

Dairying on Dry Land Farms

DAIRYING is the one never failing money-making resource in dry land farming for the family with little capital. The native wild grass is a dependable dairy feed. Kafir and sorghum, when given good treatment, never fail to produce feed crops. These sure feed crops make good silage and for ten dollars' outlay and his labor, the dry-land farmer can build a pit silo. Buyers of cream pay cash at the time of each purchase. The dry-land farmer with a herd of good dairy cows receives a cash income every week through the year, whether the season is wet or dry.

The new settler in a dry land country who takes a herd of milking cows with him can go out the first morning he is in his new home and milk the cows while his wife is getting breakfast. He can separate the cream and begin a steady cash income with the first day in his new home. The regular weekly return from the sale of cream enables the new settler to pay cash for his household supplies and he need not have store bills. The skim milk fed to hens and pigs adds to the profits.

The countless losses and failures in dry-land farming in the Southwest have come from attempts to make a living from exclusive grain farming and no stock. A careful dry-land farmer in Eastern Colorado raised six profitable crops of grain in 18 years. The 1914 grain crop is heavy throughout the Panhandle. The last generally good grain crop in

that district was in 1908. The man who depends entirely upon raising grain finds the wait between crops too long. It is particularly hard when the new settler comes at the beginning of a period of dry years. Where the main income is furnished by the dairy cows, the dry-land farmer lives comfortably every year. He sows grain only in those seasons when there is ample moisture and the money that the grain brings is a surplus that can be used for investment.

When the dry land farmer has sufficient capital and is not obliged to have a weekly or monthly income, beef cattle, horses and mules are money-makers. Many of the old settlers on the plains have become wealthy and now have fine homes, some of them are bank directors, from the profits made from raising beef cattle and horses. Beef cattle can be finished to top the market on silage made from kafir or sorghum fed with kafir or milo grain and cottonseed meal. The gains are more rapid than the usual gains made in the corn belt.

When you think of dry-land farming, think of dairying. When you move to a dry-land farm, take ten to twenty good dairy cows with you. Make your main crops feed crops for the dairy cows. Store the surplus in cheap pit silos. Take good care of the cows and of the cream. You will prosper.—H. M. Cottrell, Agricultural Commissioner, Rock Island lines.

Fall Calves Versus Spring Calves

IT IS CLAIMED by most farmers that spring is the natural season for everything to bring forth their young, and, rightly fed and cared for, animals born at this time might prove most satisfactory and profitable in general.

However, there are many circumstances and conditions peculiar to this season which often bring about unsatisfactory results with calves. In many cases the cows are run down in flesh after coming through the winter, so that their unborn calves have been partly starved and considered stunted.

Again, not one farmer in a thousand ever takes into consideration the fact that the sire of their calves is run down by too much breeding during the rush season when cows come in heat, which also has a most deteriorating influence on the size and vitality of his offspring. This is particularly true of the farmer operating only a small-sized dairy, keeping no bull in connection, but taking his cows to some other dairyman who does.

Another point that often makes for unsatisfactory results with spring calves is the fact that the rush season for field work comes on at practically the same time as the calves, and the latter thus often are neglected or slighted, especially where skim milk is fed, some calves being cheated by the others, little or no grain being given and digestive troubles being brought on because of sour pails for feeding milk at an improper temperature, etc.

All at One Time.

Some claim that the calves all coming at practically the same time enables the farmer to tend to many as well as he would with only a few, and, while this is true, the full advantage of this point is not taken by any appreciable number of farmers. With a little systematizing of feeding and caring for the calves this plan would work well, but it takes careful planning the same as with any other work. Of course, grass is plentiful and forms the ideal feed for spring calves, but the presence of intense heat and the torturing flies more than counterbalance the good effect of the pasturage as against the succulent rations which may be supplied in connection with winter calf raising.

Now that silos are coming into more or less general use, the man who has provided himself with one of these necessary farm equipments,

can to a considerable extent have a ration, which may be fed to the calves in the winter time, which will largely take the place of grass.

By having the calves dropped in the fall, the farmer usually has more spare time to devote to them, and they are apt to be given a better chance.

He also can handle the dairy products with more care, and, with the cool weather in connection, his profits will be higher, dairy products usually being a better price at this season because of the scarcity of them.

Fall Calves Healthier.

Fall calves are very apt to be more vigorous and healthy than spring calves, as the cows have just passed through the grazing season, and usually are in prime condition for developing their offspring; while the absence of flies, and the cool, invigorating weather combine to promote rapid, healthy growth.

Some offer the objection to fall calves that they are harder to take through the winter than spring calves, but with good, warm quarters, proper care and ample feed, the fall calves will come through the following spring in as good or better condition than the spring calves. Notice the very slight differences in size between the spring calf and the fall calf, the next spring after their first winter, and you will see this point clearly.

A compromise on this question by having the cows drop their calves at practically all seasons of the year, will prove most satisfactory, especially with the dairy farmer owning a herd of only moderate size.

Then, the farm household will be well supplied with milk, cream and butter the year round (something not always so with either spring or fall calving) and the profits from the dairy herd will be coming in every week—a much better plan than having them drop in at intervals, with a portion of the year being without any.

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