

American Milking Devon Cattle Association

Established in 1978 to promote the conservation of American Milking Devon cattle as a triple purpose breed by maintaining a breed registry, encouraging knowledgeable and responsible breeding, and educating the public about the historic role of American Milking Devon Cattle, as well as their place in a healthy sustainable agriculture.



“SLOW BUT SURE. A test of strength for oxen at the annual Goshen fair was won by this pair, owned by Louis Warner of Thomaston, Conn. They drew a sledge, heavily loaded with rock, only part of which is shown. The off ox has dug in so far that his knees are almost on the ground.”

Kansas City Star, Monday, September 27, 1937, page 4.

To stop receiving the newsletter or if you have suggestions, content or announcements to be included, please contact Shelly Oswald (814) 786-7687 or myorjojr@verizon.net.

News from the Directors:

For those that are not aware there are seven members on the Board of Directors and they meet once a month via a conference call to discuss and act on any matters concerning the association. Since the 2014 annual meeting in May a number of exciting things have happened. Sue Randall was presented with a lifetime membership in honor of her many years of dedicated service to the AMDCA. Joseph Janowski was appointed, and graciously accepted, to fill Sue's seat on the board for the remainder of her term. A fireproof safe was purchased to protect the hard copies of the association's registrations and other important documents and a laptop was purchased for the Registrar's duties. A few other topics of discussion have been the upcoming fall gathering, membership dues policy, and publicity.

Reminders:

- Send registrations and registration transfers to: Bonnie Hall, 610 East Pond Meadow Road, Westbrook, CT 06498 (860) 399-4611 johnandbonniehall610@comcast.net
- Send membership applications, dues, and address or email corrections to: Shelly Oswald, 1919 Harrisville Rd, Stoneboro, PA 16153 (814) 786-7687 myorjojr@verizon.net
- Membership dues should be sent in at the first of the year and if not received by the annual meeting, your name will be removed from the breeders and mailing lists and you will not be able to process registrations until the dues are paid.
- Make sure that all checks are made out to: "AMDCA", not to the registrar or membership.
- Please be patient as the registrar and membership volunteers become familiar with their new responsibilities.
- Direct questions, concerns, requests for information, etc. to Ray Clark at (802) 626-8306. Ray is the primary contact for the association.

Events

September 12-14: Mother Earth News Fair in Seven Springs, PA. The AMDCA will have booth #59. Contact Shelly Oswald if you would like to help "man" the booth –myorjojr@verizon.net or 814-786-7687
<http://www.motherearthnews.com/fair/info.aspx#axzz31X1OsG4R>

October 11 - OX WORKX: Clinic for oxen and teamsters at Matthews Living History Farm in Galax, VA. Instruction from Andrew and Howard Van Ord. Bring a team or come to watch. \$85 per team/family. Registration and more info contact Kandy Sawyer: [Matthews Living History Farm Museum http://matthewsfarmmuseum.org](http://matthewsfarmmuseum.org)
ksawyer.2009@gmail.com, (276) 237-2605

October 12 - Mid-Atlantic Milking Devon Breeders Gathering: Sunday at 2 PM. Planning session to develop a bull-exchange program. Devon lunch available at 1 PM, \$10 donation suggested. For registration and more info contact Kandy Sawyer: [Matthews Living History Farm Museum http://matthewsfarmmuseum.org](http://matthewsfarmmuseum.org)
ksawyer.2009@gmail.com, (276) 237-2605

October 18 - AMDCA 2014 Fall Gathering: AMDCA members and friends are invited to Maple Breeze Farm, in Westbrook, CT for a Devon Cattle Field Day. Come and see Devon oxen at work; a discussion of conformation, breeding, and culling. Professor Drew Conroy, PhD will be leading these discussions. Coffee will be available beginning at 9 a.m. The program will run from 9-3. A Devon beef lunch will be included.

(We are looking for someone to videotape the Fall Gathering. Please contact John Hall if you can help)

AMD in the Media *(Please email mentions of AMD or breeders to Lawrence Gilley at lcgilley@tds.net)*

Wakeup Call, Kandy Sawyer, The Livestock Conservancy News, Spring 2014, p 11.
<http://albc-usa.etapwss.com/images/uploads/docs/Spring2014.pdf>

Rollie and Paula Johnson with their oxen at the Oregon-California Trails convention at Fort Kearney State Historical Park, Hastings Tribune, August 5, 2014,
https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/milkingdevoncattle/files/Johnson1_2014.pdf

Livestock Safety Handling Tips
Marion Barnes, County Extension Agent
Colleton, Hampton Counties S.C.
Clemson University

One of the most important issues to consider when working with livestock is safety, not only for the animal, but for the handler as well. Most farmers never take the time to consider why animals behave the way they do and how this behavior affects their personal safety. Many times animal handling practices are often learned from watching others and from our own experiences growing up around livestock. Too often this results in unsafe animal handling practices.

