Revised grade herd recording rules

M. Cullity
REVISED GRADE HERD RECORDING RULES

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THE rules governing the operation of Grade Herd Recording under the Western Australian Herd Improvement Scheme were recently revised and modified to meet existing conditions.

The revised rules are published for the information and guidance of interested dairy farmers.

GRADE HERD RECORDING—WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HERD IMPROVEMENT SCHEME

RULES

1. The scheme shall be known as the Western Australian Herd Improvement Scheme and will be under the control of the Superintendent of Dairying, Department of Agriculture.

2. The State shall be considered as one Grade Herd Recording Association and units within the Association may be formed in suitable centres in the dairying districts and each unit shall be compact in area. Each unit and each herd within the unit shall be given a letter for identification and recording purposes.

3. Dairy farmers who desire to join a unit and become members of the scheme are required to make application annually by February 15, of each year on G.H.R. Form 2 (Application Form for Herd Testing). A farmer may apply for membership of a unit at any time within a testing year.

4. The official herd recording year shall cover the period from March 1, to the following February 28. New units may be formed to commence testing at any period between March 1 and July 31.

5. Every member shall undertake to effect the culling from his herd of all cows which, having reached the age of six (6) years, fail to produce 175 lb. of butterfat in each of two consecutive lactation periods.

6. Each member of a unit shall undertake that within three years from entering a herd for recording he shall not use a bull unless it is a pure bred dairy bull from a cow which has achieved the production standard prescribed in the Rules of the Official Western Australian Pure Bred Herd Recording Scheme.

7. Each member shall undertake not to rear any bulls to be sold for use as sires of herds unless they are pure bred dairy bulls.

8. Each member must undertake to provide the herd recorder with satisfactory free board and lodging whilst he is on duty on the property.

9. Facilities.—Satisfactory facilities to enable the recorder to carry out his duties must be provided. These shall include:—

(a) A bench in the milking shed or milk room for use whilst taking samples and recording details of cows and their yields.

(b) A firm bench to carry the centrifuge during testing.

(c) Adequate supplies of hot water for testing and cleansing equipment.
(d) Adequate ventilation and lighting.

10. A member must submit for testing all cows in his milking herd and must continue testing all cows until they are dry. Such cows will be classified at the first test as being “A” class cows or “B” class cows. The records of yields for “B” class cows will not be published or used in calculating averages either for the herd or the scheme as a whole.

The following may, with the approval of the Superintendent of Dairying, be classified as “B” class cows:

(i) Cows which have aborted.
(ii) Sick cows.
(iii) Cows with permanently diseased or damaged udders or which milk from less than four quarters.

Cows in categories (i) (ii) and (iii) above automatically become “A” class cows if they produce 150 lb. of fat in the first six months of their lactation period.

(iv) Nominated cows. A nominated cow is one which has calved normally but which on entering test is nominated for culling. If such cow is not out of a herd six months after calving she shall automatically become an “A” class cow.

(v) Strippers. A stripper is defined as a cow which has already completed a full lactation period and has not again freshened or, in a herd entering test for the first time, a cow which has calved more than 150 days prior to the first test. Such cows shall remain “B” class cows for the remainder of that lactation.

11. (a) Fees.—The fee for an “A” class cow per lactation period shall be prescribed annually and the minimum subscription shall be equal to the testing fee for ten (10) cows. There will be no charge for testing “B” class cows. The full fee as prescribed each year shall be paid on the estimated number of “A” class cows to commence a lactation period by October 31 each year.

When any variation occurs between the estimated and the actual number tested, the fee shall be adjusted annually. The fee for cows purchased after or calving after October 31 each year shall be paid as soon as the cow is tested.

(b) Method of Payment of Fees.—The recording fee shall be paid on application for the testing of a herd. Where, however, this is not possible, the fee shall be secured by an irrevocable procuration order on a dairy company. For the purpose of assessing fees every cow which has been tested once shall be deemed to be a cow submitted for test.

Fees will not be refunded to a member after the first test of his herd has been carried out.

12. Identification of Cows under Test.—The herd recorder shall be supplied with the following details of each cow in each member’s herd:

- Age.
- Colour.
- Marks and/or brands.
- Date of calving.
- Sex of last calf, and also the pedigree to the extent known.

The following means may be adopted to identify the cows under test:

(a) Members may have their cows individually marked for identification by tattooing in the right ear with two letters to indicate the unit and the herd, and in the left ear with a numeral to identify the individual cow.

