

The Dairy Business

By
Newton Bair

COW PHILOSOPHY

Some of you might remember reading a small book published nearly four years ago by Paul Misner, who was the guiding spirit behind several of the very successful dairy herds of that era. I remember him as the herd manager for the famous Dunloggin Farms, of Baltimore, Md. The book was titled "Cow Philosophy," and was a down-to-earth treatise on his attitudes and beliefs in regard to working around cows.

The philosophy he emphasized more than anything else was that a good cow man had to learn to think

like a cow! What he meant, of course, was that a herdsman had to learn to anticipate what motivates a cow to do her best for her owner.

I'll only list a few things that enter into that ability to anticipate and motivate. First, you have to like cows, and furthermore, like working around them. I can always spot a herd owner who likes his cows. They are clean, comfortable, and well fed. And they are usually very profitable producers.

A person who likes cows will know everything there is to know about every member of the herd.

There's no mistake about who the sire and dam is, and most often he can give you a three- or four-generation pedigree. He (or she) will often be able to tell which sire will be used in the next mating, when it will occur, and why that sire was chosen for the job. Of course, the production record of every cow will be known, and boasted about. And if they are purebreds, the type classification score of each individual in the herd will always be available for scrutiny and discussion.

A cow lover is as particular about the dry cows and heifers as he is about the milking string. Calves get all the attention they deserve, and heifers are considered as potential breeders and improvers of the breed. They are always well grown, so that they can be bred to take their place in the herd by the time they are about two years old. They have reached their greatest potential for profit and satisfaction, and the owner is anxious to see them perform.

A real herdsman or herdsman loves to show off the cows at every

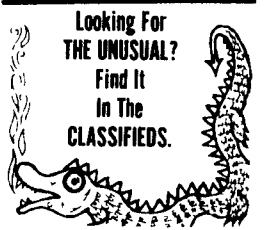
opportunity, whether at the local fair, Farm Show, or district breed shows. They also don't mind parting with a good animal occasionally, at a public sale where the other dairymen can see what a good job they have done. After all, she will be going into another herd, where the owner also loves cows and will take good care of them.

And lastly, good feeding and nutrition has become an exact science, and every owner worth his own salt will learn all he can about it, or else obtain a reliable and dependable nutritionist to help with the job. After all, no one can be a complete specialist in everything. Here is one place that even a top dairyman will often prefer to rely on a feed specialist, rather than risk making a second-rate decision that could cost money and disrupt an otherwise well-run business.

Cow philosophy can be summed up like this. The dairyman who doesn't particularly like cows, but just keeps them because they are a convenient way to market his feed and keep the boys busy around the

farm, is not doing himself or the rest of the industry any favor by staying in business. If he doesn't love his cows, most of the things I have mentioned won't get done. He might make a bare living, but doesn't really care if milk tastes good, or if the consumer buys lots of it and lives better because of his efforts.

And it also includes the will to spend a little time and money to convince others to buy and use his products. Cow philosophy is an all-inclusive attitude, encompassing every aspect of the business, with the ultimate goal of producing and selling a superior product at a profit.



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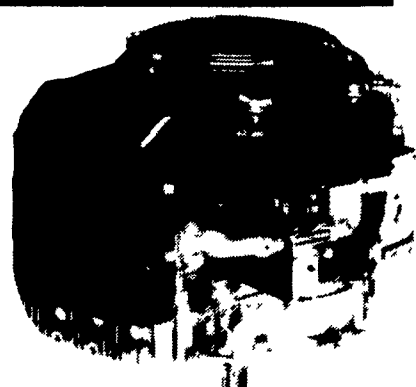
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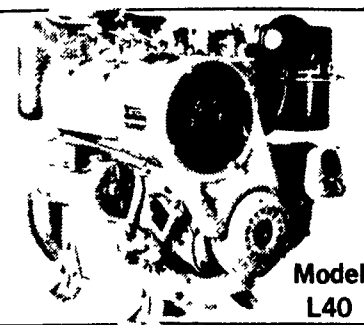
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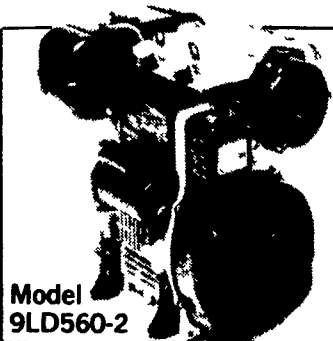
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