

## FITTING AND SHOWING DAIRY CATTLE

By JACK McINNES, '27

**The Preparation and Attention Given a Cow Weeks Before the Contest Puts Her in the Money Class at a Big Show. The Experience and Alertness of the Exhibitor Play Important Roles in the Selection of the Winners.**

**S**HOWING dairy cattle at Fairs is one of the most fascinating and profitable enterprises into which a stockman can enter. Leading a prize animal, with the winners, past the grandstand promotes a joy, which only those who have experienced it, can adequately appreciate.

The monetary reward, added to the advertisement and reputation gained by a winning herd, makes a Pure Bred Dairy Show a place of keen interest.

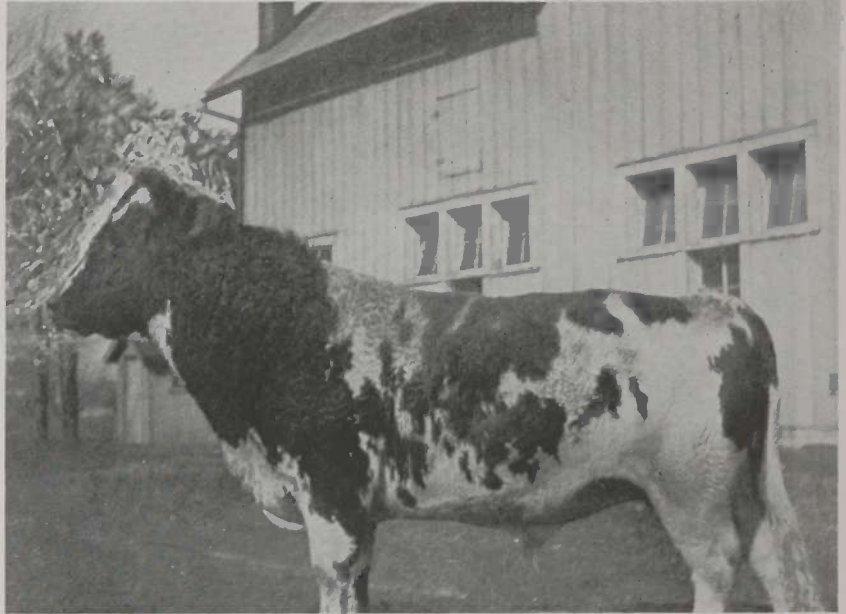
Preparation for a Fair circuit begins before the animal to be shown is born. This preparation is gradually intensified, from the general care of the mother, and the herd in general, till the last straw is brushed from the cows back as she enters the ring. In order that the foetus shall be extraordinarily strong the mother should be well fed, and dried up early. The calf should receive the best of care and feed. Mothers milk as long as possible is without doubt the best feed. Skim milk and gruel may be substituted later. Feed should always be the best available for the animal, varying of course with the age and class in which the individual is to be shown.

### Intensive Preparation Begins

Intensive preparation for the circuit begins about six weeks before the time of the first show. At this time horns that have been in trainers are given a rough scraping to even up wrinkles and make them more symmetrical. Hoofs are scraped and trimmed into shape.

At this time the feed is altered a little too. The feed should be a little higher in protien, and this is usually added in the form of Linseed Oil Meal. The oil meal promotes a laxative condition and puts a gloss on the hair that is developed so well in no other way. Keeping the cows, bulls, or calves blanketed softens the hide, and aids in developing the gloss and finish in the coat of hair. Blankets should be used according to the temperature so that too much sweating will not be induced.

To develop a good middle on the animals, a slop of beet pulp has been found by show men, to be the best feed. Besides being a relishing feed, it is so bulky that, to satisfy their



PURE BRED AYRESHIRE BULL ROUGH FROM THE CORRAL BEFORE FITTING FOR THE SHOW.

appetite, cows will eat an immense quantity of it. This feed is fed all through the circuit as one of the main feeds even for calves.

### Saturday Night, The Bath

In order that cattle look their best, as well as be perfectly healthy, they must be immaculately clean. It takes several weeks to get an animal, that appears to be clean, absolutely free from dirt. Six weeks prior to the show, cows should be washed, scrubbed in fact, with warm water and Grandpa's tar soap. After a thorough washing the soap should be rinsed out to leave the hair in a soft condition. The cow should be sunned and then blanketed to keep her from catching cold. What is said here of washing cows holds also for bulls or calves. The cow should be kept in a stall heavily bedded down with straw to keep her clean.

Two more washings should be administered before the show. Ivory soap is better for these washings, and after the soap is washed out, rinsing with lux makes the hair fluffy and makes it look cleaner.

During the circuit the cows should be washed at least once a week, and preferably twice. A thorough groom-

ing should be given all the stock at least once a day and care taken to remove any dirt or manure from the body or legs before it is dry.

Clipping cows is quite an important operation. With the exception of Ayreshire the entire body of dairy cattle should be clipped about a month before the show. This should be very even, unless there is some defect like a slightly sunken vertebrae of the tail bone which should be covered with long hair, bringing the hair surface to an even line. Just before the show the head and neck should be clipped, being careful to leave no clipper marks. All cut hair must be carefully brushed out after the cutting.

Ayreshires have a different kind of "bob" in that the body is clipped, leaving the hair long over the head and neck, back to a line running from the withers to the points of the shoulders. This gives the animal a less beefy appearance and makes the wither look more pointed. In order that this hair be not too long, it should be clipped about two and one half or three months before the show.