Cattle are powerful, quick, and protective of their territory and offspring and can be especially unpredictable during breeding or calving time. Although considered domesticated livestock, working with cattle carries an inherent risk of danger. When it was time to work the calves on our farm when I was growing up we would get help from our neighbor who had several sons and in turn we would help them work their calves. It was not a question of if or when, but who would be the first to get kicked, stomped, butted or rolled in the dirt. We young boys would always get a “kick”, (no pun intended) out of seeing others on the receiving end.

It's important to understand that cattle have both instincts and habits, also called behavior patterns that are based on actions for the most part that make them comfortable. These instincts and habits allow them to react to changes in their environments. However, many of these instincts are strong and potentially dangerous. Each year many farmers are needlessly injured (sometimes fatally) because of lack of safety awareness. Broken bones, crushed and mashed limbs, missed days of work and unnecessary medical expenses are just some of the results of livestock related incidents. A study in four western states (Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska) between 2003 and 2008 identified 21 cattle-related fatalities. The report indicated that decedents tended to be older (60 plus years of age) (67%) and male (95%). Circumstances associated with the incidents included working with cattle in enclosed areas (33%), moving or herding cattle (24%), loading (14%), and feeding (14%). One third of the fatalities were caused by animals that had previously shown aggressive behavior. Not surprisingly, 48% involved bulls and 14 % involved cows with calves. Understanding cattle behavior and using common sense when working cattle can greatly reduce the risk of injury to livestock handlers.

The following are some important livestock behaviors and tips for working safely around cattle.

Animal behaviors and precautionary measures

- Beef and dairy cattle are generally colorblind and have poor depth perception, sometimes showing extreme sensitivity to contrasts, which may cause an animal to balk at shadows or rapid change from dark to light.
- Cattle have a panoramic field of vision, which means they can see everything around them except what is immediately behind their hindquarters. This is the animals “blind spot”. Approaching from the side or front will be less startling to these animals than approaching from the rear.
- Cattle have a tendency to kick forward or out to the side, where horses and mules kick to the rear for the most part. Cattle are inclined to kick toward the side with pain or injuries. For example, it would be advisable to approach a cow suffering from mastitis in one quarter of the udder from the unaffected side.
- Cattle who are used to being around other animals can become frightened and agitated when separated, becoming dangerous and difficult to handle. When appropriate keep animals together, they will be more calm and cooperative when in groups.

- Cattle like other livestock are extremely sensitive to loud noise and can become easily frightened or spooked. In an attempt to move away from the source or direction of the noise and in addition to their poor depth perception and color blindness, they may crash into or through gates, fences or people. When working cattle be calm, deliberate, and patient and avoid yelling. Also be cautious around animals that are blind or deaf on one side. They often swing around quickly to investigate disturbances and if standing too close, a person can be easily knocked down and trampled.
- The flight zone is one of the most important principles regarding cattle behavior and safe handling. It is the animal's personal space. Cattle will react in a variety of ways according to handlers activities related to their flight zone. When the handler is outside the flight zone livestock will face the handler and maintain a safe distance. On the other hand, animals will turn away from a handler that enters their flight zone. Working from the edge of the flight zone will generally keep livestock calm and manageable.
- The point of balance is another behavioral principle and is associated with an animal's flight zone. An animal's point of balance is located at their shoulders. Most animals will move depending on a handler's position relative to their point of balance. This principle can be use to move livestock through crowding alleys, pens, chutes and squeezes. When a handler stands behind the animal's point of balance, the animal will move forward. When the handler stands in front of an animal's point of balance, the animal will stop or back up. By adjusting one's position the handler can encourage the animal to move in the desired direction.
- Livestock with young exhibit a maternal instinct. Cows with young calves are sometimes more defensive and can be difficult to handle. The younger the calf the more the difficulty. If possible let calves stay close to the mother cow when handling.
- By virtue of their size and disposition, bulls may be considered the most dangerous of domestic animals. Bulls are more aggressive during breeding season and are extremely dangerous while fighting. Handlers should never turn their backs on a bull and never trust a bull; particularly a "loner bull" reared or kept in isolation. The older the bull the more dangerous they can become. Being able to recognize various body postures of threat and aggression displayed by bulls will allow for safer handling.
- Zoonotic diseases, illnesses that can be transmitted between humans and animals are a sometimes overlooked concern for livestock handlers. Leptospirosis, rabies, brucellosis, salmonellosis and ringworm are especially important. Livestock owners can be exposed to zoonotic diseases by being bitten by an animal, handling an infected animal or disposing of infected tissues. To reduce exposure to disease, use basic hygiene and recommended sanitation practices.
- Good facilities play a major role in safely handling livestock. Properly constructed facilities allow livestock producers to perform routine chores as well providing a means controlling and restraining cattle. Construct corrals, holding pens and other facilities with the safety of the livestock and the livestock owner in mind.

