

Beef Crossbreeds Becoming More Important

(Continued from Page 22)

desirable. However, the Limousin does not produce as much milk as the Simmental or Maine-Anjou. Fertility of all the new breeds is supposed to be quite high.

Maine-Anjou. The modern Maine-Anjou animal is similar to the Simmental and is also a meat and milk breed. Maine-Anjou has not

been used in as many United States experiments as have the other breeds, although it is included at Penn State. From a growth standpoint, preliminary Penn State research indicates Maine-Anjou are similar to Charolais, Limousin and Simmental in growth rate. However, these data are based on limited numbers.

Chianina. Chianina is probably the largest breed in

the world, and has white hair with pigmented hides. It is claimed Chianina has a growth rate comparable to or better than the other new breeds and Charolais. The calves are heavy at birth, but are streamlined and "barrel-shaped" with relatively little calving problem. The Chianina breed, quite old, originating in Italy, is the latest breed to be used heavily. There is essentially no carcass or growth information available on crossbred Chianina cattle.

Penn State Research
At Penn State, we are using Angus-Holstein crossbred cows owned by the State Correctional Institution at Rockview. Seven breeds of bulls - Angus, Charolais, Chianina, Limousin, Maine-Anjou, Polled Hereford and Simmental are being tested on these cows. This cow herd has had a good production record mostly because of the high milk producing ability.

As one example of the performance obtained from using Charolais and the new breeds, steer calves this year have averaged 1110 pounds at 408 days of age. Carcass leanness has been desirable and carcass quality, measured by several different methods, has been acceptable in most cases.

However, the beef produced from the larger breeds probably will not be of the same type or quality obtained from the established breeds like Angus and Herefords. But the taste of the beef-consuming public is changing and leaner beef may be more acceptable to the public in the future.

Beware of Calving Problems
Before using any of the new breeds of bulls, calving information on the bulls should be checked carefully. Few bulls of the new breeds should be used on first-calf heifers. Each A.I. organization has calving

records to indicate which bulls could be used with the least chance of calving problems.

Economics of New Breeds
Prices paid for crossbred heifers (beef or dairy) have been quite high, averaging from two to four times as much as commercial weaned heifers. Eventually, these prices will level off and there will be a bigger separation between the new breeds.

This is a good chance for a dairyman with extra cows, or one who does not need or usually raise replacement heifers, to produce heifers with a good market value. It is also a good opportunity for commercial beef breeders with modern-type cattle to produce heifers of more value at weaning. This through artificial insemination.

Crossbred Bulls Available

There are several breeders in the northeastern states producing crossbred bulls for use on commercial beef cows. Although it is usually not desirable to use crossbred bulls, in certain situations these bulls may be useful to a commercial breeder. A one-half or three-fourths Simmental bull bred to some commercial cows may increase the milk production potential of resulting heifers. However, because of hybrid vigor, a crossbred bull must have better weaning and yearling weights than a purebred bull in order to be of equal breeding value. And attention should be paid to the dam of the crossbred bull.

Established Breeds Improved

All of the established breeds - Angus, Polled Hereford, Hereford, Shorthorn, etc. - have made tremendous progress in the past five to eight years. I doubt very much that breeders' attitudes and type of animal desired have

changed any more rapidly in any other livestock industry than they have in the beef business. Most beef cattle breeders today have a much better idea of what a really profitable and usable animal is than they ever had before.

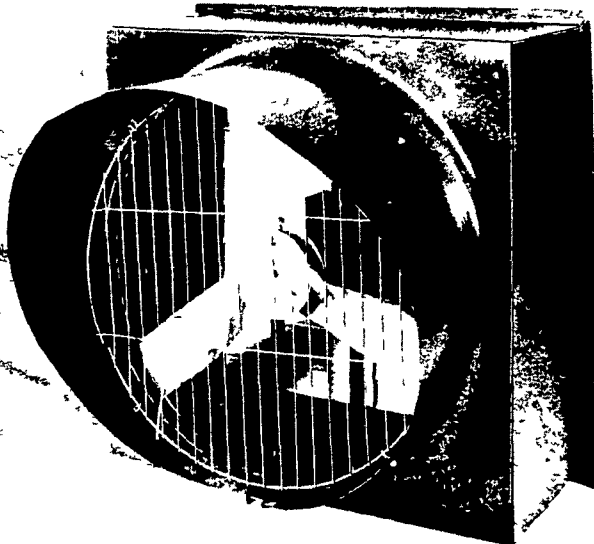
Late, Late Show
It's bad enough they show old American movies on the Late, Late Show - but now they're showing British movies from way back when. In one movie I saw last night, Henry the Eighth was played by Henry the Ninth!

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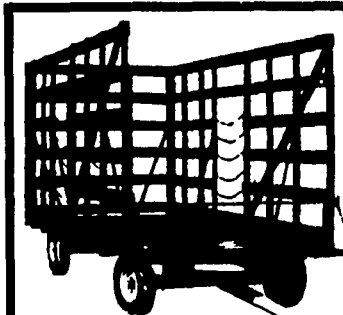
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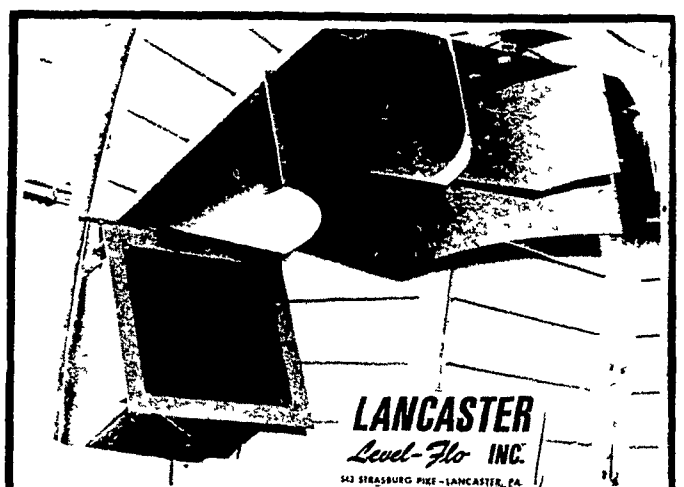
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