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* **BABY BEEF**

THE RESULTS OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL MINNESOTA CARLOAD BABY BEEF CONTEST

1930 - 1931

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REPORT OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL CARLOAD BABY BEEF CONTEST

1930-1931

Feeding of purchased cattle is becoming a more difficult enterprise each year. This conclusion is drawn because of the problems in buying the right kind of cattle to feed, the difficulty in financing the deal, the disease risks involved and the limited volume of roughage on the larger farm which it is possible to dispose of thru the fattening operation alone.

This situation with certain other important factors as the labor supply on many farms, the desire to eliminate speculation so far as possible, and the desire to utilize some lands as pasture all lead to the sound conclusion that there is a greater place in Minnesota for baby beef production. Many more farms of 240 or more acres could to advantage maintain a beef cow herd, marketing pasture and rough feed thru this herd and using the grain to fatten the calves raised as baby beef.

This type of beef production has proven profitable in Minnesota for several years, and will undoubtedly continue to do so where the farm conditions are right for such an enterprise and where proper methods of management are followed. This is true for the low priced grain areas of the Red River Valley and southwestern Minnesota.

From the experience of men enrolled in the Minnesota Carload Baby Beef Contest, it is possible to point out certain factors which make for success in baby beef production.

Successful Practices of Contestants

1. Breeding stock, both cows and bulls, possessing size along with thickness produces the most desirable calves for baby beef production. Such calves when finished weigh more than the smaller type calf and, therefore, sell for more money.
2. Creep feeding grain to calves while running with their dams on pasture is a profitable practice. An increase of 100 or more pounds in the weight of the calf can be obtained this way by weaning time on a feed consumption of about 300 pounds of grain.
3. Baby beef can be successfully produced with pail fed calves. Such calves, however, must maintain their thrift from weaning and be fed grain liberally from the time they will eat it. Unsanitary feeding utensils are a frequent cause of unsatisfactory results with pail raised calves.
4. Some breeders do not feed a sufficiently generous grain ration during the first 60 to 90 days of the feeding period. When calves are once on feed nearly full feeding of grain until finished is desirable. A full feed is about $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds of grain per day for each 100 pounds the calf weighs.
5. Many baby beef feeders do not feed the most efficient rations. Oats are sometimes used in too large amounts resulting in reduced gains. Corn or barley proves most satisfactory as the bulk of the rations with oats limited to not more than 20% of the grain fed once the calves are on full feed.

6. Too generous feeding of roughage reduces gain. Calf feeding is a means of disposing of grain not roughage. A cow herd will utilize the rough feed to better advantage and be maintained at a low cost.
7. The condition of heifers may make it desirable to sell them earlier than the steers as heifers finish earlier than steers tho they do not make as rapid gains.

The results of the sixth annual Minnesota Carload Baby Beef Contest compare with those from the four previous contests when allowances are made for the difference in the length of the feeding periods. The winning load in the first contest averaged 1,056 pounds; the second contest, 1,040 pounds; the third contest, 953 pounds; the fourth contest, 935 pounds; the fifth contest, 937 pounds, and the sixth contest, 900 pounds. The last four were for calves averaging 40 days less in age than for the first two years.

In the first two contests, each lot of calves was weighed up when they averaged 450 days of age. Objections were raised by contestants to the length of the feeding period so the time was shortened to 410 days average age for the lots in the later contests.

The reasons for the change were:

1. In the longer period heifers were finishing sooner than the steers and in a few instances sold below the steers because of being overdone. The shorter period has corrected this.
2. The longer period required more financing in the holding of the cattle and purchasing of feed.
3. The feeders desired to market before hot weather and fly time set in.

The change to 410 days has overcome these objections, but in several of the lots, the calves were not yet ready for market and were held longer in the feed lot after being weighed up.

No other changes have been made in the following rules:

1. The calves must be born between February 1 and July 31.
2. They may run with their dams or be pail fed.
3. The dams may be grade or purebred cows of beef breeding but the sires must be purebred beef bulls.
4. No limitations are placed on feeds or methods of feeding.
5. Fifteen calves constitute a carload but 20 head may be entered and the 15 heaviest taken as the load. The extra calves are allowed as a precaution against loss of calves, injuries, and a handicap from poor feeding individuals.