In summary, by having the proper facilities, planning ahead, using common sense and good judgment and understanding animal behavior, farmers can increase their level of safety when handling livestock.

Information for this article was taken from the following references:

Livestock Safety- Jill Webster Ph.D., Mark Gonzalez Graduate Assistant Utah State University
 Working Safely with Livestock- AEX-990-08, Thomas L. Bean Ohio State University

(Thank you to the author for permission to use his informative article in our newsletter.)



JACOB OF SUN MOON FARM
(10630) Calved March 20, 2007.
Bred by Steve Estes Wrightsville,
GA.
Sire: Moses 10413.
Dam: Cherry 1566.
Sold August 27, 2007 to Regan
and Melissa Westbrook, Fort
Smith, AR.
Sold February 28, 2008 to
Charles and Patricia Howell, Ad-
vance, NC.

How Do You Manage a Bull?

These are member responses to the Discussion Question from the June 2014 newsletter.

They are not to be construed as advice, but as another member kindly sharing practices they use on their farm.

Kendy Sawyer, Virginia

We sold "Bully," our 9 year-old bull last January since all 4 of my milk cows are his daughters and I don't like to breed that tightly. "Bully" was never haltered. We did scratch his ears and back over the fence, and he would look for treats when we went to the fence or gate. We let him run with the herd (removing young heifers) except when we needed to conserve hay (he would tear up and waste round bales). I had picked him because he was available locally - and I knew he had a calm demeanor. I backed into his nose once and got tossed through the air (not with horns, just with his nose). Avoid going into the bull's personal space unless you have a reason. We shouldn't be that casual with cows, either.

I had the opportunity to talk one-on-one with Temple Grandin about bull handling at a Forage and Grasslands conference a few years ago. I told her how happy I was with Bully, and attributed his gentleness to having always received patient and kind handling. She told me I was wrong. She is convinced there is only one way to have a safe bull. The bull must be herd raised, not bottle raised - do not confuse the animal about his species-identity. The herd should be a mixed-age group - all babies or calf and mom is not enough to teach social skills. Halter training or not makes no difference to sexual behavior issues. Observe body language - turning sideways and "looking big" is the beginning of a challenge. (I hoot and stomp and go right toward them until it stops.) Pawing can be display or it can be to discourage flies - stop displays. Don't rub their foreheads or play or tease. If you feed treats make them take a submissive posture - nose up like a calf suckling.

It's easy for a bull to get too fat. Over-conditioning leads to health problems. I carry a stick - when I hold it horizontally the bulls think I have much bigger horns than they do - and stop. they won't make a challenge they don't think they have a chance at (if they have learned from larger animals.)

At the moment I am keeping 2 young bulls which I bought last winter. The older one can be handled, but doesn't really understand being led. Bulls born here are being halter trained. The young bulls are taught herd manners by the older bred cows. The baby bulls spending 1/2 time with mom and other milk cows. The other half of their time is spent in another mixed age group, usually including a bull. Babies get led and tied every day.

Horns don't make an animal dangerous - it's what's between the horns that creates risk. Respect their strength and quickness, never fully trust the bull. Try to use a buddy system when working with livestock. Mean bulls seldom hurt people - because people keep their guard up. Friendly pet bulls are far more likely to hurt their handler.



***MOUNTAIN PRIDE OF
WOOL BRANCH***

*(10297) Calved on March 15,
1999. Bred by Weston Utter,
John Skemp,
Sire: Cinnabar of Cove Creek
Devons 10205.
Dam Sugar Magnolia of Wool
Branch 441.
Sold 1999 to Gurney Davis,
Trinity, NC*

Daniel I. Singletary, New York

The first thing in managing a bull is that you **never** make a bull a “pet”. The only reason to keep a bull on a farm is to sire the next generation of calves. What you have to keep in mind is that a bull is interested in only a few things and one of those things is not pleasing his owner. A bull is interested in eating, wary of being threatened, and a cow in heat. If you keep a bull you must be cautious and anticipate the bull instincts not yours.

