

**DAIRY FARM
MANAGEMENT
BASICS**

A Farm Management Course by
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Controlling What Cows Eat - Article 16

Goal Know and control what cows eat, how much they eat, and when they eat it
Maintain a continual flow of necessary nutrients to the rumen, and in proper proportions

We develop rations on paper, we deliver a ration to the cows, we have average intake data for the herd but what really counts is what the individual cows actually consume. Intakes can vary considerably from cow to cow within a group and from what is on the paper

- Rations fed in conventional systems are difficult to control, because some of the feed stuffs are fed separately and at different times. Cows have some opportunity to pick and choose what they eat. Therefore, it is usually beneficial to work with a greater margin of safety.
 - Feed more than minimal amounts of forage and less concentrates
 - Feed concentrates at frequent intervals, and feed no more than 8 lb. of concentrate per feeding
 - Feed forage before grain
 - Match the feeding of soluble protein feeds with the feeding of soluble carbohydrates
- Total mixed rations (TMR) are best, if properly balanced and if properly fed. Every bite has the potential to be identical and balanced so the flow of nutrients to the rumen is consistent and constant

TMR's have the potential to increase production by 2,000 lb. or more over conventional feeding situations in many herds. However, if TMR-fed cows are top-dressed, or are given free access to one or more feeds, they do NOT have a TMR mix! So, don't expect the benefits of a TMR ration in these situations! Don't waste your money on a TMR system if you are not going to use it properly

- Monitor what is going on and make ration adjustments whenever needed
 - Keep a close watch on daily bulk tank milk weights
 - Monitor milk composition. Low fat tests, and fat tests lower than protein tests might indicate a malfunctioning rumen. High or low milk urea nitrogen (MUN) levels may indicate a need to rebalance the ration. Fat cow and thin cow problems may be due to energy imbalances. Ketosis, twisted stomachs (DA's), laminitis, and milk fever are nutrition-related problems too
 - A lot of grain kernels and long fibers in the manure could indicate the need for more soluble protein, or the need to feed less grain and more forages
- Base your feeding decisions on accurate information
 - Analyze your feeds. Be sure to collect representative samples of the feeds to be tested
 - Take feed samples early, have them analyzed, and have recommended feeding programs in your hand ready to use, prior to the time you need them. Testing feeds at harvest time can help you plan ahead. It is also helpful to buy feeds in advance of the time you need them so you have time to test them and work them into your feeding program in a systematic manner
 - Be sure the feeding program is based on accurate herd information. In other words, don't expect your nutritionist to give you a good program if you do not give him/her good information to work with
 - Weigh the feeds that are fed and the feed that is refused or wasted
 - Check the moisture contents of ensiled feeds frequently
 - Know how much dry matter cows are actually consuming
- Revise the feeding program when - -
 - Cows' actual intakes do not agree with recommendations on the feeding chart
 - You notice a change in animal performance
 - You notice changes in feeds, feed quality, or their moisture content

More Than 175 Participate In 2nd Showmanship Contest

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - Over 175 young people participated in the second Youth Showmanship Contest, part of the 35th annual Pennsylvania All-American Dairy Show.

Senior division winner was Joy Hess, 21, Gettysburg, Adams County, who received a \$500 savings bond donated by the Centre County Holstein Club in memory of Roger T. Green. Hess also received a director's chair donated by Jane and Bob Pepple, Chester County, and an embroidered jacket and a neck ribbon.

Jason Ruffaner, 21, of Armstrong County placed second, while Tara Kocher, 17, of Juniata County, was third.

All Senior division winners received a neck ribbon and a kit containing Clear Magic, Show Sheen and Iopline powder.

Winners in the intermediate division were: Wis. Colby O'Malley, 14, Gilman, Ben Cloninger, 13, Centre County, 2nd Charlynn Doeberiener, 13, Mercer County.

Holsteins, Steve & Barb Wilson, Port Royal; Stonehurst Farms Inc., Don Welk, Strasburg; and Telmark Inc., Syracuse, NY.

Judges for the event were Jane Pepple, Chester County, junior division showmanship; Michael Heath, Westminster, Maryland, intermediate division showmanship; and Ron Hefner, Maryland, senior division showmanship.

Doug Seidel, Massachusetts, served as fitting judge, and he and Hefner worked together to select the overall senior division winners.

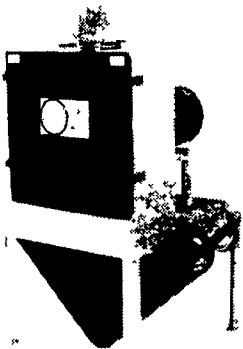


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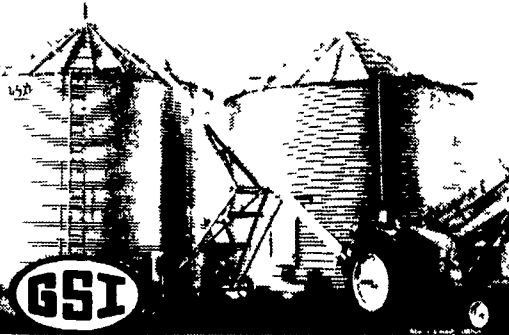
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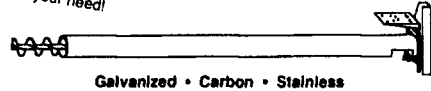


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