These contests have been conducted to locate the most successful baby beef feeders, to study the methods followed by these men, and to encourage others to follow the practices that have proven successful.

RESULTS OF THE SIXTH ANNUAL MINNESOTA CARLOAD BABY BEEF CONTEST

1930-1931

NAME	ADDRESS	COUNTY	BREED	AV. WEIGHT PER CALF	RANK
Cox Bros.	Adrian	Nobles	Hereford	900	1
Daly Bros.	Granada	Martin	Hereford	898	2
Bolstad Bros.	Winger	E. Polk	Hereford	862	3
Henry Ostrem	Lanesboro	Fillmore	Aberdeen-Angus	833	4
John Wester	Adrian	Nobles	Hereford	815	5

1931 WINNERS

Cox Bros., Adrian, Nobles county, won first place in this, the sixth annual contest, with an average weight of 900 pounds. The calves were grade and purebred Herefords from medium to big type cows and sired by a medium large, low set, compact, purebred Hereford bull.

MANAGEMENT OF COW HERD. Cox Bros. used a permanent native pasture for summer grazing from May 11 until they turned into the meadows and stubble fields after haying and harvest. When corn husking was completed about November 1, the cows had the run of these fields. These sources of feed were ample until about December 1. The winter feeding period was from December 1 to May 1. No grain was fed during the winter. Corn fodder, sweet clover hay and oats straw comprised the ration. Corn silage was added to the ration about one month before calving. Then for the remainder of the winter feeding the cows received a full feed of corn silage, sweet clover hay, and corn fodder with free access to oat straw. Considerable care is exercised by these men in the selection of the bulls they use to head their herd. Their bull must meet certain standards of type as well as breeding.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CALVES. These calves ran with their dams until November 19 when they were weaned. They were creep fed oats and corn during the pasture season. All the bulls were castrated during May and June. Early castrating is always followed as these men believe the operation at an early age is less of a set back to the calves. All were dehorned December 1st.

During the feeding period the calves were hand fed grain twice daily. Water and salt were always available.

RATIONS USED. These calves were started on feed November 19 with corn and oats as the ration. This was gradually increased until a full feed had been reached January 1. The ration was gradually changed to corn which constituted the grain fed from January 1 to May with alfalfa hay and corn silage as the roughage. One-half pound daily of oil meal per steer was added to the ration about March 1st. On May 1 the silage was discontinued. Then shelled corn 14 pounds, linseed oil meal 1 pound, and alfalfa hay

made up the ration. After May 1, no change was made in the ration except that it was increased in amount fed.

These calves topped the market at Sioux City when sold.

Daly Bros. Granada, Martin County, won second place in the contest, with an average weight of 898 pounds. Their calves were grade and purebred Herefords from medium to big type cows and sired by a big type, thick fleshed, purebred Hereford bull.

MANAGEMENT OF COW HERD. Blue grass or native pasture supplied the grazing for these cows with their calves during the summer. After harvest stubble field and hay meadows supplemented the regular pastures until after corn picking when the stalk fields were utilized. The winter feeding period started about December 1 and was continued until May 15. Corn silage, a little hay and oats straw constituted the winter ration.

MANAGEMENT OF THE CALVES. These calves ran with their dams during the pasture season. All were dehorned and the bulls castrated when about one month old. No grain was fed them while suckling. On December 1 they were weaned and started on feed and from that time on hand fed twice daily. Loose salt and water were provided at will.

RATIONS USED. Starting on December 1 alfalfa hay supplied the roughage while the grain ration consisted of $\frac{3}{4}$ oats and $\frac{1}{4}$ corn. During this month as the amount fed increased a gradual change was made to more corn and a reduced amount of oats. Soon after January 1st corn had replaced all the oats and constituted the only grain fed. Oil meal was added at this time and continued thru the feeding period.

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