Milking Devon cattle are unique. They have not been selected for survival in a feed lot and have not lost their genetic proclivity to survive out on pasture with a herd of animals. They are very sensitive to “pecking order” and will drive younger animals away including bulls. It is very important to make sure your bull is big enough to be sure he is accepted by the herd. My experience is that the bull must be approaching three to be a successful sire, but it really depends on size. The older herd boss cow will drive the young bull away until he reaches the size to push back and become a successful herd sire. Smaller herds are less likely to experience this problem.

Choosing bulls is a difficult problem for us. We focus on the milking side of the American Milking Devon cattle. We try to breed our own bulls from available semen, but have not been pleased with the results. We would like to suggest that breeders that are interested in milking form a coalition that would focus on developing the very best milking animals in our registry. We try to select bulls and semen that reflect good milking traits, but right now in our registry it is really a crap shoot. We have no choice, but to focus on the cow. We look at the calf-to-cow growth and if she is not progressing into a dairy type animal we will cull her from our herd. By focusing on the cow we can move in the right direction. Without reliance on the bull we have achieved some success in establishing a “Milking” Devon herd.

It is my experience Milking Devons have the ability to produce milk on grass that is superior in making dairy products and I surmise that is because they have not been selected to thrive in confinement. Our association needs to be more attentive to the extraordinary milking qualities of our animals.

Ryan Rathje, Arkansas

My bull, Norman, manages himself. He stays in the fences and I leave him alone. I was about 36 when I got Norman. He was 13 months and serviced 5 adult cows within 30 days. He had to do a lot of jumping, though! I chose Norman based on experienced advice and simple availability. I don't breed heifers, Norman does, usually whenever they will stand still for him. Most heifers have settled at 18-24 months, with a few around 14 months ...which is too early. Better management advised. I'm not much of a stockman. Thank goodness our American Milking Devon Cattle rarely need me to be.



MEADOW BROOK H JOE

(10512) Calved on April 25, 2006.

Bred by Raymond Clark Lyndonville, VT.

Sire: Woodside GL Napoleon 10246.

Dam: Pine View Harriet 96 II 572

(With Ray Clark's grandson, Wyatt)

Lawrence Gilley, New York

I confine my bull due to children, numerous naive visitors, close neighbors and 150 head of Holsteins just across the road. I have fences of electrified aluminum wire which are mostly single strand and vulnerable to deer. "Mister Clark" has a small barn for shelter and hay storage. There is a sizable exercise yard where he has access to hay and water. There are three gates. One gate is to the exercise yard. It is big enough to back in the spreader. One gate is to the barn. One gate is between the exercise yard and the barn. It can be opened and closed without entering either the yard or the barn. There is also a people door to the barn. When it is time for breeding a cow I usually entice the bull into the barn with grain and then close and lock the gate between the barn and the exercise yard. I open the gate to the exercise yard and herd the cow from the barnyard to the exercise yard. I close and lock the gate before opening the gate between the barn and the exercise to let the bull out into the yard with the cow. I repeat the procedure when the cow has been serviced.

The barn and fence were constructed with recycled lumber with the exception of the treated posts. I splurged on a headlock, which can be used to hold the bull or a cow. It is installed inside the barn and it is easy to capture the bull since that is where he gets occasional "cookies". The fences of the exercise yard are all raised above the ground enough so that in an emergency, I could roll out under the fence. I am satisfied with the system. The problem I have is that the exercise yard has been churned up much more than I anticipated. Stone and gravel get mixed with mud and manure. I decided against concrete because of what being on concrete did to the hooves and legs of an earlier bull, Red Gulliver.

Next question: How do you plan and manage calving?

Please contribute your answer to the question and share your practices with others.

Post to the Milking Devon Yahoo Group at groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/milkingdevoncattle/info or to the American Milking Devon Cattle Facebook page or send to Lawrence Gilley <lgilley@tds.net>, P O Box 277, Deansboro, NY 13328



Eagle brand, schmeagle brand: sweet jars of DIY heaven

by Jackie Cleary of Auburn Meadow Farm, West Middlesex, PA

WHAT DO FUDGE, ICED COFFEE, CARAMEL, ICE CREAM, CREAM LIQUEURS & PIES HAVE IN COMMON? SWEETENED CONDENSED MILK, THAT'S WHAT.

I don't have a great answer to explain my snootiness about store-bought sweetened condensed milk. It just seems super commercial and over-processed, which is not my cup of tea. And, it's never been a sacrifice. I had no use for it, so it was easy to ignore.

