy Calf Care and Management, Circular 30, Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station.

strong and vigorous at birth and one that will grow rapidly and well. The calf, after drawing the first milk from its mother, a necessary precaution, may be weaned at convenience and fed a weighed amount of warm, fresh milk from its mother. At first, the quantity should be from 6 to 10 pounds or pints daily in two or three regularly timed feedings, depending upon the size and vigor of the calf. As the calf gets older, the quantity may be increased, a pound at a time, until at three weeks of age it is receiving from 8 to 12 pounds daily in two feeds. It is always safe to have the young calf appear a little hungry after feeding. If whole milk is scarce, the calf may gradually be changed to skim milk the fourth week. The entire week should be used to make the substitution, a pound of skim milk being substituted for each pound of whole milk. The quantity of milk fed daily may be increased 2 pounds each week until 20 pounds is reached. Unless skim milk is very plentiful, this is as much as need be fed. Skim milk feeding may be continued as long as desired, but it may well be stopped at the end of the fourth month. Overfeeding almost always causes indigestion, scours, unthriftiness, and stoppage of growth. Don't overfeed milk.

After the first two weeks, the calf will eat a little hay and grain. Give it all that it will consume. Water and salt are also essential after this time. Pasture in the summer and some exercise at all seasons are desirable for calves.

Pens, utensils, bedding, in fact anything pertaining to the housing or feeding of the calf, should be scrupulously clean. Dry, clean bedding, clean milk pails and feed boxes, and a warm, dry pen are safeguards for calves in the prevention of ailments and disease. Cleanliness constantly carried on insures continued calf health and growth.

Horns serve no useful purpose, and their growth should be stopped with a caustic pencil when the calf is young. Fall calving fits better into farm practice, and fall dropped dairy calves if properly cared for usually grow better than spring calves. Open sheds are suitable for young dairy heifers after six months of age provided the heifers are liberally fed. Plenty of feed for the growing heifers, especially from a year old until they enter the herd, results in well-developed cows that are capable of profitable production. Calf and heifer raising may be summarized as cleanliness, regularity, constant care, caution, and plenty of feed.

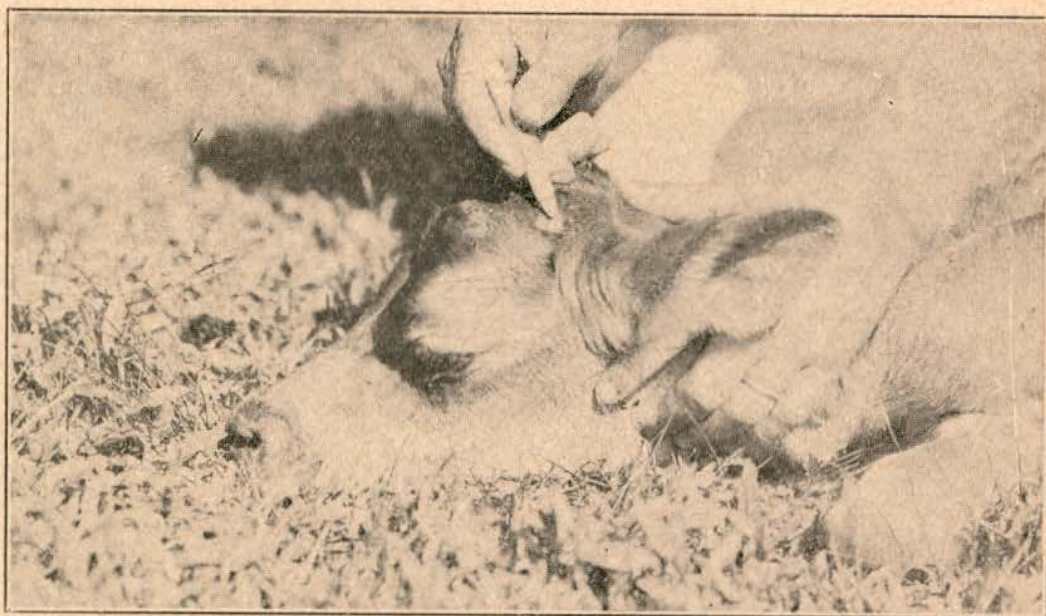


FIG. 5.—Applying caustic to calf's head to prevent the growth of horns

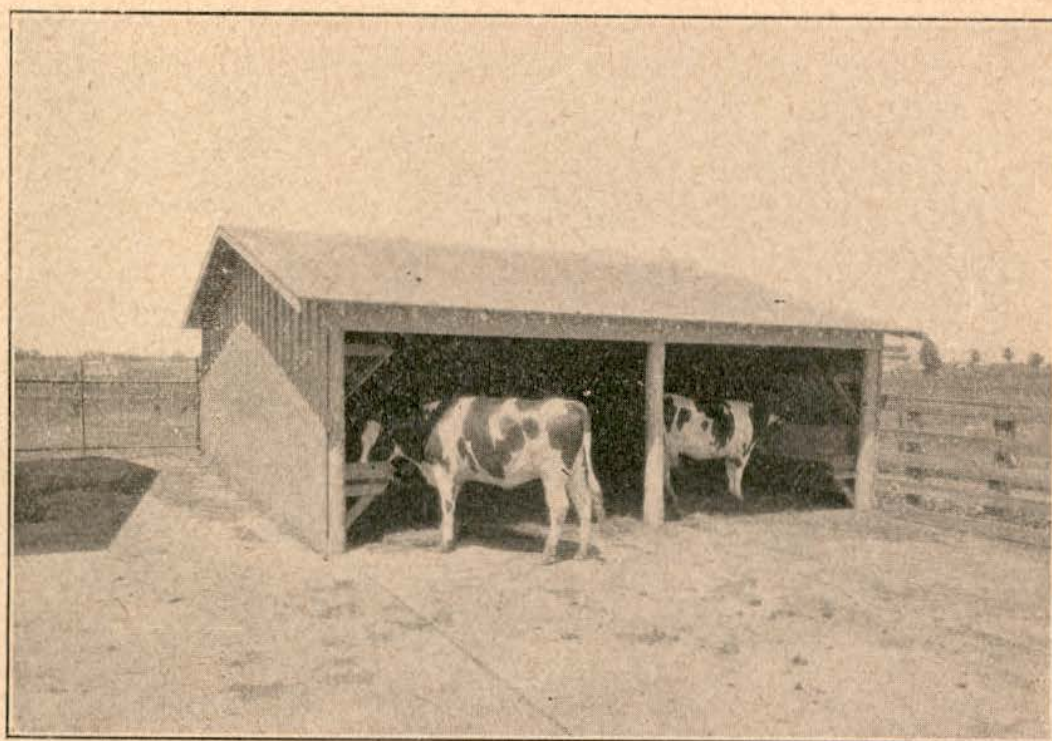


FIG. 6.—Open shed for young stock

MILK IS CLEAN, SO SHOULD BE CREAM

Milk, Nature's most complete food, when drawn from healthy cows is clean and wholesome. Dirt gets in from the outside. A clean barn, clean hands for the milker, clean flanks and udder for the cow, a clean, small-topped milk pail, and immediate cooling of the milk or its immediate separation thru a clean separator, and the cooling of the cream will insure a delicious, healthful, dairy product. Cool milk or cream below 50° F. at least, and 40° F. if possible, and deliver it as soon as possible. Then everyone will enjoy fresh, clean milk or cream, or fragrant fresh golden butter that is made from it.

Milk only good cows and feed them well. Breed better calves and raise them well. Care for milk carefully and the dairy cow will bring pleasure and profit.

[20M]



FIG. 7.—Milk the ideal food