

MR. SHOWMAN SPEAKING



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MY part in our family cattle raising program has been mostly the feeding and fitting and showing of the show herd and feeding the breeding herd. It has also been mostly my responsibility to see to the selling of the cattle, for the reason that many of the sales were made when I had the cattle on the road. I can sincerely state that what success came to us from my end of the job is due to the understanding and support of the rest of the family, Dad and Mother and my brother John.

I think it is important to you as buyers to know how our cattle were fitted and why they were fitted the way they were. There is a lot of misunderstanding about the effect on breeding cattle of fitting for show. Truthfully, a lot of the misunderstanding is justified, because there have been a lot of fitting jobs done that did injure cattle for production and breeding. In most cases it need not have happened.

When we were first starting to show I learned from experienced men the safe way of feeding for show and why and how to avoid the costly mistakes.

A lot of folks still may not believe this, but it is true there are no secrets on how to successfully fit and show cattle. Success comes mostly from having good cattle to work with and then following a few common sense rules applied with a lot of hard work.

Proper fitting of cattle to me means a lot more than having a set of fat cattle. The rule we follow in fitting is to start early and bring the cattle up slowly on a bulky grain ration (plenty of oats, bran and beet pulp) and lots of high quality roughage. Our cattle have been bred to a type that makes them capable of using a lot of good roughage to advantage. It is one of our most important feeds.

It is also important, after cattle are pretty well fitted, to adjust the ration by adding more bulk in hot weather. When the temperature on the show circuit (or at home) goes to 90 degrees and more we are content to "make haste slowly" with our feeding.

Regularity of feeding and watering and taking care of the chores completes a rough outline of a good show fitting program. It is a program that prevents cattle

from being "burned up" with a too concentrated, heavily fed ration and avoids injury to their production ability and breeding capacity.

In safeguarding the breeding and productive capacities of cattle that are fitted for show, it is just as important to let them down properly after the shows as it is to do a careful, long, slow job of bringing them up to winning condition. Here is our simple method for handling animals that need letting down after the shows. We continue to keep these cattle full of a light ration and good roughage, allowing them to lose fat gradually. The common mistake is to more or less starve them down quickly. It could be pointed out that many young, growing cattle require little or no letting down. This is often true of bull calves and yearling bulls.

Probably the above is interesting to you. Maybe you would like more details, but its real importance to the buyers of our cattle in the sale, many of which have been shown, is that you can put them in your breeding and working herds with confidence that they have not been hurt. Let's look at a couple examples. Many could be mentioned if space permitted.

I would like to illustrate with one of the outstanding cows we are selling in the sale, Rose Blossom Advancer AR. She was a calf in the show herd in 1947 and has been in the show herd every year since, taking her usual place in the milk barn the rest of the year. Our sensible fitting program has kept this cow, through eight years of showing, as sound as she was as a calf. She has been on the milk line ever since she freshened, except when showing, making consecutive AR records. Her show record, by the way, was climaxed in 1954 when she was judged best uddered cow at the national show.

May I bring to your attention an example of fitting and caring for a herd bull that was extensively shown? The particular individual in mind is the 1952 National grand champion, Redvue Bud. This bull started his show career as a two year old in 1948. He was brought out and presented in the peak of condition, in the opinions of many breeders. He was put in breeding service the following fall and winter and brought out for two more years to head our show herd. On the show circuits he was often successfully mated to some of the show females without any difficulty. The fourth year, 1951, we retired him from the ring temporarily in favor of his son, Redvue Monarch. Monarch won the national grand championship and according to rules of The Red Poll Cattle Club had to be retired from future national shows. So again, in 1952, when he was seven years of age, we fitted Redvue Bud for the fourth time in five years. He won the national grand championship that year. Today at nine years of age he heads a good Minnesota herd where he is hale, hearty and active and promises to give more years of service.

As I said before many examples could be given. But space does not permit this and the important thing for you to know is that we have no trouble keeping our cattle sound and healthy and fertile.

Our cattle will be well, but not extremely highly

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