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On the cover - TLC Midnights Jewel owned by Tom & Laura
Christofk - Grass Valley, CA
On the back -
(right) Lacy Findley @ Findley Farm
(left) Photo saved from the old Members Forum. Identification
unknown except initials JM and DD
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Association Update

BYLAWS CHANGES

It was the ancient Greeks who said government has only one purpose, to improve the lives of citizens.

When PDCA was created it decided to give ultimate power to its members – not its board of directors. Using the analogy of our own government, just as the U.S. Constitution was designed to protect the people from its government, PDCA created its founding Bylaws to do the same thing. The Bylaws gave the members, and ONLY the members, the power to change the Bylaws.

The term Bylaws sounds huge, but Bylaws are actually a brief set of defining concepts which allow or restrict. The much larger document is the Rules & Regulations where the details of the Bylaws are defined. Think of the Bylaws as “what”, and the Rules & Regulations as “how.”

The PDCA board is expected to promote the betterment of Dexters and PDCA members within the mandates of these Bylaws and Rules & Regulations.

From time to time, Bylaws need to be reconsidered to ensure their relevancy, necessity and productivity towards the goal of “betterment.” Now is the time.

The PDCA board is suggesting some changes/updates that we hope the membership will approve of, or improve of. These “suggestions” are available to review, discuss, and cast a vote for or against on our Member Forum. We have made it easy for you to participate at whatever level you chose. PDCA has given you the power – we hope you will use it.

www.dexterstoday.com/forum

WHAT'S UP?

PDCA has had a Members Forum for a long time. But, participation over the last several years has dwindled as Facebook groups began to emerge.

This is not a bad thing – people with something in common – Dexters- are engaging with one another regularly (usually) about Dexters. Sharing, learning, encouraging, inspiring... It’s all good!

But… when it comes to sharing ideas and viewpoints, a Forum has two big advantages:

1. Content is segregated by Topics – not interested in something? No time wasted.

2. The primary purpose is educational and opinion driven, not social. You do not engage on a forum to be “liked”, but to be heard.

And that is exactly why we are remodeling the PDCA Members Forum. Our new Members Forum is not trying to be another social Facebook group, but a place for you to participate in both the improvement of PDCA, but more importantly in the promotion of Dexters in general by offering your opinions and ideas. The new Members Forum is a direct link to PDCA management and PDCA members.

For those who enjoy connecting with others using social media, PDCA has started a Facebook page that we hope you will “Like.”

http://facebook.com/pdcanow

LOOK FOR IT IN SUMMER ISSUE

July 1st is Membership renewal time. When you renew, you will be asked to approve or edit your Herd Status report so that we can update our registry keeping it as current and accurate as possible. You will also be asked to cast a vote regarding Bylaws changes, and to participate in a brief survey, which will help PDCA to understand the wishes and concerns of its members. Quick and easy - we promise.
1-2-3 NOT IT!

Remember when you were a kid? Last one to say “not it” was “it.”

Why does no one want to be “it”? Who wants to stand in a corner, alone, counting to 100?

No fair - everyone else is having fun.

Being “it” might seem like crummy luck or a punishment, but it is very temporary and very vital.

So what would happen if no one was “it”? No game. No fun.

The PDCA board is a group of “its”. No one is paid, and there are no perks - no free membership, no free registrations, nothing. But we did not draw the short straw; we volunteered for the job. Not because we had a little free time to donate to the cause – HA! just the opposite! We volunteer because we assume it will be very temporary, but very vital – and it is!

Unless PDCA wants to change from being a member empowered, non-profit to a “for-profit” where the incentive and policies are about betterment of the bottom line rather than the betterment of Dexters, more members need to take their turn at being “it.”

The commitment is not as terrible as one might assume. The board meets monthly via an evening teleconference to discuss and decide on actions that we each individually feel will be for the betterment of our cattle, ourselves, other PDCA members and the association. By design, the PDCA board (seven Area Managers, president and vice president) represent our diverse membership: varying in gender, age, location, herd size, experience, preferences, etc. This is our strength: whereby collectively many viewpoints are considered in the decision making process.

Unless we are OK with one or two people making all the decisions, then we all need to be willing to be “it” for awhile.

PDCA has had several Area Manager positions vacant for quite awhile and two more are soon to be vacant. This transition or turnover of people does not indicate dissatisfaction, but simply that it is time for someone else to be “it”.

Turnover is not just fair, it’s healthy.

Area Managers are listed on page 2. Go there – see who is representing you – or not.

Maybe it’s your turn to be it.

POLICY CHANGES

Registry to Registry Transfer - This option was created to make it very easy and affordable (only $5 per animal) to have your entire herd of (originally ADCA, CDCA or Legacy registered) animals included (registered) in the PDCA registry.

Although this screamin’ hot deal will continue to be offered to new members of PDCA, the PDCA registration certificate(s) will now be sent via email as a self-print PDF file. Printed and mailed registration certificate(s) will be available for an additional $5 (still a good deal!)

Registry to Registry transfers- certificate sent as PDF via email = $5

Registry to Registry transfers- certificate printed and mailed = $10

Easier Transfers – Sometimes getting the seller’s signature that is required on the back of the registration certificate can be difficult if downright impossible. After considering the pros and cons of this requirement, PDCA will no longer require the seller’s signature, but will instead inform the seller of the transfer transaction to allow for rebuttal.
The first rule is to be flexible with your rotations, and do not overgraze! Few of us live in areas where the weather will be predictable from year to year, or season to season. Having a fixed plan or schedule of how you are going to graze your pastures, even if you are using rotational grazing, will eventually not work because Mother Nature is going to throw something unexpected your way.

