

French 'Cheese' Breed

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have a similar friendly personality. "You can instantly make pets out of them," he said.

"They really cross well with Holsteins. They make the animal so much stronger. I get good prices for veal calves and cull cows," he said. "Bringing outside semen in gives vitality and vigor to the animals.

"The French are good about keeping their lines separate — not crossing closely," he said.

BreedingUp

Kobosky is working on breeding up to purebred status, although with increased import regulations because of foot and mouth disease, his plans may be somewhat slowed.

The Kobosky herd includes animals that are 50 percent Normande with the other 50 percent going to Holstein and Ayrshires. Fourteen or 15 of the animals are 75 percent Normande.

"They can be registered at 50 percent. There are varying degrees of purity," he said.

According to Kobosky, all European breeds are dual purpose, but each breed is found in a specific region suited to it.

"You won't see a mix of breeds among local farms," said Kobosky. In the Southern Alps, for example, the rugged Tarentaise may be the only breed that can sur-

vive in the winter conditions.

Kobosky also pointed out the use of Normandes in cheesemaking.

"Ninety-nine percent of the milk in France is made into cheese," he said. The French make 200 varieties of cheese and each breed produces its own style of cheese. Also the animals' feed has a bearing on the kind of cheese produced.

The best cheese, said Kobosky, is made in portable milking parlors and cabins, without electricity, in the Alps. The cheese is stored in caves to cure for six months.

Efficient Foragers

Jonas Esch and his brother, Menno, both of New Providence, were introduced to the breed by Chateau at a grazing conference in Pennsylvania in 1999. The brothers, who each milk approximately 50 cows, mostly Holsteins, were looking for "a hardy cow that will take grazing," according to Jonas.

After researching the breed by contacting the North American Breeder's Association, the Eschs decided to buy bulls.

"Their milk components were the next thing that caught my eye," he said. Additionally the cows' strength from their dual-purpose background adds market value as cull cows, as "they have something left when you beef them."

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