

Dairy Cattle Showing and Judging

“An opportunity and fun” by Gabriel N. Karia – Dairy Classifier

Knowledge on judging dairy cattle is a basic requirement for a successful herd manager. Such knowledge is of practical use in choosing foundation cattle, in buying and selling, in culling to improve the herd, in selecting herd sires and in handling cows to keep them at peak production. A good judge knows what characteristics are required for a long useful life of high production and low incidences of feet and legs problems and udder disturbance. Production is basic while functional type is important for a long useful life. Showing dairy cattle is fun and an opportunity. Its fun because it is a social and business function for same interest groups and others that can be influenced to the same. You meet and make friends with other breeders. It is an opportunity to advertise your cow(s) and promote the breed, the two most essential elements of showing. It is also a learning opportunity to determine the value of your stock, learn the desired type of cattle, learn how to prepare cattle and show them to the best advantage, and, a means of interesting many young people to dairy farming. Showing also has a hidden value of marketing

the dairy products.

It is an art

If one is to prepare the present dairy animals to their best advantage, one must learn how to fit and also show them, and also learn and abide by the rules and regulations for the show you intend to exhibit in.

The exhibitor should prepare and exhibit only those animals that have desirable dairy type, that is, good enough to be competitive for the show in which the exhibitor plans to exhibit. Good knowledge of dairy type, the level of show, and the show classes for the particular show is important.

Start early enough

Selecting show animals should start early enough to have them looking their best at the time they are shown. Only the best



*Pictured: Bottom centre: clipping the cow ready for the show
Above: at the showground the day before the class washing the cow thoroughly.*



should be selected. Displays containing inferior animals are not good advertising. Therefore, it is not always necessary to have an entry in each class.

Morning of showing

Unplait the tail and brush out. Give the coat a final grooming and polish the horns and feet. If the cow is milking, take out sufficient milk to stop dripping and give udder a good shape. Put on a show number. The handler should wear a clean white coat. Have all the cows standing close to the ring to be ready for their classes, with their numbers on.

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Unbraiding the tail the morning of showing

Showing

Lead animals in a clockwise direction in the ring. From the time the animal enters the ring until she leaves, it should be the business of the showman to see that the animal is shown to the

best advantage. Show the animal moving slowly except when requested with the judges to stop. Follow the judge's directions promptly and courteously. Take out the animals from the ring when judging is ended. Criticizing the judge or fellow exhibitors must be avoided even though the placement may not have been to the liking of the exhibitor. Exhibit good sportsmanship.

Showing out of the ring

Often, prospective buyers or other interested people attend the show, and it is important that such people have the opportunity to see the animals outside the ring. This is especially true of the winning

animals. It is usually profitable to have courteous and knowledgeable attendant with the animals when the visitors are around.

Conclusion

Real proficiency in fitting and showing cattle can only be acquired through actual experience, working with the cattle and by carefully observing the techniques of superior showmen. When attending shows as an exhibitor or a spectator, careful observation of the real professionals can be a valuable learning experience and is highly recommended.

Enjoy future showing and attending shows!!!



A line up of well prepared cows in a show with handlers wearing white coats.