Here in Michigan we usually enjoy relatively stable weather over the summer, but occasional drought conditions can crop up. Several years ago, we had such a drought in the Midwest and Great Lakes area. We continued to make daily strips of stock-piled pasture available to our herd, and were very diligent in setting a back line daily to prevent the cows from grazing backward; but by mid-August, we no longer had new strips to move them to.

Others who were not rotational grazing had mostly run out of grass by the beginning of July and had been feeding hay, and letting their cows nibble on dormant stubble of what remained of their pasture, turning it into a dry lot with little remaining vegetation. Not only were they feeding hay they would need for the upcoming winter, but a second cutting of hay wasn’t going to be available to supplement their already-dwindling supply. Some of you may remember hay prices that winter in the drought-affected areas skyrocketed, and people were purchasing hay that was triple or quadruple what they normally paid, or had it shipped 1000 miles or more.
We still had grass several inches long in our pasture, because we hadn’t let them graze it to the dirt and had been diligent about maintaining a back line to prevent them from going back over pasture that they had already grazed. It was tempting, but instead of keeping them on the pasture and letting them continue to graze the three-inch-long remaining forage, we moved the cows to a small sacrifice area and only allowed them to feed on hay. By this point it was early September, the sun was lower in the sky, and the temperatures were in the 60sF instead of the 80sF.

When the rains finally came, we held the cows off the pastures for another week, and because we had not allowed them to graze it to half-inch-long stubble like so many others around us, the stored energy in the roots allowed for the forage to quickly green up and start growing again. This allowed grazing all the way into November without feeding hay. Those who had allowed their cows access to their pasture all summer trying to avoid feeding as much hay never did have enough forage regrowth, because their forage had insufficient reserves in the roots to grow before winter set in. No matter how tempting it is in a drought condition as in this example, don’t allow the cattle to over-graze your pasture!

In the beginning of the growing season, most of us have more pasture than we can utilize without over-stocking the remainder of the year. There are several ways of dealing with this. For those of you who hay, by limiting the cattle to small areas of grazing you can utilize much of the excess pasture by taking the hay off the areas cows have not accessed. The cattle can then be rotated onto this area after there has been some recovery of the forage following haying.

For those who only pasture their Dexters and don’t hay, there are two options. One is to still limit the cattle to smaller areas, and go...
in and clip the forage before it reaches its mature stage and puts all of the energy into seed production. Clipping before the forage goes to seed renews the growth process, and the cut forage builds soil quality and allows it to have a more dense growth.

A more economical method to use for those who have larger herds, is allow the cows to do the work. This is the method we employ. We make rapid moves into small areas at least twice per day, allowing the cows to graze what they can, but they will trample far more than they are capable of eating. Forage that has both been grazed and trampled will recover quickly, and can be re-grazed in as little as 20 days. However, the forage is damaged enough that most will not go into the seed stage by the time the second grazing takes place. This uses no fuel, or wear and tear on the tractor, and although it takes time, it really isn’t much different than spending an afternoon on the tractor, and you get to spend some time with your cows in the process as you move them often.

Second Rule

The second rule of managed grazing is to not neglect the back line! Other than in the late fall or early winter when forage growth has stopped, a back line is essential for allowing the pasture to re-start its growth process without additional damage by re-grazing, or – nearly as important – hoof traffic. Think how grass looks after some event that doesn’t have any grazing, but has a lot of foot or vehicle traffic. Well, your cows do that too, even if they’re not eating! In good conditions, this re-growth takes place within a couple of days of grazing. Therefore, for the most effective results, the cattle should not be allowed on already-grazed pasture after that time frame until it has reached sufficient length to graze again. We move our back line at least every two days, and sometimes every day.

Probably the biggest challenge with managed grazing is water. Studies have shown that when the water source is close, individual cows will make trips for water on their own, because the herd is near. However, if the water source is located some distance away, they will not make the trip for water on their own. They’ll likely all go as a group, which will lead to a lot more walking, and a bottle-neck at the water source. Therefore, the ideal way to handle water is to keep it portable, and as close to the area that they are grazing as possible. This will encourage the consumption of water, and limit the movement of the herd. We have water lines that follow the fence line on all of our pastures, and so we can hook water up every 100 feet as they rotate, using a hose and quick connect fittings. When this is impractical due to a large distance from a water source. Therefore, the ideal way to handle water is to keep it portable, and as close to the area that they are grazing as possible. This will encourage the consumption of water, and limit the movement of the herd.

“With early spring grazing we have to be extremely careful not to overgraze the young immature plants. You can choose to start grazing your plants early, before they have a chance to send down a strong root system. If you do this, just be prepared to possibly run out of grass when the summer heat comes accompanied by lower precipitation.”
source, a large water tank can be carried on a hay wagon or trailer, and periodically re-filled. Using an automatic waterer and trough, the water can gravity feed into the trough.

If neither of these methods is possible, the only choice is to provide a lane back to a suitable water source. The lane should be wide enough to allow the entire herd to travel to the water at one time, because they will if the water is more than 200 to 300 feet from the area that they are grazing.

By the time late summer comes around, you may discover – because of the efficiency of your managed grazing – you can allow for an area of your pasture to rest for a significant period of time, allowing the forage to continue to grow without having your cows graze it. If possible, try to plan for this area to be close to your winter water source. You can stockpile the forage in this area to allow grazing until very late in the year, even in the winter months if light snow covers the ground. It is not necessary to set up a back line because there won’t be grass re-growth, but by starting at your water and making new strips of grass available daily, moving away from the water you can delay hay feeding by weeks, or even months, compared to prior years. It may be necessary to come up with a different method of holding your temporary posts, such as a heavy weighted base, if the ground is frozen and you can’t stick the posts into the ground.

