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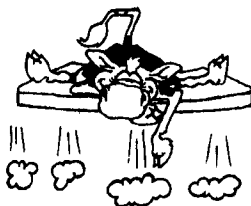


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French 'Cheese' Breed

(Continued from Page 19)

The animals are known as efficient forage converters. According to Esch they are not as dependent on grain as other breeds.

"Also I like color and variety and they just caught my eye right off," he said.

The Eschs wanted to forego AI, so they each purchased bulls from a producer in Wisconsin. The two yearlings came to Pennsylvania May a year ago.

Jonas put the bull on all his cows right away. The volume of milk production, according to Esch, may not be what commercial dairy producers are looking for, but the breed fits nicely into Esch's grazing operation.

"My idea is to have a cow that will replace high volume with components to keep the milk check up," he said.

Normandes could, however, find a niche in conventional herds, lending their sturdy builds and high components to the bloodlines, said Esch.

The breed has recently caught the eye of dairy producers, believes Esch, because France in recent years has improved the dairy traits of the breed.

There aren't enough Normandes milking yet in the U.S. to know statistics yet, said Esch. "A lot of people have one calf crop and are waiting to see what will happen." Esch is tentatively planning to breed up his animals to purebred status. He now has several Jersey, Holstein, and Normande cross calves.

"My long-term goal is to develop a 'care-free' cow that would do well on grass," he said.

For more information call the North American Normande Association (NANA) at (218) 262-1933. Also, Chateau can be reached toll-free at 866-823-7212.

2002 National Holstein Conventions Slated

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — The 2002 National Holstein Association USA Convention and National Junior Holstein Convention will be conducted here June 24-27.

Both the adult and junior conventions will be headquartered at the Trump Taj Mahal Casino resort.

For more information on the adult convention, contact Judy Bagge at (800) 952-5200 ext. 4128, e-mail jbagge@holstein.com.

For more information on the junior convention, contact Kelli Dunklee at (800) 952-5200 ext. 4124, e-mail kdunklee@holstein.com.