The appearance of dairy stock is greatly affected by the horns. The horns are trained to proper shape and

symmetry during the early stages of development by the use of weights and tension trainers. Then after the rough ridges of the horns are rasped off a month or so before the show, they are scraped until they are quite smooth, then sanded, and still more, rubbed with a cloth to get the surface perfect. Common metal polish gives about the best luster and shine that can be obtained on a perfectly smooth horn.

#### Bag and Fill Important

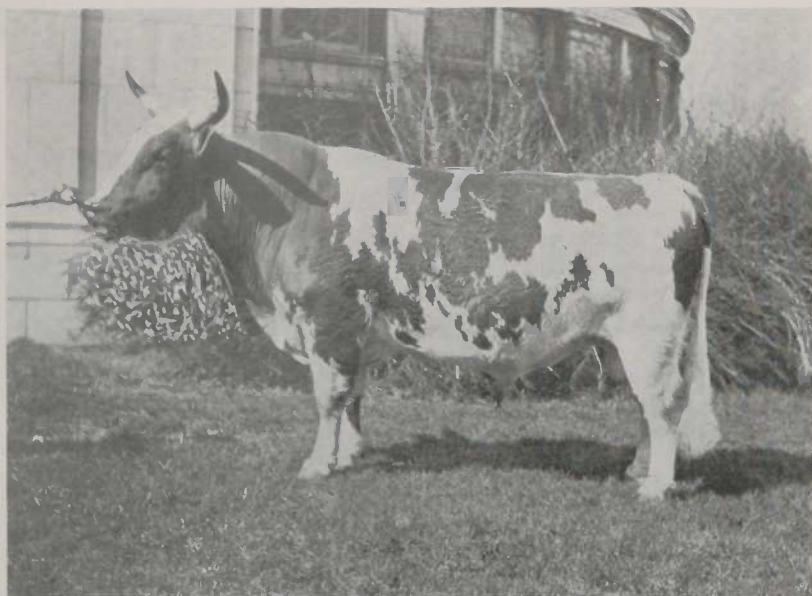
Present regulations in most Fair associations limit the bagging of cows to a certain length of time. The Superintendent makes the rounds to see that the cows to be shown the next day are milked dry at about six o'clock in the evening. From that time they may not be milked until after their showing the next day. Some cows leak milk after a certain time and the showman must know the individual cows, in order not to bag too long, and have her leaking milk at the show.

The "fill" is also influenced by the individuality of the cow. The most important thing is to "fill" the right amount with warm water. If cold water is used the animal will go into the ring shivering and with the hair standing roughly on its end. Beet pulp may be used to fill with. If a couple of hand fulls of salt are mixed with the feed the night before the show, the animal will take on all of either water or beet pulp slop necessary to correctly swell her middle.

There is quite a trick to making the tail present its best appearance. The brush should be braided wet from a thorough washing and rinsing with lux. This braid, varying in size to suit the taste for curls in the switch, should be wrapped tightly and left a few hours; so that it will dry and may be curled out some time before the show. The best switch is made by the experienced man, just as much so as the best marcel is obtained from the most elite beauty shoppe.

Then as the animal is led from the stall to the ring all straw or foreign material should be brushed off her, and her hair smoothed up. Then all has been done that is possible except the showing which is done best by the experienced hand, who watches the Judge as well as his animal.

The show man should be neatly dressed and show all courtesy to the Judge. If he notices the Judge noting his animal's top line he should be sure that he has the pose that brings out those characters to the best advantage.



THE SAME BULL AFTER TWO WEEKS OF INTENSIVE FITTING.

#### Most Judges Know Their Business

It is better never to doubt the Judges decision. If you are defeated take what you can with you and win the next time.

To a protesting showman, Dean Mumford, the Judge of a certain class of live stock said, "If you want me to,

I will give the reasons for my placing to the audience."

"No," replied the defeated man, "I will accept the placing."

He knew his animals weak points and cared not to have them broadcasted.

#### VIGOROUS HENS MORE PROFITABLE

Regardless of the extent of the method of breeding, the poultryman has always at command the power of selection, and it is a real source of improvement. It is made possible by variation and is responsible for many of the most noted improvements in poultry breeding.

By selection is meant the ability to choose stock for propagating purposes which possess desirable qualities, and which are prepotent in regard to those characteristics, so that, with proper care, the progeny will be of such a high standard of excellence which can be maintained. To select consistently and bring about definite improvement, a breeder must have a clear idea of his purpose, and work continuously toward it. He must know the breed with which he is working as well as its ancestry, must understand the principles underlying selection, and use judgement in departing from certain well-defined lines when compelled thereto for economic or commercial reasons.

In selection there is the important fundamental advantage in that it results in absolute improvement of qual-

ity, and not merely in the elevation of the flock to a higher standard by the elimination of the lower or average members. It accomplishes two well defined results: (1) It increases the production of individuals, thereby making it possible to secure increasingly higher individual records; and (2) it stimulates the average production by raising the average of the mass, by eliminating the poor producers, and by substituting heavier layers in their place.

Selection should be continuously practiced, not only in the breeding and growing period. Fowls which show, at any time, a lack of constitutional vigor will never prove profitable for any purpose.

EDW. E. WILLIAMS.

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That the life work of Luther Burbank, the plant wizard of Santa Rosa will be perpetuated, has been assured, by the report that Stanford University will raise an endowment fund for the purpose of continuing the work of Mr. Burbank on his retirement. Mr. Burbank has been engaged in horticultural work for over fifty years and while he has mostly devoted his time and talents to horticulture, he has instilled into the human mind the necessity of better breeding.