

DAIRY CATTLE JUDGING

Dairy cattle judging has been very important to dairy farmers and dairy cattle breeders for years. The goal is to have show-winning cows with excellent-type conformation. It is difficult to determine the dollar value of type, but cows and bulls in high demand are usually ones with excellence in milk production and good type.

Being able to evaluate type conformation requires a lot of hard work and training. You can learn this and have a great time as well through the 4-H dairy judging program. You will learn how to evaluate type by making comparisons and accurate observations that lead to decision making. You will also learn the importance of type as it relates to production through sound feet and legs and udders that are attached strongly and carried above the hock. Giving oral reasons helps you learn to express yourself concisely and to the point. It also helps you think more clearly, improve your memory, and develop confidence in yourself.

TYPE

"Functional type," a term related to dairy cattle judging, is important to all dairymen because recent research shows cer-

tain type traits (strength of udder support, feet and legs, and body size) are positively related genetically to longer herd life and higher lifetime production. It may be defined as body conformation suitable for efficient milking and management, allowing cows to live a long life and use their inherited ability for high milk production.

PARTS OF A DAIRY COW

The first thing you need to do in learning to judge dairy cattle is learn the names of the parts of the dairy cow. Study the diagram below thoroughly and learn each part.

THE DAIRY COW UNIFIED SCORE CARD

The Purebred Dairy Cattle Association Score Card is found on pages 3 and 4. It has five major divisions with each part counting different amounts based on its importance (frame, 15 points; dairy character, 20 points; body capacity, 10 points; feet and legs, 15 points; and udder, 40 points). Each part of a cow