To summarize, don’t let your forage get too short (three inches or so), don’t let your forage get too long (hay it, cut it, or trample it before it goes to seed). Watch the weather and adjust the frequency of your moves and areas they should graze to adapt to the conditions. And if possible, set an area in late summer that you can stockpile forage for grazing later into the year. If you can accomplish these basic goals, you’ll find your feed bill will decrease, or you can add some additional Dexters to your herd, or both. You’ll find your herd will follow you around, because they believe you have something good for them every time you walk out into the pasture. Best of all, it’s great exercise!
Artificial Insemination - Part 1

If you want to get your cow pregnant, you have three choices:

Own a bull, rent a bull, or perform artificial insemination (AI). If you’re unable (or unwilling) to keep a bull and no one around you has a Dexter bull whose services you can rent (not uncommon in rural areas), then it comes down to artificial insemination.

But fear not, this is not as daunting a technique as you may have been led to believe. In this multi-part series, we will examine the pros and cons of AI to determine whether it’s something you want to try.

It’s important to remember AI is not just a novel way to get cows pregnant. It’s a powerful tool that has brought tremendous improvements to livestock (regardless of how distantly separated in either time or location the bull and cow are) by introducing genetic diversity and reducing genetic diseases.

From the first, dairy cattle have been at the forefront of AI research and application for the obvious reasons of improvements in lactation. AI has been used at most American dairy farms since the 1950s to improve genetics and reproduction efficiencies, large through the improvement of udder traits.

Dexter breeders are not solely concerned with maximizing milk production, and AI has been used to select for beefier build, not to mention reduction of genetic diseases to which Dexters have been prone in the past.

Since 1784

In centuries past, if farmers wanted to improve their breeding stock they chose the very best animals they could and crossed them. However of necessity they were limited to local or (at best) regional selections.

The first successful AI was performed on a dog in 1784 in Italy by Lazzaro Spallanzani. A century later, the Englishman Walter Heape (as well as others) were using AI in isolation on rabbits, dogs, and horses. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Russian Ilya Ivanovich Ivanov pioneered efforts to establish AI as a practical procedure by developing effective techniques and equipment. Eventually interest spread to the Far East, the rest of Europe, and America, and efficiency increased exponentially. The benefits of AI were too numerous to resist.
Advantages and Disadvantages

Nothing is perfect, of course, and AI is no exception. Consider the advantages and disadvantages of artificial insemination.

A rutting bull is unbelievably single-minded when pursuing a cow in heat. I speak from experience when I say it’s hard to keep a bull from his intended target, which is how I ended up splashing backwards into a water tank in a comically cartoon-like fashion one summer morning a few years ago. And the bull got his cow after all.

Some Dexter breeders are smallholders with no room for a bull. In our case, we had to construct a nuclear bull pen to confine our bull, and fortunately Dexter bulls are of fairly moderate disposition. Other smallholders raising larger breeds with more ferocious male temperaments may not want to risk keeping a bull at all. Keeping a bull also means you have to swap him out every few years to keep bloodlines fresh. Besides, is it worth feeding and housing a bull year-round for once-a-year activities if you only have five cows?

For all these reasons and more, AI is often the answer.

Sire Selection

What should you look for in a bull? Thanks to AI, you can shop literally around the world for specific traits such as improved milk production in daughters, increased muscle mass for meat production, and generic considerations such as polling, color, and of course free of chondrodysplasia and pulmonary hypoplasia with anasarca (PHA). Proper sire selection can even help protect against potential calving difficulties (for both purebred and mixed-breed Dexters).

Responsibility for sound sire selection also rests on the collector. Wes Patton of Glenn Land Farm notes, “In the Dexter breed of cattle there are a number of genetic tests available to insure...
that undesirable traits are not passed on through artificial insemination. Unfortunately, in some cases those tests are used as the sole selection criteria, and soundness and conformation traits are overlooked. When selecting Dexter bulls to have collected for artificial insemination, it is important to start by selecting individuals that are sound in conformation and that meet the breed standards, and then do the genetic testing to verify that they are genetically sound as well.

Dexter breeders are a varied lot, and each dedicated breeder selects for different qualities. Some prefer larger animals, some smaller. Some prefer more muscled livestock, others want improved milking potential. We should all be breeding for disease-free healthy animals with sweet dispositions.

Remember, half your herd’s genetics stem from the bull. Don’t stint when it comes to qualities you want. Sire selection represents the greatest opportunity for genetic change in your herd. Through AI, relatively few bulls service a large number of cows, so breeders have the opportunity to breed their animals to an elite, superior bull they may never see in person — for a very reasonable cost.

One thing to remember: Sire selection has a long-term impact. Genetic change is permanent change. Unlike changes in diet or environment, the effects of introducing new genes will carry through generations in your herd until you introduce new genetics. For this reason, purchasing semen should not be viewed as a short-term expense, but a long-term investment.

“One of the major reasons for initiating AI was to make the males that transmit superior genetics for milk production available to more producers in the animal industry,” notes R.H. Foote in “The History of Artificial Insemination” (Dept. of Animal Science, Cornell University). “This was democracy in action. The elite bulls would not be limited to the wealthy.”

**Semen Collection**

There are two halves to artificial insemination. At the provider’s end, there is semen collection, storage, and shipment. At the user’s end, there is semen selection and ordering, heat detection, estrous synchronization, and (of course) insemination.

Wes Patton describes the steps taken by semen collectors. “There are several critical control points from the bull to the calf that they will sire,” he says. “Hiring a reputable company to do the collection is the primary step. They will help you condition the bull properly to insure that the highest semen quality will be collected. That doesn’t start the day before collection. It may take several weeks or months to alter the nutrition and health programs of the bull to give him the best chance of producing high quality semen.

