

CHAPTER XXIX.

JUDGING DUAL-PURPOSE CATTLE.

The term dual-purpose cattle is to-day understood to represent a type that will yield well of both beef and milk. It is a comparatively recent application as a substitute for the common expression long in use of "general purpose." There are to-day several breeds of cattle that represent the dual-purpose type, of which the Red Polled and Devon are best known in America. There are also what are known as milking or dairy Shorthorns, that are commonly regarded as dual-purpose cattle. The fact is, cattle of beef-producing character, that are also valued for dairy purposes, are quite common in Europe. The Shorthorn has a long history as a milk producer in England, while on the continent of Europe, the cattle are essentially dual-purpose, though not always known as such. Dual-purpose classification and promotion is a comparatively recent one in America, notwithstanding the fact that a century ago Devon cattle were highly regarded in New England for the several purposes of beef, milk and labor.

The dual-purpose idea is not equally clear in the minds of all its advocates. One of the most noted breeders of milking Shorthorns in England informed the writer that he desired as beefy a cow as possible, yet with highly developed udder and large milking capacity. In the eastern United States the milking side of the animal is emphasized, at the expense of flesh, while in the west the reverse is the case. At the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo in 1901, when eastern and western Devon herds met, this difference in type was very marked. This variation has been seen repeatedly in the case of Red Polled cattle in American show rings, in which wide extremes have prevailed, ranging

from animals of decidedly beefy type with inferior mammary development, to those of essentially moderate beef type, with strong mammary development. From a scientific point of view, based on the law of correlation, it may be argued with reason that flesh is produced at the expense of milk, or *vice versa*. Therefore, to be a true dual-purpose

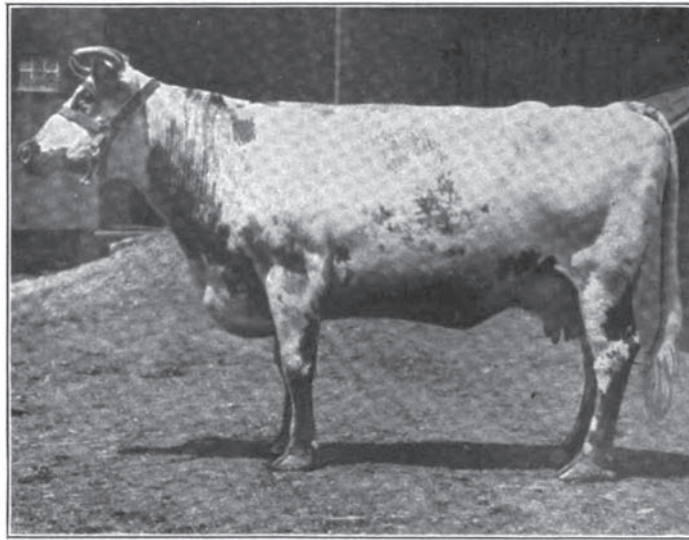


Fig. 197.—“Lou Waterloo,” a choice example of a milking Shorthorn.

cow, there should be a production of both flesh and milk up to at least a certain point, the beef development in keeping with beef type, and the udder conformation and milk secretion, comparable with that in a reasonably good cow of dairy type. Gay states¹ that “it is perfectly reasonable to expect from one individual the production of milk to the extent of one-half the normal in dairy cows, and the production of a carcass of beef at least 50 per cent as valuable and one-half as economically produced as in the

¹ Principles and Practice of Judging Live Stock, 1914, p. 214.

case of a typical beef steer. This is all that should be attempted and apparently all that can be accomplished in the perfection of the dual-purpose cow." Special advocates of this type of cattle, however, would no doubt take issue with the proposition that only half as much milk should be produced as is normal in dairy cows. In their 1907 sale catalog, Innis and May, breeders of milking Shorthorns, state that "the whole herd of mature cows, six years old or over, have made average yearly milk records of 9,170.5 pounds." One year at Tring Park, England, 54 milking Shorthorns averaged 6,658 pounds of milk, and 44 Red Polled cows averaged 6,174 pounds, yields considerably in excess of 50 per cent normal production in dairy cows. Dual-purpose advocates also emphasize the value of the calf for veal as compared with progeny from dairy cows. Without question, superior examples of dual-purpose animals in type and ancestry, will return yields, either in beef or milk, on better than a 50 per cent basis, but just how much better is not known. The natural tendency of this type is for a comparatively short period of lactation, this being followed by a disposition to lay on flesh.

