

Red and White Holsteins

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and whites have grown to be the dominant breed. Not only is the European market hungry to acquire American Holstein bloodlines; it is eager to acquire red and whites from quality American stock.

"Red and whites have some catching up to do," Specht says. He acknowledges that generally they are not up to snuff with black and whites except on the best farms. Not only do red and white breeders have to undo 80 years of prejudice in the U.S. view. They also have to recoup 80 years of lost breed development time.

Ironically, the U.S. farmer may have helped bring the red and white Holstein along farther by his prejudice. "If a farmer took a red calf from a good cow, he probably kept her on as grade stock, while he destroyed any red calves from average cows," Specht explains. "That means the reds that survived represented the best breeding."

Still, red breeding is lagging behind. "There just aren't enough good red bulls," Lapp says as he reviews his list of 22 red or red-factor bulls he's used.

Breeder Dennis Wolff of Millville, Columbia County, agrees. "Right now red and white breeders are swimming upstream. There's no good red bull that's strong on production, test, and type at the same time. Until there is, the breeding is going to be limited." Wolff points to Hanover Hill Triple Threat and Cold Spring Elevation Fagin, both of which dropped proof eventually but have been favored bulls. "The bloodlines have had to come out of Canada, and they're just not as good as the U.S. on production. They have some catching up to do."

The Red and White Association is optimistic about the possibilities of catching up soon. It offers a

"grade up" program that allows farmers to begin with a grade cow and produce a purebred in two generations. It also allows cross-breeding and permits upgrading of the herd to registration in three generations from cross-breeding.

Carpenter points out that the grade up program is bringing better bulls onto the market already. "Two of the best red and white bulls today," she says, "are grade ups, E-B Thor Red and his half-brother, E-B Tonto Cavalier, both at ABS."

The Association also registers black and white Holsteins for dairymen trying to build a pedigree, but moreso it encourages farmers to double register their cows with the Holstein-Friesian Association, to promote more red breeding.

The market for red and white Holsteins may be the best incentive of all. Wolff points out that Clar-Dot Charlie Berry Red, the cow he bought from Beiler, although typed Very Good (85) and a strong producer is not among the top group of U.S. cows. But she has done well on an embryo transplantation program, and he has been very successful in sales of her eggs to Hungary. "They're eager to get a hold of good U.S. cows that are red."

Europeans may become even more interested in the next several years. A recent international study commissioned by the shorthorn breeders in Europe identified the U.S. red and white Holstein as the best cow to use for improving breed and bloodlines.

Wayne Lapp is glad to see the barriers against red and whites coming down. He recalls a youngster who used one of his cows as a 4-H project not long ago. "The kid did great. He won the local shows and the regional, everything he could. But when it came time to

go to Harrisburg, they wouldn't let him because the animal was registered with the Red and White Dairy Cattle Association and not the Holstein Association. Lapp shakes his head in disgust at the memory. "That was just plain meanness. They would have found any reason to keep that boy and that red and white cow out of the show. Attitudes like that are going to hold farmers apart instead of bringing us together to improve the breed."

Brubaker to host Fast Dry meeting

LITITZ — Richard Fuller, the scientist who developed the "Fast Dry" process for Beacon Feeds, will speak at a breakfast meeting Thursday hosted by Brubaker Agronomic Consulting Service, Lititz.

Fuller, a Beacon vice president, will explain how the drying and preserving agent allows alfalfa to dry so uniformly that the grower can bale sooner, with less leaf loss. One of the 17 Pennsylvania

farmers who is currently using Fast Dry will also attend the meeting.

In addition, Jeff McCellan from Chevron Chemical Co. will answer questions on Paraquat herbicide for in-between cuttings.

The breakfast meeting will be held from 8 to 10 a.m. at the Bird-in-Hand Restaurant. Reservations should be made by contacting the Brubaker firm by Monday.

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