“One, seasonal temperature extremes may also be involved as well. Then, as the bull is being collected, there can be a difference in semen quality between those collected naturally using an artificial vagina or with an electroejaculator. At the time of collection the tech will immediately evaluate the semen to determine if it has acceptable motility and morphology. Some bulls don’t get past this stage of collection. If the semen is acceptable at this stage, it is taken back to the lab where it is extended and put in straws and then tested again. The breeder should then receive a report from the company indicating the number of straws prepared, the motility score, the live sperm percentage, etc.
“The next step is getting the semen from the company where it is stored to the tech that is going to do the insemination without damage to the quality. Moving the straws from the storage tank to the tech’s tank, or from the storage tank to the shipping tank to the tech’s tank, is critical. This should only be done by someone who is trained in semen handling, so that the straws are not exposed to sunlight, held out of the tank too long, etc.

“Preparing the cow for artificial insemination is as critical as preparing the bull for collection. The body condition score of the cow, her health, environmental conditions at the time of insemination, the timing of insemination, and the handling of the cow after insemination are key points that need to be addressed. Some techs will suggest using only natural heats to do insemination, while others will want to synchronize the cows with exogenous hormone treatments to get them ready.”

Fresh liquid semen can be successfully stored for one to four days at 40F, but most semen is frozen. There are two methods of freezing and storing semen: dry ice and alcohol (-100F), and liquid nitrogen (-320F). Liquid nitrogen is the preferred method because there is no evidence of fertility deterioration with age, whereas fertility gradually declines in semen stored in dry ice-alcohol. Under proper conditions, frozen semen can be stored indefinitely.

Straws of semen are usually shipped via regular delivery methods in specialized liquid nitrogen vapor-style shipping containers. Often the semen is shipped directly to the AI technician you plan to use.

“Of course, the skill of the technician is especially important to insure a high success rate,” continues Patton. “Many people have their vet do the insemination, and that is fine if they inseminate cows as a part of their weekly practice. Other breeders use the services of technicians that inseminate cows at the local dairy. Yet other breeders are trained and can do their own. In any case, the handling of the cow for the first month after insemination is critical. Avoid any stress during that time. Stress can include hot temperatures, nutrition, animal mixing, dogs, unfamiliar people, vaccinations, and the list goes on.

“In the best of worlds you will probably not get a 100 percent conception rate, and most techs will suggest getting two straws of semen per cow in case they do not take the first time. Remember, it costs the same to ship one straw of semen as it costs to ship 100, so if you plan ahead you can buddy up with fellow Dexter breeders and share the cost of shipping and/or get enough for multiple years.”

In future articles, we will examine professional vs. owner insemination (including step-by-step pointers for the do-it-yourselfer), heat detection, insemination techniques, troubleshooting, and other details of artificial insemination.

Article written by Patrice Lewis
Special thanks to Wes Patton of Glenn Land Farm for his insight on collection techniques.

Wes and Jane Patton owners of Glenn Land Farm in Orland, CA

The championship Dexter herd of Glenn Land Farm was established in 1989 with bloodlines from Missouri, Idaho, Oregon and California with a focus on conformation, temperament and calving ease. To improve milking traits, they introduced English genetics from Beryl Rutherford’s Hedgehog III bull and transferred fresh embryos from one of their best females. Glenn Land Farm offers semen from five chondro and PHA free bulls – each offering different attributes creating a smorgasbord of choices: black, red, dun, horned, polled, A2/A2, big and beefy, or smaller within breed standards.
**Little Girl, Little Cows**

**Olivia Williams, Sebastopol, CA**

For one little girl, Dexters offered an opportunity to forge a special bond that led to bigger things. Meet Olivia Williams, now age 15 (and no longer little), who has spent the last few years in love with her wee cattle and showing that love to the world.

Olivia was born into a family of first-generation farmers who mostly raised sheep. But Olivia always loved cows. When her parents went to Glenn Land Farm (owned by Wes and Jane Patton) to buy lambs, she only had eyes for the Dexters. “When Olivia was just old enough to walk, Jane [Patton] would take her out and show her the Dexter calves,” related her father Rex Williams. “Olivia was hooked.”

In 2013 at age 10, this enterprising young lady confidently told the Pattons she was coming to buy a heifer after she sold her first lamb. She showed the animal at the Sonoma County Fair. The next year she bought another heifer from the Pattons, then her first heifer calved, then she bought a bull.

“The main thing that attracted me to Dexters was their size,” related Olivia, “after learning how much feed it takes to grow big show cattle, and then learning how efficient Dexters were. I can feed a whole show string for the same money that someone – showing big cattle – spends to feed two show cows.”

Olivia had great success at her first all-Dexter show at the Utah State Fair. “I won my first buckle in Youth Senior Showmanship against high school kids, and I was only 13 at the time,” she said. She won several classes and brought home another buckle for the Champion Female.

“I think my cattle did well because they were fed to show condition. We had a hair coat long enough to work with, thanks to the foggy summer nights we have here on the coast.”

By this point she was making quite a splash at the local county fair. “This will be the fifth year of her showing Dexters at the Sonoma County Fair,” said her father. “She has quite the following. Last year people showed up especially to see the ‘little’ cows, and the cow men are not laughing anymore.”

Olivia is now selling breeding stock to other 4-Hers, and this year for the first time there will be other kids with Dexters at the county fair. Also for the first time at the county 4-H/FFA judging contest, the kids got to judge a class of Dexter cows.

“I love the size of these cattle, and enjoy the fact that we have had no calving problems ever!” said Olivia. “And of course the calves are super cute. For other kids who want to raise livestock, I would say start small, and raise what you love. If you love sheep, raise sheep. If you love cows, then raise cows. Seek out a breeder that will help you and has a good reputation for solid cattle. I want to thank Wes and Jane Patton for selling me the breeding stock to start a solid set of brood cows.”

