

PURINA DAIRY HERD PROFILE

GROWTH and HEALTH

At the Dairy of Distinction farm of John and Bonnie Hess and family, they farm 1,000 acres east of Gettysburg, and milk 270 Holstein and Brown Swiss cows under their Jobo prefix.

The Hesses want their first calf heifers to freshen at 22 to 24 months and produce 22,000 pounds of milk. So, naturally they need their 300 head of calves and heifers to grow big and fast. And that's why they switched to Purina's calf growing program several years ago.

"The reason we are using Purina feeds for our calves is because it works," John said. "Since we raise the bull calves for beef and the heifer calves for replacements, we are starting 20 to 25 calves each month. So for us the growth and health of our young stock are major concerns in our dairy operation."

In September and October 1993, Purina's Nursing Chow 100 and Startena were put to the test. Six calves were put on the Purina program and six control calves were left on the program used at the time. The calves were weighed and measured each week. After an average of 50 days, the six Purina fed calves gained 2.45 pounds and grew .09 inches every day on the average. The control calves' average was 1.85 pounds and .06 inches.

Daughter Joy Hess, Adams County dairy princess, is responsible for the calves at her home farm. "Before we fed Purina, our calves were not nearly as large and they didn't gain weight as they do now," Joy said. "They really take off on Nursing Chow and are weaned at a younger age. They like the feed right away, and with the high energy, the calves are more frisky too."

The calves at Jobo are started on Nursing Chow 100 and also given Startena free choice from four to six weeks until they are weaned. Then they are switched to Growena. At three months, the calves begin on a TMR mix with Growena continued as a topdress.

The real proof is in the milking heifers that came through Purina's program. These heifers freshen within the desired time frame and weight from 1,200 to 1,300 pounds. One of their Holstein heifers just produced 27,000 pounds of milk as a two-year-old and is classified VG at 85 points. That is why they can recommend Purina's calf and heifer raising program.



Joy Hess, Adams County dairy princess, is at home with one of her family's growthy calves fed on Purina's Nursing Chow 100, Startena, and Growena programs.



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