

American Milking Devon Cattle Association

Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting Tunbridge VT, May 8, 2010

The meeting was called to order by President John Hall at 10:20 AM with 18 members present. A MOTION (Berglund/Michaud) to accept the minutes of the May 10, 2009 annual meeting as presented was seconded and passed unanimously.

Reports

President: John thanked Lawrence Gilley for hosting the November 2009 gathering at Deansboro NY, which was a great success. He also thanked Ramona Huff for her service as a Director; Ramona is retiring from the Board this year. The Board has held monthly meetings throughout the year; normally by telephone. John announced upcoming events including the Woodstock (Connecticut) Fair on Labor Day weekend which is expected to feature a display of Milking Devon cattle, and the ALBC meeting in central NY 12-14 November. Members were reminded to pay their dues. Finally, John noted that a discussion of the breed standard by a group of experienced breeders would take place after the Annual Meeting; members are welcome to observe.

Treasurer: John provided a written report showing a year end balance \$9570.94 checking, \$10366.92 CD. Income for the year was well above expenses. MOTION: (Blaiklock/Mansfield) to accept the Treasurer's report was passed unanimously.

Registration: Sue reported 1259 living females, 393 males. Sue is still working on the population survey. We have

112 paid members, plus a similar number of whose dues are unpaid, but are considered "active". Members whose dues remain unpaid after June are taken off the breeders list. Animal identification is an on-going problem. Don't forget to tattoo; it's the only permanent marker.

Communications: Bill thanked Lawrence for continued support of the web site, John and Bonney for help with the newsletter. We are continuing to increase our use of e-mail address, with paper copies to those who don't have or haven't provided an e-mail address. As well, the ballot mailing will continue to be sent in hard copy. We have tee-shirts and hats to sell, as does Lawrence.

Genetics: Ray reported on our semen testing project, the purchase of semen from Regen Westbrook and the status of our semen inventory. Regarding the semen testing project, we have obtained DNA profiles for the bulls in the semen bank in order to have a genetic profile on file in the event that questions arise in the future. In response to a question, Ray noted that we are staying away from the milk quality genes due to questions of cost and possible patent issues.

We have added two bulls to the semen inventory: Sunnyknoll Gabe and Augustine of Pope's Creek (from Regen Westbrook).

Website: Lawrence provided a written report showing an amazing number of hits: 1057/mo./12000 per year. Some 55% of visits each month are new visitors. The most popular pages include: For Sale, Breeders List, Breed, Semen Bank, Links, History and FAQ.

ALBC: Shannon Nicols was unable to be present but provided a written report. The ALBC Annual

Meeting is tentatively scheduled for 11-14 November in Hamilton NY. Final arrangements are still in work. ALBC is working to define the word "heritage" with respect to breed definitions and hopes to announce the results at this meeting. Shannon is working on funding for omega-3 and CLA breed comparison studies and on the feasibility of organizing an association of dairy cattle breeds, to lower administration costs.

Election of Directors

Nils reported the ballot count: John Hall, incumbent: 24; Bruce Balch, nominee: 21. Both are elected to the Board.

General Discussion

Genetic testing for milk properties: An extended discussion ensued concerning the utility, propriety and advisability of testing for genetically controlled characteristics of milk, primarily the A2A2 gene. The Board's policy has been that testing by AMDCA will be limited to that necessary to identify sires and/or establish that an animal is pure bred

American Milking Devon; testing for production characteristics is the province of individual breeders. Several challenged the Board's position, suggesting that all members could benefit from data obtained from testing for production characteristics. Comments included (summarized):

-All mammals were originally A2; the A I mutation occurred in the dairy breeds. -Are we sure the originals were A2?

-American Milking Devons should be A2 as part of the breed standard. The association needs to decide whether the A1 gene is a defect, like dusky muzzles.

-The gene is patented by the A2 Corporation who sell A2 milk in the southern hemisphere. -The A2 Corporation has a patent but that's as far as it goes. Anyone can test. Milk has many "milk" characteristics to test for; not only A2. AMDCA need to think about this.

-You can buy A2 semen from NZ/Australia.

-The more data the better. We need to know more. The information would help in selecting bulls. -Is the gene transferable? Is it repeatable through successive generations?

-Is the mutation a natural evolutionary development or a dead end? • Reference: Keith Woodford, The Devil in the Milk, available from Acres USA. -Shannon Nicols may have information on testing for a broad range of milk characteristics.

-Rob Seymour (Gene Test) will test a minimum of 10 samples for \$300.

After several attempts the following MOTION (Bruce Farr/Tom Slater) was proposed: The Board/Genetics Committee is authorized to spend up to \$2000 to determine and select data relative to milk and/or beef genetic characteristics and to provide a speaker on the subject for the 2011 AM. Passed unanimously.

A short discussion of Omega3/CLA ensued. Ray and Jeremy are having samples tested at University of Utah to determine whether there is a genetic component to this characteristic, which is usually considered to be feed related. The results will be shared with the members.

Genetic testing for breed identification: Several members contributed hair samples to a genetic analysis of the breed being conducted in England. No report has been received as yet. Question: Is there a specific breed DNA profile? Jeremy responded: Yes, most likely.

Cow critique gatherings: John suggested that we organize gatherings to critique local cattle (similar to card grading). This idea was supported by the membership. It was noted that a video was made of a rare breeds show held in Washington County Vt, and judged by a couple from Canada.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:10 PM.

William C. Blaiklock, Secretary