But, once I started down the caramel candy, ice cream and cream pies rabbit hole, avoiding sweetened condensed milk began over-complicating my life. The thought my results could be better if I weren't so stubborn started creeping into my brain. Finally, the Huffington Post pokes me with [proof](#) that Sweetened Condensed Milk is the best stuff on earth.

UNCLE. I give. **How did I not know what an international phenomenon sweetened condensed milk is?** And so, this time, I have to admit I may be a *little* bit wrong.

I say a *little* bit because in my wish to support local farmers, buying Eagle Brand isn't really part of the solution. But in fairness, the list of ingredients on a can of Eagle Brand is exactly the same as homemade: milk and sugar. And that's how the idea for this compromise was born.

Be warned: homemade sweetened condensed milk is amazing in every way and well worth the time spent. Which, I won't lie, is considerable so pick a weekend you're going to be close to home. The recipe is simple – hardly a recipe really. My favorite kind.

And, this basic recipe is a springboard for many, many ideas. Honey, maple syrup or maybe apple cider molasses to sweeten? A little cardamom or nutmeg? Chocolate? Hmm.

Maintaining the temperature is truly the single, non-negotiable aspect. Let it get too hot and the milk will form curds. Once that happens, game over, you're done. Throw it to the pigs and start over because you'll never get the smooth, creamy, liquid fudge-y texture that makes this stuff so addictive.

Use a stainless stock pot on the stove set at the lowest temperature or a crock pot with a "keep warm" setting. I prefer the crock pot – by alternating between the Keep Warm and Low settings you can maintain the temperature without fear of scorching and easily put the process on hold when you need a break.



USING A CROCK POT & THERMOMETER ALLOWS YOU TO EASILY PUT THE PROCESS ON HOLD WHEN YOU HAVE TO RUN OUT TO FEED THE PIGS.

Equipment:

- Crock Pot with Keep Warm setting and lid or stainless stock pot with lid
- Thermometer

Ingredients:

- Gallon Milk
- 5 cups sugar or 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups honey

To speed things up, I began by heating my milk and sweetener in a covered stockpot on the stove over medium-low heat just until steam rises – pay attention, you don’t want the milk to boil! Transfer your mixture to a crock pot set on Low. Do not cover. A thermometer helps you monitor the temperature: it should remain between 150° – 160° F.

The milk will reduce to nearly $\frac{1}{4}$ its original volume. You can use a metal ruler to gauge the reduction by measuring the depth of your liquid at the start, divide by four to guesstimate the final depth then measure throughout the process.

Since I’m not that familiar with sweetened condensed milk, I actually used a can of Borden’s as a guide. When my texture was nearly the same stiffness (remember your liquid will thicken a little more as it cools), I stopped and poured my milk into sterilized jars.

If you need to put the process on hold while you feed the pigs, grab a bite or get some sleep, simply switch the setting to “keep warm” and cover to stop the reduction process. When you’re back, return the setting to low and remove the lid. It was a little busy around here, so I stretched it over a full 24 hours, taking care to not allow the temperature to go below 150.

The result is recipe-ready sweetened condensed milk comparable to store-bought in texture. From a gallon of milk, I ended up with about 40 ounces or a quart and a cup and a half. Since most recipes call for a 14 ounce can, I figure this batch will make five recipes plus some extra for my morning coffee.

“Can this be canned?” I know you’re about to ask. Well. You didn’t hear it from me, and you definitely won’t hear it from the USDA, but on old homesteading boards I hear tell of pressure canning at 12 – 15 psi for 13 minutes. Another mention of water bath canning for two hours that supposedly does not affect the flavor of the milk as much. Freezing would be another option to consider.

I don’t really know for sure, but I tend to be bold and will probably try pressure canning for myself. What I do know is that it keeps at least two weeks refrigerated.

Good luck with that.

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Ray's Corner

Quotes and advice from Director Ray Clark.

- § “When you go in a lot with a bull, ALWAYS keep your eyes on the bull.”
- § “The “ugly” bull seldom hurts anyone it is the “friendly” bull who does and generally not on purpose.”
- § “If a Milking Devon does something wrong and you don’t know how to correct them, do nothing until you know how to correct them properly. If you correct them wrongly, you will have to live with it a long time since they are extremely smart.”
- § “The Milking Devon usually do not fully mature until they are 7 years old, similar to horse.”
- § Recommended readings:
“Feeds and Feeding” by F.B. Morrison
<http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=ucl.Sb24896>

“Merck Veterinary Manual”
<http://www.merckmanuals.com/vet/full-sections.html>

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