Olivia has no intention of stopping a good thing. “I’ve learned over the years to love what you do, because there is a lot of work...”
that goes into raising good show cattle. As a matter of fact, I’ve talked mom and dad into buying a new trailer so we can haul more cows than the sheep trailer,” she joked. “But the best part of showing cattle is getting to go all over the place and meet new people. I have many friends from all over the state from showing Dexters.”

These little cattle loom big in Olivia’s future. “I am still building my herd. It takes time to breed a whole bunch of good consistent brood cows. I want to sell more breeding stock, and the best way to do that is by going to shows and sales. The calves which don’t have the quality to be breeding stock, we will direct-market them as Dexter beef. After high school, I want to attend an agricultural college, then come home and take over my parent’s farm. I’ll probably reduce the number of sheep and add more cows!”

This gutsy young lady is an example of how an entire movement to popularize Dexters can start with one little girl.
Make An Impression

The great thing about showing or exhibiting your Dexters at a public venue is the opportunity to meet people who are seeking to know more about Dexters. It is these seekers, or someone they know, that will likely buy stock from you in the future if their experience with you was a positive one.

There is a saying that goes: “You only get one chance to make a first impression.”

Keep in mind, every time you show or exhibit your Dexters, even if you never leave your farm, is an opportunity to make an impression. Everything from the quality and condition of your animals, the cleanliness of your specific area, the creativity of your educational or marketing table, as well as you - yourself, your knowledge-ability and willingness to share are all factors in creating an impression- good or bad.

Once you have made a great first impression, the best thing to do is make a lasting impression. This is done with literature: business cards are critical, but another excellent marketing tool for promoting, both Dexters in general and your farm specific, is with a quality brochure – something people can take and read later – that is both informational and a physical reminder of their encounter with you. Brochures are sales tools and you need them.

PDCA has designed a brochure about a few of the benefits of Dexter cattle with a warm invitation to learn more about them from YOU. A place for your name and contact info are incorporated into the design.

These color brochures are complimentary to PDCA members, so plan ahead, take advantage of the opportunity, and make a great lasting impression.
Cattle have a well-developed eye that sees some color but not as much as humans. They generally avoid bright light if given preference. The position of each eye allows very wide peripheral vision along the side. This alerts the animal to movement which is then investigated using binocular vision. A good side view is useful for watching where other animals are during grazing with head down. So cattle have nearly 360° vision as they move around, when grazing. Using two eyes, the animal has a much narrower binocular vision (about 25-50°). We exploit the wide peripheral vision when moving stock using their “point of balance” just behind the shoulder. Cattle have a narrow blind spot at the rear where they are vulnerable, so they move a lot to keep checking it out. Cattle’s eyes are designed to see down rather than up. When alarmed will raise head to investigate. A bull in fight response uses one eye to watch you, but is getting his head ready for sideways swipe at same time. Cattle can recognize different people from their shape and color of clothing. They can also count, and associate more than one person or someone in green overalls, with pain or stress of injections or forced handling.

Cattle are sensitive to high frequency sounds which people cannot hear. These high frequency sounds can increase arousal and low tones are more relaxing for them. Music is regularly used in milking parlors to provide cows with a familiar background noise.

Cattle have a better sense of smell than people. The smell of blood can cause great panic. This is seen when cattle pass paddocks treated with blood and bone fertilizer. For some unknown reason, this panic is not consistent but is very real.

Cattle have a very sensitive skin and can flick flies off from localized areas. Cattle respond to touch and use it as an important form of communication among each other. Mutual grooming is important in cattle, especially in mature animals. Dams lick and groom their calves right up to weaning. Touch is important for handlers to warn cows where you are e.g. when milking. One really bad experience by cattle will put them off all people for a considerable time till a positive human/animal bond is restored.

Thanks to Clive and Lifestyle Block website for allowing reprint this article.
WE Make the products that Make Your Life EZier!

Our new silicone inserts come in three sizes... from sheep to goats, cows, horses and more, our innovative products make milking, collecting colostrum & treating mastitis easier than ever!

Questions? Contact the inventor, Buck Wheeler | 800-287-4791 or 507-213-2126 info@EZAnimalProducts.com Learn more about these products and watch video demonstrations at www.EZAnimalProducts.com

All products made in the USA
The Udderly EZ Milker
by: Patrice Lewis

It was the only time in 20 years of owning cattle that we nearly lost a calf for being unable to nurse.

Our elderly Jersey had poor udder attachment, and when her latest calf was born, the udder hung so low it nearly brushed the ground. The baby couldn’t even find the teat, much less get that critical colostrum in her belly. So I armed myself with what became a life-saving item: A hand-milking device called an Udderly EZ. While the mother laid down to rest, I pumped out the colostrum (sideways!) and bottle-fed the baby. We followed this procedure for two weeks until the mother’s udder resumed less-swollen proportions and the baby could nurse directly.

It’s the nature of emergencies to be unexpected, and the outcome of this birth could have been much different without the ability to extract colostrum from awkward positions.

Dexter cows usually don’t have pendulous udder problems of poorly bred Jerseys, but sometimes the opposite happens: the teats are so small that efficient milking is difficult – not so much for the calf as for the humans.

The Udderly EZ is a hand-held, trigger-operated vacuum pump that attaches to a flanged plastic cylinder. For times when milking is difficult (swollen udder, mastitis, tiny or misshapen teats), the EZ milker offers a simple solution. The Ultimate EZ – the electric version of the hand-milker – can milk two teats at the same time. It’s as fast as commercial milkers with less noise (and one-third the cost), so the animals hardly know it’s running. The silicone inserts are gentle even on engorged or misshapen teats.

