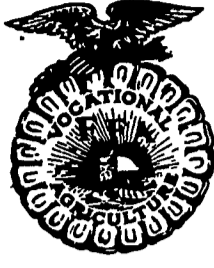


From Local Ag Teachers:



Thoughts in Passing



This weeks article was submitted by Michael J. Burton, Young Farmer instructor at Penn Manor High School.

Sire Selection - A Management Tool

In order to survive in the dairy business today, the successful manager must increase production while holding down costs as much as possible.

To accomplish this he must use every management tool at his disposal - forage testing, soil testing, least cost rations, mechanization, credit, etc. Every farmer has heard of, and probably used, most of these tools at one time or another. They can help the dairyman stay in business if he uses them correctly in his program.

One management tool that is often overlooked, but can contribute greatly toward the dairyman's future in dairying, is sire selection. His decision on which bull to use on a cow today can decide the genetic potential of a replacement heifer two years from now. It will pay him great dividends to select bulls that are known to sire top producing daughters. They will be the dairyman's future.

Now the question arises, how does the dairyman measure genetic progress made through sire selection. Sure he is using

Ivanhoe Star, Palcamar Capsule, Westside AB Seaman or another of the top AI bulls. But most likely he uses other sires also, so these top bulls represent only a portion of his total sire selection program. He needs to look at his total program and find out what the genetic improvement or "proof" of the average sire is. The Manor Young Farmers have devised a method to calculate this proof. Any dairyman can use this method, it's easy.

1 List the last sire used to breed each cow and heifer over the past 12 month period, using the barn breeding chart.

2 List the predicted difference plus repeatability for each bull using the latest USDA Sire summary which is available from any AI technician.

3 Now total the data and divide by the number of bulls. This is the average genetic improvement.



Michael J. Burton

4. Analyze the data. Now that he has calculated his

average herd sire, the dairyman asks "What does it mean?" The average herd sire is the genetic improvement that he is breeding into his herd now and the genetic potential of his replacement heifers.

The next step is to set goals for your particular herd and breeding program. We have used a predicted difference of 500 pounds of milk with a repeatability factor of 55 percent as a base for establishing individual herd goals. From here, each farmer establishes his individual goals for fat, type, etc.

After you select your goals, then look at the sires available to you and decide which ones will help you reach them. If you need some brushing up on predicted difference, percent repeatability, etc., contact your local agriculture teacher, county agent, or AI representative. They will be glad to help.

Sire selection, if managed properly, can contribute a great deal towards improving your future in dairying. Treat it as a management tool and profit from it!

Note: If anyone would like a

Fix-It Tip

When washing musty white cotton materials, add diluted chlorine bleach as directed on the container. (Never use chlorine bleach on silk or wool.) Some colored fabrics and fabrics treated with special finishes may also be affected by chlorine.

To help keep moisture out of clothing and household fabrics and thus make them less susceptible to mold growth, treat them with water-repellent sprays. Use on draperies, slip covers, mattresses, golf bags, overshoes, jackets and other outer garments.

In order to have sufficient chemical on the fabric for mildew protection, wet the surface of the fabric thoroughly with the spray. Examine frequently and re-spray when necessary.

copy of the survey form used by the Manor Young Farmers, contact Michael Burton, Penn Manor High School, Millersville, Pa. 17551.

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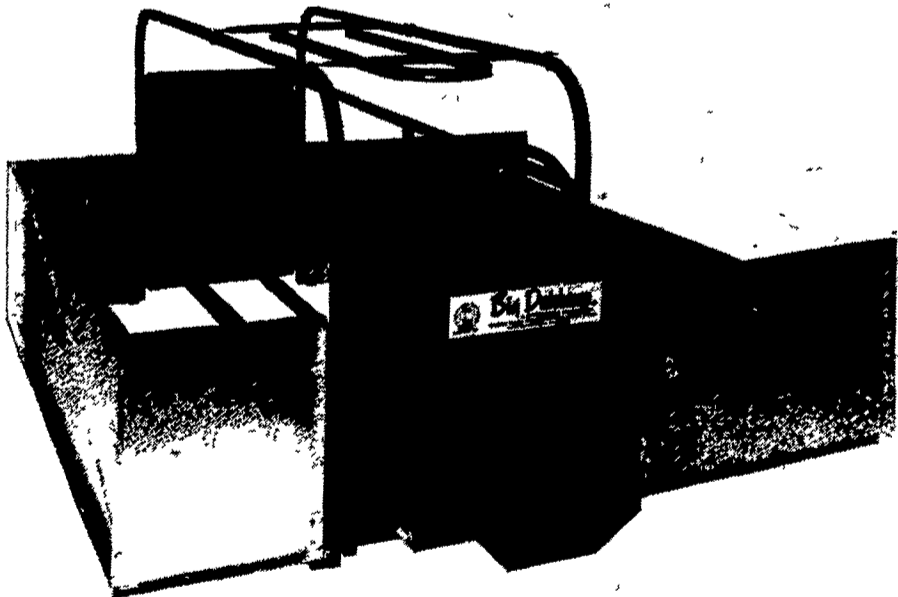
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