The dual-purpose type, as generally recognized, represents an animal of modified beef form. This modification is especially seen in somewhat more length and thinness of neck, narrowness of withers, extreme length of body from shoulders to hips, and lack of thickness in the thighs. Either males or females seem to be more upstanding and have more length or stretch, than in case of the true beef type. The cow should carry an udder fairly representative of that of the dairy type. The judge must keep these features in mind, in passing on dual-purpose cattle, but he will make no mistake in giving preference to cows of distinct beef conformation, provided they show commendable udder development. In 1914, at the show of the Royal Agricultural Society of England at Shrewsbury, in the milking Shorthorn class, consisting of 40 cows, first and second places were awarded to animals that were more of beef type than otherwise, but

having beautiful large udders. These same cows would not have looked out of place in a standard Shorthorn cow class, yet the two judges regarded them as the best dual-purpose animals in the ring, and their judgment met very general approval. At the International Live Stock Exposition at Chicago, in the milking Shorthorn classes, the most successful winning cows have shown considerable size and beefy character, and yet have had large udders. The judge must not be misled to favor the so-called dual-purpose type, where dairy conformation and lack of flesh prevail. The frame should be smoothly covered with flesh, yet not fat, exemplifying beef type and its possibilities. The tendency of dual-purpose bulls is to be too short and compact. Some of the finest examples of this type of bulls, that were notable sires, showed great length, were only medium thick of withers and thighs, and had somewhat too much length of leg.

Scales of points for dual-purpose type cattle may be found in those for bulls and cows adopted in 1907 by the Red Polled Cattle Club of America. From these the following quotations are made, in order to set forth certain features of the official standards relative to this type:

Cow.		Points
Head , of medium length, etc		6
Neck , of medium length, clean cut and straight from head to top of shoulder, with inclination to arch when fattened, and often showing folds of loose skin underneath when in milking form		3
Shoulder , of medium thickness and smoothly laid		6
Chest , broad and deep, brisket prominent		10
Back and ribs : back medium long, moderately wide, spring of ribs starting from backbone giving a rounding appearance, with ribs flat and fairly wide apart		14
Hips , wide, well covered		3
Quarters , of good length, thighs wide, roomy, not too meaty		6
Legs , short, straight		3
Fore udder , full and flexible, reaching well forward, extending down level with hind udder		10
Hind udder , full and well up behind		10
Teats , well placed, wide apart, and of reasonably good size		4
Milk veins , of medium size, full, flexible, extending well forward, milk wells of medium size		6
General description —Medium wedge form, low set, top and bottom lines straight except at flank, weight 1,300 to 1,500 lbs. when mature.		

Bull.

	Points
Head , wide, strong and masculine, relatively short, etc.	12
Neck , of medium length, full crest, of good thickness	5
Shoulder , of medium thickness and smoothly laid	8
Chest , broad and deep, brisket prominent	12
Back and ribs : back, medium long, with spring of ribs from backbone giving rounding appearance, with ribs flat and fairly wide apart	14
Hips , wide, well covered	3
Quarters of good length, thighs wide and moderately full, deep	6
Legs , short, straight	3
Rudimentaries , large, wide apart and placed well forward	12
Position of rudimentaries	6
General Description —Strong, impressive, low set and of good carriage, weight 1,800 to 2,000 lbs., when mature and finished.	

Special features of these scales of points that apply to the dual-purpose type, are the emphasis on the word "medium" as applied to length and thickness of various parts, the character of back and ribs, and the large number of points credited to mammary development. The judge should note especially that the scale of points for the cow contains nearly as many points credited to the udder, etc., as is recognized in some of the official dairy cattle score cards—a rather striking evidence of recognition of milk production in this type.

In judging cattle of the dual-purpose type, it is highly important to keep the essentials of conformation well in mind, and assign animals to their places according to the way they measure up to the more or less elastic standards of this class.

CHAPTER XXX.

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ON DUAL-PURPOSE BREEDS OF CATTLE.

The Red Polled breed of cattle comes from the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk in eastern England. It is a true dual-purpose type, and is advocated as such by its breeders. However, we find great extremes within the breed, ranging from those of dairy to a distinct beef type. This condition applies equally in England and America. The color is a pure red, varying from light to dark, a medium shade being most common. The size of mature Red Polled cattle is about medium, bulls ranging from 1,800 to 2,000 pounds, and cows from 1,250 to 1,300 pounds. The general conformation is dual-purpose, as described under that type. Red Polled cattle are frequently somewhat upstanding.

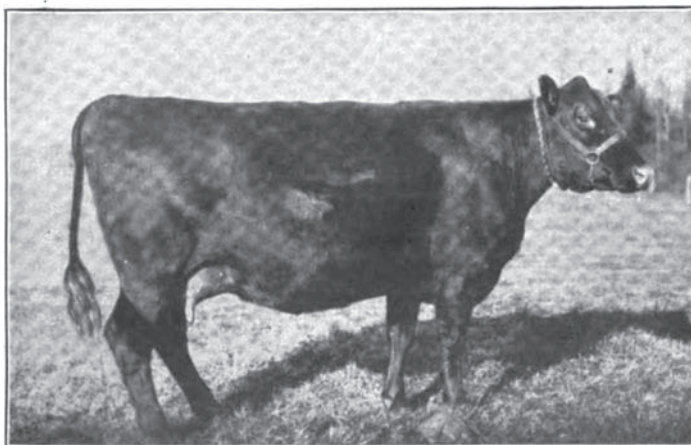


Fig. 198.—Red Polled cow, "Jean DuLuth Pear," the first cow of the breed to produce over 600 lbs. of fat in a year. (Photo by courtesy Jean DuLuth Farm.)