It’s not just the health of the animal that requires assistance. Sometimes it’s the health of the human. For those unable to milk their cow due to carpal tunnel syndrome, arthritis, fibromyalgia, lymphasemia, or any other painful or debilitating condition, the EZ milker offers relief and efficiency.

Proudly Made in the USA
So where did this nifty milker come from? It was a simple case of necessity being the mother of invention, and it came from trying to milk out colostrum from thoroughbred horses in the racing industry. Inventor Buck Wheeler said, “I knew there just had to be a better and safer way to collect the colostrum from these thoroughbred mares than the way we were doing it. Everyone was using either a 60 cc syringe by hand, or a women’s breast pump, and they did not work!”

Facing a sad case in which a thoroughbred mare had died, leaving behind a 10-day-old foal, Buck related, “I told the hired man to go buy some goat milk, and he came back with the goat and kid. He said it was cheaper to buy mama. The rest is history.”

Buck started the Udderly EZ company, calling it “a million dollar leap of faith and just by accident.” Its research and development started in about 2003, and they went into manufacturing and marketing in 2004.

The initial product was a hand-powered vacuum pump designed to extract colostrum from thoroughbred mares. Three or four squeezes establish the vacuum, after which the user stops squeezing so the milk can flow into the collection bottle. When the milk flow slows down, the user gives another gentle squeeze or two until the milk flows again.

The milker worked beautifully with horses. After listening to requests from clients, the company continued to improve and upgrade the milker and its silicone inflations (the tube which fit over the animal’s teat) and broadened their marketing. By adding three different sizes of color-coded silicone inserts into the extractor tubes, it was an easy and natural step to use...
this milker on other species: cows, sheep, goats, camels, reindeer, yaks ... in short, any domesticated animal that lactates.

It wasn’t long before an electric version became available, and after that a solar-powered version, making the milkers particularly useful for those off-grid or trying to minimize their carbon footprint.

From theses humble beginnings, the Udderly EZ hand milker became an international sensation among small farmers. “With a lot of time, experience, investment and listening to our clients, the Udderly EZ hand milker has become a household name,” said Buck. “It’s currently being used in over 65 countries and under many languages worldwide, and is used on sheep, goats, cows, horses, donkeys, and camels. The hand milker was instrumental in the development of its stablemate, the Ultimate EZ electric milker.”

In this age of cheap imports, the Udderly EZ products are proudly and entirely made in the U.S.A. Buck Wheeler would have it no other way. Yet despite the international success, the company’s roots remain in humble agrarian lifestyles. Here in America it is the Plain People who have taken it to heart. Many Amish farmers use EZ milkers to make their job more sanitary and efficient.

**Beware of Misuse**

Some people have tried the Udderly EZ and came away disappointed, claiming damage to their cow’s teats because of the powerful suction of the vacuum. This is usually because they keep squeezing the pump handle beyond what it takes to start the milk flowing, creating a stronger and stronger vacuum until the teat becomes damaged.

The secret of successfully using the EZ milker – besides employing the correctly sized inflation over the teat – is to stop pumping the handle when the milk is flowing well. When the milk flow slows down, pump another two or three times, but no more. Over-pumping will shut off the valve. The purpose of pumping the handle is NOT to draw milk; it’s solely to establish a vacuum.

The EZ milkers are something like blood pressure cuffs: a little vacuum goes a long way. Just like a nurse would not continue inflating a blood pressure cuff on your arm until you were in extreme pain, neither is it necessary to squeeze the pump handle on an EZ milker more than three or four times, just long enough to establish a milk flow. More than that, and you might hurt the animal.

Some people say a “pulsing” action is necessary when milking a cow, such as a calf’s sucking or the actions of hand-milking. However that’s not the case.

As everyone knows, an udder is not a simple bag filled with milk. It’s a complex organ requiring adequate stimulation to “let down” the milk into the teats. However it’s not the rhythmic “pulsing” movement that creates let-down; it’s the vacuum.

Properly used, the gentle, consistent vacuum created by the EZ Milker draws milk out of the udder with no discomfort to the cow. But that’s the secret: the tool must be properly used. The milker does not pulsate, and does not have to pulsate to operate and milk properly. There are numerous videos on the website (www.udderlyez.com) demonstrating the proper use of the milker.

**Multiple Uses**

Udderly EZ milkers are not just for daily milking, though they’re superb for that function. Nor are they solely used to ease the burden of people dealing with medical issues in their hands and arms. They are also used for animals that need assistance: those with mastitis, or those with misshapen teats, making it difficult for calves to nurse. They’re also a superb aid for milking a sick cow, which keeps the milk isolated from that of healthy animals.

On our farm, the EZ milker was instrumental in saving that sweet little heifer calf born to our elderly Jersey. Today that heifer is a healthy cow with a calf of her own. Ironically, because she’s half-Dexter, her teats are so small that I use the Udderly EZ to milk her efficiently.

Whatever the reason, having an Udderly EZ on hand for anything from emergencies to routine milking – or the Ultimate EZ, for faster milking of two teats simultaneously – is a safety cushion no small farmer should be without.

*This testimonial was submitted by PDCA member Patrice Lewis and not meant to be an official endorsement by PDCA.*
I recently was asked by one of our members if I knew what the requirements were for butchering cattle that had been treated with Phenylbutazone. She had heard that once treated with it, a cow could never be used for meat. Her vet had her give this to a pregnant cow that seemed to be having difficulty walking. I had never heard of it or heard of a drug used in livestock that did not have a specified withdrawal time to make the meat acceptable. I started to do some research and was surprised by what I found and felt it pertinent to share the information with my fellow cattle breeders:

“Sec. 520.1720c(3) Limitations: Do not use in horses intended for human consumption. Federal law prohibits the use of this drug in female dairy cattle 20 months of age or older. Federal law restricts this drug to use by or on the order of a licensed veterinarian.”

