



Queen of the Furrow, Mary Dolson, is one of the more attractive participants of the Plowing Match. (Ag. Department Photo)

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## Valuable Feed Source

GUELPH — Straw or corn stover treated with lye or sodium hydroxide could be a valuable feed source as a result of research at the University of Guelph. Dr. Dave Mowat, Department of Animal Science, says the treatment is possibly a year away from practical application.

The application of a dilute solution of sodium hydroxide breaks down or softens some of the fibrous materials making cellulose and other plant constituents more available as energy sources for ruminant animals. The principle is comparable to that used in the paper industry to treat wood pulp.

The cereal or corn plant, says Dr. Mowat, is made up of approximately 50 per cent grain and 50 per cent stalks and leaves on a dry matter basis. The energy in the grain is readily available.

By applying the chemical, the energy in the stalks and leaves could be made just as available. The straw could then be used for feed instead of just bedding. The figure of over one million acres of unused corn stover alone gives some idea of the feed potential, he said.

While treatment costs are relatively low, Dr. Mowat feels that it will have first application with straw since the effect is greater with straw than corn stover. The most effective system seems to be to spray the liquid on the plant material as it is ensiled.

There is, however, a limit to the amount of treated straw you can feed and obtain good results, says Dr. Mowat. Also, the straw should contain 60 per cent or more for effective treatment. Thus, possibly the most effective system

would be to treat the entire plant, grain and all, as it is ensiled. The liquid sodium hydroxide would be metered onto the whole mature plant cereal or corn silage at the silo while ensiling.

However, says Mowat, more research is necessary concerning silage characteristics, data, etc. before recommendations can be made.

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## Canada Now Recognizes Santa Gertrudis

TOWNSEND CENTRE — On Oct. 1, 1971, Canada officially recognized a new breed of cattle, the first of breed to be developed in North America.

The Santa Gertrudis were on display recently at Hellyer Farms where about 130 breeders from Canada and the United States were hand to see the cattle onstration.

Joel Aldred, one of the in Canada to experiment with the breed, played one of his Santa Gertrudis bulls. He has been

developing the breed in Canada since 1958.

"As a cattleman, I became extremely interested in the Santa Gertrudis breed in the early fifties and have been developing them ever since. The breed is the best I have seen and they can be used to upgrade any type of cattle. They are finally, being recognized in Canada, though the breed registry was issued in 1940 in the States," said Aldred.

Executive-secretary for Santa Gertrudis International Richard

Thallman said work on the Santa Gertrudis was initially started on the Kings Ranch in Kingsville, Texas. The ranch stretches some 60 miles from the Coast of Mexico and includes varying terrain and climatic conditions. The breeders wished to develop a strain that could live in any of these environments.

"To get the breed, they have to take two completely opposite breeds of cattle and combine them for several generations to finally get a pure strain. The two types used were the

Shorthorn and the Brahman breeds. The European Brahman brought to the breed a hardiness and resistance to disease that was not found in the Shorthorn," said Thallman.

"In 1920 the first sire of the breed appeared and all present Santa Gertrudis have descended from him. This bull, known as Monkey, produced about 150 useful sons that were used in select herds of Brahman-infused Shorthorn cows. Eventually in 1940 the U.S. Department of Agriculture officially recognized the Santa Gertrudis as a pure breed, the first brand of beef cattle to be developed in North America."

Tom Cashan and Jerry Hemphill, also from Kingsville, Texas, explained to the breeders the differences and qualifications that the cattle must have to achieve the S brand labelling them pure Santa Gertrudis. Both men are field representatives and classifiers for the International association.

They explained that the breed is capable of growing faster and with less feed than other types. Also the cattle can withstand changes in weather and adverse conditions easier than others. Thallman stated the King ranch has over 43,000 grazing acres for the cattle and no available shade.

"And yet," said Thallman, "their

productivity in milk and beef is outstanding. Also they are more fertile than other breeds."

For grading-up purposes, Thallman said that any brand could be improved by the Santa Gertrudis. Their best results so far have been with the Hereford and Angus breeds.

After the demonstration, Cashan and Hemphill labelled two of the Hellyer calves to receive the Santa Gertrudis brand, one the full S while the other got the lower case "s" mark, denoting a grade below the usual standard.

Thallman mentioned that the Santa Gertrudis would aid all concerned with beef the farmer, producer and consumer. "They produce better beef and milk in a shorter time with much less care and feed. That makes it less expensive for everyone."

"And once the breed achieves official status in Canada, we expect a thriving business for the cattle breeders here."

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