

Breeding structure of dairy cattle reported

BRATTLEBORO, VT. - The breeding structure of U.S. dairy cattle is greatly influenced by the artificial insemination industry with selection of sires becoming more intense every day, according to a Holstein Science Report recently published by the Holstein Association of America.

Dr. A. E. Freeman, of Iowa State University, concludes in his report that a major contribution to genetic improvement of dairy cattle has come about through the efforts of the A.I. industry. However, he adds, sires selected and progeny tested by private breeders and syndicates of private breeders continue to aid in the overall contribution made by the many A.I. organizations.

Freeman has represented the Holstein Association on several technical assistance assignments in Europe. His report is based on a formal presentation made last year at a dairy conference on cattle breeding at Warsaw, Poland.

U.S. figures show that the

vast majority of dairy herds are owned and operated as family units. Of the nearly 11 million milking cows in the United States, about four million are enrolled in the Dairy Herd Improvement Program.

The average herd size on official test stands at 77 animals. The average herd size of all U.S. dairy herds is about 68 animals. The proportion of cows tested, herd size, and production levels vary widely from state to state.

The new report lists Holsteins ahead of all dairy breeds for production of milk and fat. The Holstein breed accounts for 91.5 per cent of all cows on official test. This percentage, however, appears to be slightly higher for cows not on test. The potential economic return from breeding a large number of Holstein cows allows large capital investments by A.I. organizations in genetic improvement programs, according to Freeman.

The Holstein Science Report reviews the in-

novations in practice today in the U.S. dairy industry. There is a definite emphasis on research directed toward genetic improvement of dairy cattle. Developments involved with the use of computers are being tried on

farms to make information on herds more easily available for management decision.

Developments in reproduction that employ superovulation and frozen

embryos are becoming more wide spread. The impact of these developments depends on their effectiveness and costs, but have a potential for breed improvement according to the report.

Copies of the Holstein

Science Report, "Breeding Structure of the Dairy Cattle Industry in the United States," are available from the Holstein Association, One South Main Street, Brattleboro, Vermont 05301.

Highway safety urged to spare animal life

WASHINGTON, D.C. - It is estimated that autos kill millions of wild animals on U.S. roads each year.

Much of the damage occurs during the Spring and Summer, when rural roads are jammed with holiday-bound motorists.

If you are about to go on vacation, the National Wildlife Federation urges you to observe these humanitarian rules:

Remember to look out for animals, both wild and domestic, along the highways. By driving alertly, especially at night, you can help spare the lives of

creatures who normally panic when confronted with a speeding auto.

Dr. Fred R. Scroggin, president of the NWF, issued the appeal. "We can't assume that wildlife will act rationally when they see your car," he said. "The driver must be rational. You may have to stop completely to avoid a collision that could kill you as well as that roadside animal."

Scroggin noted that 29,914 whitetail deer and 84 bears were killed by autos in just one state, Pennsylvania, last year. In one area, Allegheny

County, drivers killed more deer on the highways than hunters bagged during the hunting season.

Three Pennsylvania State University employees who conducted an informal survey of the wildlife toll in their area are convinced that millions of animals die on the state's roads yearly. Along their 40-mile commutation route alone, in one month they counted 65 dead rabbits, 34 birds, 20 opossums, and a number of raccoons, skunks, groundhogs, cats, dogs, squirrels, deer, chipmunks, snakes, foxes, and porcupines.

The three noted that the greatest number of animals died on unfenced, two-lane roads bordering farms or forests.

NWF's President Scroggin also advised against "adopting" or "rescuing" wildlife. "Wild animals make bad, and even dangerous pets," he said. Except in rare cases where an injured animal might be taken to a veterinarian for treatment, and then released again into the wild, he said, most wild animals are better off left to their parents.

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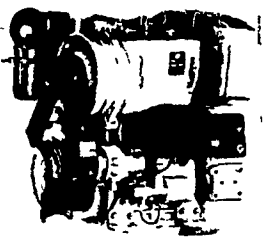
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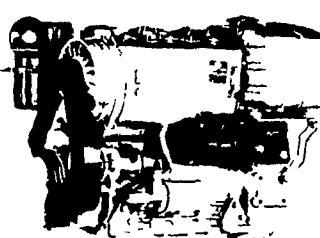
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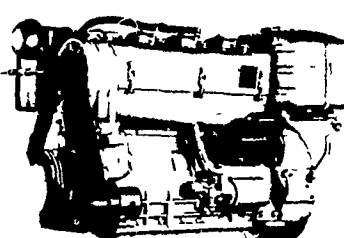
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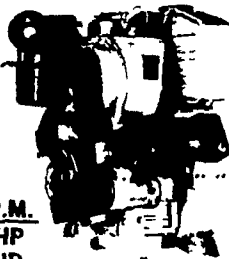


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