Use of phenylbutazone in dairy cattle > 20 months of age was prohibited in 2003. This order was based on the detection of phenylbutazone residues in culled dairy cattle and the discovery of phenylbutazone products on dairy farms. This was of particular concern because there are no phenylbutazone formulations approved for use in any food-producing species. Phenylbutazone has been used in human medicine as an NSAID in the past, but all human products were withdrawn from the market for safety reasons. In particular, phenylbutazone at doses of 200 to 800 mg/d can induce blood dyscrasias (such as aplastic anemia, leukopenia, agranulocytosis, and thrombocytopenia) and cause death. It is also considered a carcinogen. Of more concern from a food residue standpoint are the reports of an idiosyncratic serum-sickness-type hypersensitivity reaction for which a threshold exposure concentration has not been determined. Currently, phenylbutazone use is strictly prohibited only in dairy cattle > 20 months of age; however, its use in other meat- and milk-producing species is discouraged for several reasons. The elimination half-life of phenylbutazone is greatly prolonged in
Bute Cross-Contamination

Bute is an inexpensive, yet effective treatment for inflammation and pain in horses. It can be injected intravenously or given orally as a powder or paste to horses.

It is not authorized for use in any animal destined for the human food chain.

The risk of farmers inadvertently contaminating cattle with the common horse drug phenylbutazone through use of shared buckets is very real, research has shown.

Farmers are being urged to take extreme care when using phenylbutazone to treat horses because of the risk of cross-contaminating cattle, leaving the animals with illegal residues of the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drug that would make it illegal for them to enter the food chain.

Researchers investigated the possibility of illegal residues in cattle arising through three potential routes: a shared pen, contaminated pasture, or a shared bucket – that is, if a horse was fed from a bucket containing bute and then the same bucket was used to feed cattle.

In all cases, results clearly showed that contamination could in fact play a significant role.

For example, cattle sharing the “dirty” bucket showed residues of the drug in their blood some 3500 times greater than the lowest amount detectable using the institute’s analysis method.

Similarly, cattle sharing a pen with a treated animal showed detectable concentrations within 24 hours of being penned together.

In the final study, a number of animals were treated with bute over the winter period. The manure and bedding from these animals was spread on to pasture in early spring and untreated cattle allowed to graze the pasture some 10 weeks later. Subsequent analysis of blood from these grazing animals showed that all contained significant concentrations of bute.

Given that bute is often the drug of choice for horses and that many farmers do keep some horses, it was important that those using the drug take extreme care to avoid contamination of their cattle.

Continued

ruminant species, compared with the half-life in monogastrics. Residues may be detectable for extended periods after administration, which requires prolonged withdrawal times associated with its use.”

There is a lot more information and opinions out there concerning the use of “bute”, there are vets that say hold for 30 days, others give other times and some don’t believe it matters. The information I am wanting to convey is that there is no approved withdrawal period to make the meat acceptable according to the USDA. If you do research you will find there is another approved drug but it is IV only so it can be cost prohibitive.

My take away is to make sure I pay attention to the labels and ask questions before giving any medication. It would be a shame to have to bury a cow instead of being able to feed my family with the meat.
Got BEEF...

As Dexter breeders and owners, many of us know the superior quality and taste of Dexter beef. If you haven’t tried it, you are missing out—AND missing out on one of the major marketing criteria for Dexter Cattle. Get your hands on some and taste it. I am one who cannot sell anything I don’t believe in and nothing I wouldn’t buy myself (if I didn’t have any).

It is very important when trying to market your steers, or little bull calves, or cull cattle that you can look a buyer in the eye and say truthfully that you have tasted Dexter beef and it is far above anything else out there!

That being said, the Dexter Cattle Club of Tennessee has added a new section to our website. If you have a slaughter date and have beef coming up that you want to sell, the Club will advertise it at no charge on the website. Please check your state laws for beef selling criteria first!

This is a free benefit of membership. The more people who taste Dexter beef, the more ALL of us will sell!! Make sure you visit the website at www.dextercattleclub.com often, and send your sale animals and beef ads to your regional representative, their e-mails are listed.
Did You Know?

A WHOLE 800 +/- lb Dexter steer at processing will produce approximately:

- 3-4 lbs of Filet Mignon
- 11 lbs of Boneless Rib Eye
- 12 lbs of NY Strip
- 30 lbs of Assorted Roasts
- 7 lbs of Loin Tip
- 4 lbs of Skirt Steak
- 15-20 lbs of Brisket
- 4 lbs of Flank Steak
- 13 lbs of Sirloin
- 48 lbs of assorted Chuck Cuts
It’s end of winter in TN and with that comes cattle lice! Loss of hair and itching are the two main signs. Left un-treated can cause weight loss, stress on the immune system, etc. No worries. Lice is easy to treat and these little buggers don’t like humans—JUST cattle! Get a pour-on such as “Ultra Boss” and follow label instructions. If it’s time to worm your herd, pour-ons specifically labeled for lice also work. Two of those are “Eprinex” and “Cydectin”. Always follow your veterinarians advice and labeling directions on products.

Mud is Tennessee’s version of everyone else’s clean white snow! With it brings early spring grass and abundant first cutting hay! But it also can bring on foot rot. We would all love high dry pastures for our winter housing, but the reality is, we don’t. Even if your cow isn’t limping, it’s that time of year to check for foot rot. Once you have the foot up (which can take seconds or a while in a chute with ropes) inspect the heels and between the toes.

