

DAIRY FACTS

WATER REQUIRED BY DAIRY COWS

Of Much Importance to Supply Abundantly Always.

It is a well known fact that heavy producing milk cows require a large amount of water—more than many people realize. When cows have free access to water at all times during the winter months, as when supplied with drinking cups, they consume more than when they have an opportunity to drink only once or twice a day; especially is this true when they are forced to drink ice water.

The fact that milk contains 87 per cent of water in itself indicates that a large supply is needed when a cow produces from 40 to 50 pounds of milk a day. The chief function of water in the animal's body, however, is not to supply the amount needed for her milk. She also needs it for dissolving her food materials, to help distribute the nutritive matter through the body and to remove the waste body cells. It has been stated that 56 per cent of the water consumed by a dairy cow is excreted in the feces, about 13 per cent in the urine, 12 per cent through the skin and about 15 per cent through the milk. In summer more is eliminated through the skin than in winter.

At the Michigan station water consumption by ten dairy cows was measured from the latter part of March to the latter part of July in 1929, while the cows were producing an average of 14 pounds of milk daily. The consumption during that period was 16.9 gallons per cow or about 140 pounds per day. Thus they consumed about 3.2 pounds of water for every pound of milk produced.

The large daily requirement of water calls attention to the importance of providing an abundance at all times. On most farms the water supply is not as adequate during winter as it is during summer, even though the cows may not need quite so much. Where drinking cups can be installed in the dairy barn they will pay good dividends.

Care of Cow Essential for Making Cheap Milk

Clean, palatable foods are necessary in order to make the cheapest milk, the most milk and the best quality of milk. Moldy, dusty hay, musty grains, and all such containing dust make the cleanest and cheapest milk impossible.

Clean straw or clean shavings make splendid bedding, whereas dusty straw, dirt from the hay loft, cheap, dusty hay, and the like mean a dusty barn and dirty, poor-keeping milk.

The best milk pail is the one with the smallest opening at the top. The poorest milk pail is the large, open-topped pail which will collect the most dust.

The milk pails, cans, separators, and all other utensils used for milk must be thoroughly washed and sterilized immediately before milking.

After Freshening Feed Small Amount of Grain

After freshening only a small amount of grain should be fed. A warm bran mash is also beneficial during this period. In fact, bran should form most of the grain fed for two or three days after calving. The cow may be brought on feed gradually, depending on the condition of the udder. If the udder is badly caked or congested, grain should be fed sparingly. If the udder is not badly congested, then the cow may be brought onto feed gradually, having her on a full grain ration at about three weeks after freshening.

Dairy Notes

Milk is approximately 87 per cent water. Too often water is looked upon simply as something to quench thirst.

Roughage is the backbone of the real dairy ration. It determines, to a large extent, the feed cost of producing milk.

A calf well started is a calf half grown. It takes a long time to overcome a setback that a calf may get in the first few days or weeks of its life.

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