

# Dairy Type Bulls Outgain Steers In Feeding Tests

Keystone state dairymen may be overlooking a good source of extra income, researchers at the Pennsylvania State University believe

Thomas B. King, extension animal husbandry specialist, and Dr. James R. Nichols, experiment station dairy scientist, have conducted a series of feeding experiments with dairy type bulls in comparison with steers.

King says feeding of dairy type bulls for beef production can be a profitable enterprise since the bulls gain faster and need less feed per pound of beef produced than do steers.

In experiments at the University, he said, bulls reached 800 pounds 34 days sooner than steers. The bulls reached 1,000

pounds in 26 fewer days. The steers had a slightly higher dressing percentage than the bulls, but in percent of dressed cuts, the bulls outpointed the steers at both weights. This was primarily due to less fat thickness and more square inch of area in the rib eye muscle on the bulls.

But more significant, the researchers feel, is the amount of feed consumed by the animals. The 800 pound bulls ate 576 pounds of feed compared to 616 pounds for the steers, or a saving of 40 pounds of feed to reach market weight. On the 1,000 pound animals, the bulls ate 635 pounds compared to 714 for the steers, or a difference of 61 pounds per animal. The bulls ate less of

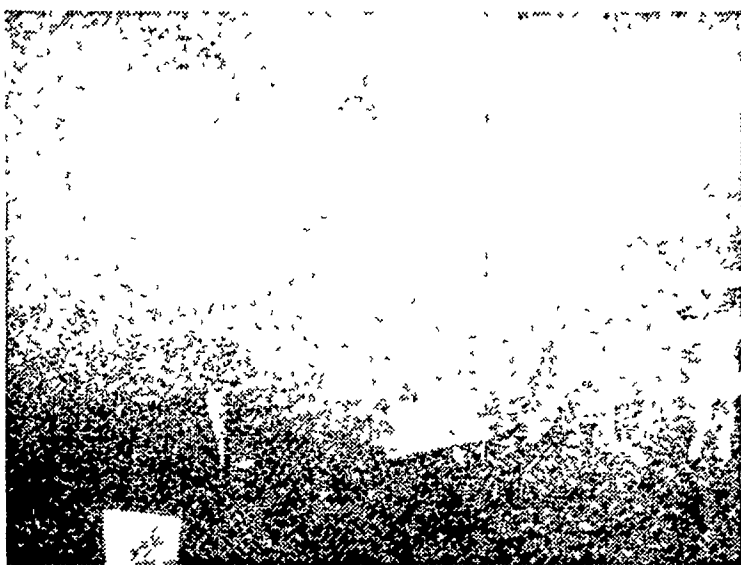
both grain and hay to reach market weight.

The steer carcasses in the experiment carried a greater degree of marbling and more fat covering. At the 800 pound weight, the steer carcasses graded slightly higher, but at the 1,000 pound weight the bulls graded higher than the steers.

King said feeding bulls is a fairly common custom in many countries but the industry here has not yet become aware of the profit opportunities available.

One of the reasons for the high interest in these investigations is that the housewife has shown an increasing interest in leaner cuts of meat," he said. "In the farmer's terms bulls provide just this."

Dr. Nichols pointed out that retailing trials in Denver, Colorado, show that 90 percent of the consumers who bought bull steaks, without knowing where they came from, said they would buy them again. About



LOOKING OVER A PEN OF Holstein steers are Dr. James R. Nichols, Penn State dairy scientist, left, and Thomas B. King, extension animal husbandry specialist. The two departments at Penn State are conducting experiments on the economic importance of dairy bulls as beef.

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the same reaction was noted for roasts from bull carcasses.

King noted that the increased gain per pound of feed could amount to nearly \$14 per animal with bulls. This could amount to \$13 million per year in Pennsylvania if the estimated 973,000 dairy bulls were fed out for beef.

The experiments were carried out in cooperation with the Holstein-Friesian Association of America, the Department of Animal Industry and Nutrition at the University, and the Cooperative Grange League Federation.

### Spring Rains Delay Seeding

Spring seeding of alfalfa and clover is well advanced and some Clobber potatoes have been planted, but rain and wet ground have delayed most farm work in the state, according to today's weekly crop and weather report of the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Winter grains generally are in fair to good condition, the report stated although some bailey had to be replanted in the southwest area because of poor germination during last fall's drought or from suffocation from water and ice.

Grains and grasses were making rapid growth.

Tobacco beds in the Lancaster county area were being steamed for weed and plant disease control.

Fruit trees have come through the winter in good condition, and apple buds are swelling rapidly. Some cherries are in bloom and a few peaches are in the pink stage. Pruning work has been completed.

Plowing for oats and corn progressed in southern and central counties, and some oats and vegetables were planted, in addition to potatoes.

Most of the state had a long, cold winter with plenty of snow and temperatures ranging down to 25 degrees below zero, but the weather was milder by several degrees than the 1962-63 season.

Snowfall ranged from 100 inches in northwestern counties to 50 inches in the southeastern area. The November-March rainfall totaled 15 to 18 inches, or considerably above normal.

#### REMOVE MULCH

Remove mulch from rose bushes gradually over a couple of weeks, recommend University horticulturists. Then remove dead wood. Cut back one inch into the green wood, and in addition, remove weak undesirable branches.

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