The most common place is between the bulbs of the heel (see photo above). It may be pink or red and tender to the touch. If so, congratulations, you have foot rot. If the cow isn’t lame on the foot you can use a topical thrush medication (in the Horse aisle). If it is severe and the cow shows lameness, contact your vet for a good injectable option in addition to the topical. Why bother? Perhaps it will be dry soon, but ANY inflammation in a cow can cause a reaction to rid the body of ALL inflammation. So, your cow is early bred, she may slip her pregnancy, setting your breeding schedule back. Pick up the foot! It’s worth a look!
Rocky Mountain Dexter Breeders  
www.rockymountaindexter.com  
We are not a registry, and you do not need to be a member of a breed association to be a part of RMDB - all breeders are welcome! Our purpose is to educate breeders on best practices for herd management, educate the public about the benefits of Dexter cattle, and provide dexter breeders with resources to market their cattle.

UPCOMING EVENTS:  
**Date Change: April 27 & 28** - Rocky Mountain Dexter Breeders Association Spring Farm Tour  
Go to website for more info

Ohio Valley Dexter Breeders Association  
ohiovalleydexters.weebly.com  
Promoting the breed along with our youth is a major focus of OVDBA, as well as educating, researching and teaching each other how to identify, select and breed for well conformed, solid animals that are within the standards of the Dexter breed. Anyone from any state is welcome.

UPCOMING EVENTS:  
**May 19, 2018** - OVDBA 2018 Annual Show and Sale, Lancaster, Ohio  
Go to website for more info.

Sierra States Dexter Community  
www.dexterstoday.com/sierrastates  
This is a community about all things relating to pastures, grasses, farming, ranching, sustainability, soil regenerative agriculture, and small farm stewardship.

UPCOMING EVENTS:  
Summer Workshops & Farm Tour - details TBA  
go to website for more info.

Legacy Breeders  
legacybreeders.org  
Our goal - To bring breeders together to preserve the unique qualities and traits found in the rare, original Dexter bloodlines. Membership is open to all breeders interested in preservation. Help us save these wonderful and unique heritage bloodlines from disappearing forever.

UPCOMING EVENTS:  
**Aug 16, 2018** - Missouri State Fair Dexter Show  
Go to website for more info
Purebred Dexter Cattle Association ALL-IN-ONE FORM

Membership - Registration - Registration+Transfer

Transfer Only Instructions on Next Page

I am submitting and including payment for:

- $20 New Member
- $20 Renew Member
- $20 Registration
- $40 Registration + Transfer

Certified Registration

- [ ] Genotype on file
- [ ] Sire Verified
- [ ] Dam Verified
- [ ] PHA Positive
- [ ] PHA Negative
- [ ] Chondro Positive
- [ ] Chondro Negative

Non-black animals are registered as “Dun/Red” unless Tested/Proven

Name of Animal to be Registered (max 23 characters)

- [ ] Horned
- [ ] Polled
- [ ] Black
- [ ] Dun/Red
- [ ] Dun (Tested/Proven)
- [ ] Red (Tested/Proven)

Name of Sire of animal being registered

- PDCA #
- Legacy #
- ADCA #
- CDCA #

- [ ] I owned sire at the time of breeding
- [ ] I did not own sire at the time of breeding
- [ ] Dam was bred using AI on (date):

  Receipt/invoice from AI service company/technician included (required)

Name of Dam of animal being registered

- PDCA #
- Legacy #
- ADCA #
- CDCA #

- [ ] I was the breeder of the animal being registered
  and in possession of dam at time of breeding

- [ ] I owned the dam at the time of birth
- [ ] I bought the dam already bred on

(Date of purchase):

From:

Address

City

State __ Zip _______ Ph (____) ___________________ Email ________________________

www.purebreddextercattle.com - Fall 2017
Ownership transfers are easy

1. Complete the Application for Transfer on the back of the Registration Certificate
2. Mail it (or a copy of it) to PDCA
   Or take a pic of the back with your phone and email to PDCANOW@gmail.com
3. Include payment - $20
   Or
4. Use the online Transfer Only Form and pay online
   www.dexterstoday.com/transfer

Registry to Registry transfers are easy

1. Just mail a copy of ADCA or Legacy animal(s) registration certificate(s) to PDCA
2. Include payment - $5 per animal
   Or
3. Use the online Registry to Registry Transfer Form and pay online
   www.dexterstoday.com/registry-to-registry
   (Must be current member. Sorry, no edits or ownership changes on this type of transfer.)

Genetic Testing

- What is genetic testing?
- What is genotyping?
- What things might you want to test and why?
- When is testing required?
- When is genetic testing unnecessary?
- PDCA does not require testing. Why?

Read about it at www.dexterstoday.com/about-genetic-testing

Genetic Testing Labs

University of California-Davis
www.vgl.ucdavis.edu

Texas A&M University
vetmed.tamu.edu/animalgenetics

GeneSeek/Igenity
http://genomics.neogen.com/pdf/igenity/ag088_igenityorderformbeef.pdf,

PDCA
P.O. Box 135
Edwards, MS 39066

Tattoo letters
2015 – C
2016 – D
2017 – E
2018 – F

(Must be current member. Sorry, no edits or ownership changes on this type of transfer.)
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ADCA # 39018

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harley802003@yahoo.com

Larry Haggard
EDWARDS, MS
(601)575-5748
LHD357@BELL.SOUTH.NET

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HORNS - POLLED - RED - BLACK - DUN

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ADCA 029752

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POLLED RED A2/A2
PDCA PENDING
ADCA 032845

Singing Springs Farm
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  - Non Chondro Non PHA
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  - $25 per Str.

- **ADCA #026101 Valor**
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  - Non Chondro Non PHA
  - Red Homoz. Dun
  - $25 per Str.

- **300024-C Habanero**
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  - Non Chondro Non PHA
  - Chondro Carrier
  - Non PHA
  - Red Homoz Dun
  - $25 per Str.

- **300110-C Rebel**
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  - Non Chondro Non PHA
  - Carries Red & Dun
  - $25 per Str.

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