

# Aim for production through AI says Everett

By SALLY BAIK  
Staff correspondent  
UNIVERSITY PARK —  
For an economically successful breeding program dairymen should use the

services of the artificial breeding industry and should breed for production rather than type in their selection of sires, according to Robert Everett, of the

department of animal science at Cornell University. Everett is in charge of the dairy cattle breeding program there. Speaking to the 260 men

and women attending the dairy herd management conference sponsored by The Pennsylvania State University, Everett said that artificially inseminated cows are genetically superior by 500 to 800 pounds of milk to non-AI cows.

Everett said the sire's side of the pedigree contributes 76 per cent of the total genetic progress while the cow's side contributes only six per cent. He said, "If a dairyman is not using AI, his progress is about 24 per cent of the progress in AI. All genetic progress is coming from AI bulls."

Both genetic progress and environmental progress contribute to a successful herd. Since 1957, Everett said, genetic progress has averaged about 100 pounds of milk per cow per year in the AI population and dairymen have increased management skills to produce another 125 pounds of milk per year.

Everett pointed out that some traits which a dairyman might wish to breed into his herd have a



Robert Everett

per cent of the genetic progress, a dairyman's genetic program is protected from undesirable type and functional weakness through the use of AI sires, Everett said.

Return on investment is the most critical criteria in deciding how much to pay for semen. Everett recommended that dairymen should never pay over \$15.00 per breeding unit for semen. No matter how good the bull is, the cost of high-priced semen can never be recovered through extra milk production, Everett noted. The only way to recover the price of that semen is to sell the offspring.

Everett also cautioned against semen speculation. "By the time a dairyman can stock up on a venture bull, another better bull is already coming out of the system which makes the venture bull less saleable." In addition, the amount of capital tied up in semen is then unavailable to use in other parts of the dairy business.

Dairy herd improvement records are a big help in increasing the profit in dairy breeding, Everett said, especially when the information provided is studied for individual cow records and used as a culling guide.

Studies done by Everett and by the Holstein Freisian Association show that high bulls on type are the lowest on both production and longevity, two of the most desirable traits in selecting for genetic progress. It may seem difficult for a dairyman to decide how to handle the selection of sires to provide what he wants for his herd. Everett said, "The solution rests in putting full faith and confidence in the AI industry. The AI industry spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each year collecting and interpreting data on type and functional traits of cows, and any bulls transmitting undesirable attributes in one or more traits are culled."

Since a sire contributes 76

percent of the genetic progress, the more profitable your herd and the larger the return on fees" in the dairy herd improvement testing programs. The owner-sampler program makes a larger return on investment than the traditional dairy herd improvement program. Furthermore the return on investment is positive on a 30-head or larger herd, and the return increases each year a dairyman stays on the dairy herd improvement program, Everett said.

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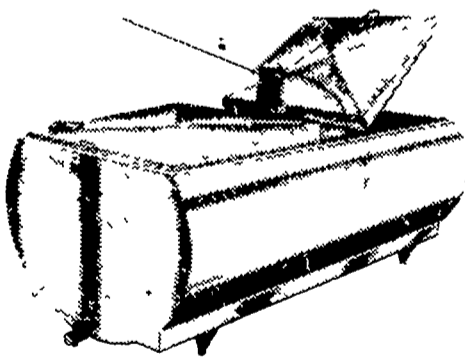
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