

DRAFT FOR APPROVAL
American Milking Devon Cattle Association
Minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting
Tunbridge VT, May 11, 2013

The meeting was called to order by President John Hall at 10:15 AM with 18 members present.. A MOTION to accept the minutes of the May 12, 2012 annual meeting was passed unanimously.

Reports

Treasurer: John provided a written report showing a year end balance of \$13,922.86 in checking plus \$10,954.91 in CDs. John pointed out that postage expenses had declined as we increase the use of email. A one-time expense was incurred to reinstate our non-profit status and Director's travel expenses appeared for the first time as authorized at the 2012 Annual Meeting. He noted that the CDs were being renewed as they came due, although the interest rates are minimal. A MOTION to accept the Treasurer's report was passed unanimously.

Secretary: Bill focussed on our efforts to communicate with the members and the world at large. The website continues to draw new visitors; the April statistics show 707 visitors making 1157 visits; 52% were new. The site is complete, up to date and thoroughly professional in appearance. Increasingly, other social media are becoming important. A Milking Devon Facebook page has attracted 157 "likes" while the Yahoo Milking Devon cattle group has 28 members. Bonnie Hall described their efforts to use Facebook as part of their marketing strategy, with highly successful results.

Bill noted that the newsletter remains our only way of communicating with those not having internet access. Currently it is only issued twice a year with the most essential information, so there is plenty of scope for improvement if someone can be found to lead the effort.

Jeremy Michaud described efforts to expand our publicity and introduced guest Julia Shipley, who has been hired to produce an article on the American Milking Devons for publication. Julia would like to know about successful AMD farms and their market outlets, e.g. restaurants, mail order etc. It was noted that, due to small herd size and irregular supply, we are limited to niche markets. Bill noted that such an article might support an updated brochure which would focus on the current value of the breed to the dairy industry. Meanwhile the current brochure is available for download from the website.

Genetics: The focus during the past year (in addition to publicity) was on defining the milk characteristics of interest to cheese makers, as directed by the 2012 Annual Meeting, with the goal of initiating some testing to quantify such characteristics. Unfortunately the subject proved to be complicated and the potential range of tests prohibitively expensive. Accordingly, the Board has tabled the subject for now. Ray did report that, based on DHIA testing AMD milk solids-not-fat is about 16% compared with 10% for typical commercial milk. Member experience shows that AMD milk is suitable for almost any cheese with high yields, DHIA testing of individual herds is the best way to proceed from here. Possibly the Association could survey the members to determine what types of cheese are actually being made, what characteristics and feed regimens are important to the cheese makers.

President:

Publicity: Efforts to publicize the breed included an articles in Rural Heritage Magazine (Dan Singletary and John Hall) and Lancaster Farming (Lawrence Gilley). As well, we have commissioned another article as noted above.

Gathering: The Fall Gathering took place at the ALBC Annual Meeting in North Carolina. Attendance was disappointing. Member Kendy Sawyer won a prize in the ALBC poster session and Nils Berglund was a speaker. Concerning future Gatherings, John felt that new locations and a strong local attraction (farm, museum, event etc.) was essential to success. Bill added the idea that a local "committed champion" who would drum up interest was also important. Possible candidates might include Dave Heinlin in Washington State and the Johnson's in Colorado.

A2/A2 milk: Member Dave Heinlein has tested the bulls in AMD semen bank for this genetic trait. This was a private

initiative, not endorsed by AMDCA; however John Hall has a copy of the report.

IRS status: John noted that our IRS 501(C)(5) status has been reinstated.

Semen Bank: Jeremy described a recent conversation with a non-AMD breeder who tried to purchase semen from our semen bank and had been refused. He asked whether the policy of limiting sales to AMD breeder members was still appropriate? There are about 760 straws in the semen bank. Sales have dropped off to the point where they just about cover storage costs. Some members are actively selling semen. After considerable discussion, the Meetings decided by consensus to table the question until next year.

Election of Directors: Nils reported 34 votes cast: John Hall 34, Bruce Balch 33. John and Bruce are elected to a three year term.

General Discussion/New Business:

Embryo transfer policy: During the year the question was raised whether the current embryo transfer policy was to be applied retroactively to previously drawn embryos. There was no policy at the time the embryos were flushed. The Board agreed to research the existing policy to see what precedent may have been set at the time (Bill Blaiklock action).

Herd Book/Registration: Great concern was expressed over the continued absence of an updated herd book, timely registrations etc. The following points were raised: the Herd book is essential, it should be online, it should be backed up to avoid catastrophic loss, membership responsibilities should be separated from registration. The Director's acknowledged the problems and will act promptly to correct them.

Melatonin: Bill noted that dairy in Ireland is selling "melatonin-rich night-milk", i.e. milk created in the dark from cows milked in the morning, which has a higher concentration of the melatonin hormone and is said to combat jet lag and insomnia. More at <www.ardrahancheese.ie>.

Dairy equipment: Bill G. mentioned Bobwhite Systems, South Royalton VT as a source of micro-dairy equipment.

Speaker: In the absence of the scheduled speaker, Jeremy spoke briefly about cattle breeding and genetics. He recommended a poster, available from Hoard's Dairyman (<www.hoards.com>), as a resource for cattle conformation. He reminded us that genetics is based on probabilities and change takes a long time. Be sure to establish your goals in the beginning

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 12:20 PM.

William C. Blaiklock, Secretary