Best Breed of Cows for the Dairy Farmer.

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To find what breed of cows is the best for the dairy farmer, we will have to start from the main point, the production of milk.

When the milk producers of a community start in to put their business on a paying basis, their first question is, what breed of cows will best serve our purpose? This question is asked in Maine, in New York, in Wisconsin, in California, in Europe, in South America or wherever milk is made a standard product. In order to answer this question it is necessary to decide, first, what any breed of cows must do to make a profit for the dairyman. The cow must yield milk enough to pay for themselves, their keeping and net their owners a profit.

This means that it is necessary to know, approximately at least, what it costs to produce milk, for knowing this, we can compute how much milk the cow must make to serve our purpose and this in turn indicates the breed we want. First, then, let us glance at the question of the cost of producing milk.

Have we any scientific showing on this essential point? At the Minnesota experiment station, at Cornell University, N. Y. and at the New Jersey experiment stations elaborate studies of the cost of milk have been made for 10 successive years, and a study of the records will be interesting to the producers everywhere.

The station conditions of course will be understood, are somewhat more favorable for cheap production than are the conditions on the average dairy farm. The New Jersey station showing for a term of 8 years ending in April 1904 that the average cow gave 6402 pounds milk per year.

The average cost of keeping a cow per year was about 45 to $50. Average cost of one hundred pounds of milk was found to be $1.19. Here it is shown from practical work, the interesting fact that, under the ideal conditions of an
agricultural experiment station the cost of making milk was too high for the average dairyman, where his cows only average 4500 to 5000 lbs. a year. Therefore it is shown we must use cows that give more than 6000 pounds of milk per year, otherwise the per cent. of profit is too small. You will need cows that will produce 7500 pounds or more to lower the cost of production, to sell at a profit. Where can such cows be gotten? The average cow of Holland today produces approximately 9500 pounds of milk per year. These are Holstein Friesian cows and they are widely scattered in this country as well as all other countries where dairy work is carried on. There is no other breed available that will produce as much milk for the farmer as the Holstein Friesians. Dairymen availing themselves of these cows, taking pains to secure well known strains, and good individuals, start with every prospect of success. Cows of this breed offer dairymen great inducements. The cow that will yield 9500 pounds milk in a year, that will test about 3.5 per cent. fat will make 332.5 pounds butter fat in one year. This by the 80 per cent. butter method will make 415.6 pounds butter that can be sold at an average price of 25 cents per pound would be worth $103.90.

From the 9500 pounds of milk one will have about 9085 pounds of skim milk fed on the farm will be worth about $18.17. This making the total income of the cow $122.07 for the year. Now we will find out what it will cost to keep this cow a year. It was found by the former experiment stations named the cost to be from $40 to $50. If this is the case the dairymen then would have a fine profit of $77 taking the average of keeping at $45. Where as now the average cow of this country makes about 4500 pounds milk that averages about 3.5 per cent. fat this would make 157.5 pounds butter fat by the 80 per cent. method would make 196.8 pounds butter at 25 cents would be worth $49.20 and the skim milk 4304 pounds at 20 cents per hundred would be worth $8.60 total income of this cow $57.80 deducting her keeping from the income you have $12.80 net profit. Having decided from this illustration that we need large yielding cows the dairymen must next select their breed of cows. Now other breeds than Holsteins produce large yielding
cows, but no other affords so high a percentage in yield as does the Holstein Friesians. If all other dairy breeds and dural purpose breeds the Ayrshire, the Jersey, the Gurnsey, the Brown Swiss, the Red Poles could afford such large yields one would still ask, which breed is the most vigorous, the prolific, the longest lived, the best able to keep up immense productions through a long career, the more resistant to disease, the least liable to abort, the surest to breed and rear calves, the most able to convert the roughage of the farm into milk, statistics would say the Holstein Friesian cow.

She is also the most abundant producer of fertilizer, the quickest to respond to good treatment and rations, the slowest to fall off when the treatment and rations are not of the best, and the best to command the highest price when beefed after the dairy work is ended. Supposing one of you wish to supply a demand of 200,000 pounds of milk for one year what breed would you go into? With the class of cows that produce 9500 pounds you would need 22 cows. Of the class that yields say 6000 pounds you would need 34 cows. The cows in both cases would approximately cost about the same per head. Say they cost $60 per head. The first bunch would have a value of $1330 and the latter $2040 or a difference of $720 investment. The difference in number of cows would be 12 head taking 12 stalls less and one man less to do the work, far less equipment and investment, all around. Which cow is the best for the farmer that patronizes the cheese factory, the creamery, and the liquid milk dealer? The Holstein cow because she gives the largest amount of milk solids of the finest quality, to be made into cheese at the lowest cost. The cow that gives from 9 to 1200 pounds milk with 12 to 13 per cent total solids will produce 1080 to 1560 pounds of total solids per year, at a production cost of 40 to 50 dollars per year while the cow of the 6000 pound yield only gives about 750 to 900 pounds total solids with a somewhat higher per cent. of fat and the same cost of production. The large yielding cow is also the best for the dairymen who sell the milk for the production of casine and milk sugar. According to the scientists who study the food subject exhaustively they find that the milk
from Holstein Friesian cows is in chemical composition and Mechanical make up the nearest approach to human milk that can be found. Its butter fat is put up in fine globules that facilitate emulsion, digestion and assimilation in the human system. Its other solids, are so proportioned to the butter fat that the milk is practically a balanced ration for the human infant as well as for the adult.