(b) Where members do not require individual identification of their cows they shall, when requested by the recorder, place in the milking shed a list showing a description of all cows in the herd.

(c) Should difficulty be experienced by the recorder in recognising individual cows he may request that individual identification as in (a) be adopted, and in such case the farmer shall give assistance in so marking the cows.

(d) When cows are submitted for test bearing the number allotted in another unit, or in the case of cows purchased which already

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bear an identification mark for herd book purposes, no further identification marks are necessary.

13. Identification of Heifer Calves.—(a) All heifer calves the progeny of cows under test and by pure bred bulls shall be marked to enable individual identification.

(b) A witnessed declaration must be given in support of calf identification. If the owner is not actually caring for the herd the declaration must be signed by the person doing this work and endorsed by the owner.

(c) The method of identification shall be as set out in Rule 12 (a) but with the addition of a letter in the left ear to indicate the season of birth as follows:

- March 1, 1956, to February 28, 1957—Letter K.
- March 1, 1957, to February 28, 1958—Letter L.
- March 1, 1958, to February 28, 1959—Letter M.
- March 1, 1959, to February 29, 1960—Letter N.
- March 1, 1960, to February 28, 1961—Letter O.
- March 1, 1961, to February 28, 1962—Letter P.
- March 1, 1962, to February 28, 1963—Letter Q.
- March 1, 1963, to February 29, 1964—Letter R.
- March 1, 1964, to February 28, 1965—Letter S.

(d) The calf must be marked as soon after birth as possible, preferably on the visit of the recorder following the birth of the calf.

(e) No calf shall be marked after it reaches the age of 12 months.

14. Sampling Procedure.—The Herd Recorder shall weigh the milk yielded by each cow at each milking during the period of his visit and shall take fair proportionate samples of each cow's milk on two consecutive milkings. Care should be taken to eliminate froth before taking readings.

The volume of the composite sample should be between 40 cc. and 50 cc. In the case of a cow giving 10 lb. of milk at night, take 2 cc. per lb. of milk (equals 20 cc.) and 12 lb. of milk in the morning (equals 24 cc.), giving a composite sample of 44 cc. The number of cc. that has been taken from a pound of milk may be indicated by a small figure against the night's weight of milk as 10². The same factor shall be used when sampling the morning's milk.

At the request of the member the recorder shall give him a similar composite sample from each cow which he may keep as a check sample.

15. Abnormal Tests.—When a yield of butterfat during the 24 hour test period differs by more than 25 per cent. from the preceding test such test may be reported as abnormal but reasons for considering the yield abnormal shall be noted by the recorder on the day sheet. In the case of a cow testing abnormally, such tests shall be recorded but may not be used in calculating the yield for the lactation. In such case an average will be made from the proximate and succeeding tests to determine production for the sub-period. The final decision as to abnormality shall rest with the Superintendent of Dairying.

16. Lactation Period.—The lactation period shall be 300 days and shall consist of ten sub-periods of 30 days. Each herd shall be tested once every 30 days, but if it is not possible to make a test immediately after an interval of 30 days the test may be taken not more than 35 days nor less than 25 days after the preceding test, and if this is not practicable calculations for the sub-period concerned shall be obtained by averaging as in the case of an abnormal test (vide Rule 15).

17. No cow shall be tested unless five clear days (120 hours) have elapsed since calving, e.g. if a cow calves Saturday morning after milking time a sample cannot be taken before Thursday afternoon.

18. Credit to be given on First Test.—In cases where owners are commencing to test their herds for the first time or where it has been found impracticable to test certain cows until after they have calved for a period, the herd recorder is authorised, if he is satisfied regarding the date
of calving, to credit these cows with milk and butterfat production as shown hereunder; such credit to be based on the first 24 hour test made by the herd recorder:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of days elapsing between calving and first test</th>
<th>Period of production credited on first test (days)</th>
<th>Number of tests required for 300-day lactation period</th>
<th>Method of arriving at the 10th sub-period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-44</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Treat 10th test as for normal sub-period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-74</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Treat 9th test as for 10th sub-period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-150</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Treat 8th test as 10th sub-period</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. Farmer Provided with Daily Record Sheet. — The herd recorder shall, after each testing day, leave with the member a day sheet (G.H.R. Form 4) setting out milk and butterfat production of each cow for the day, the sub-period concerned, and the progressive yield from the day of entry to test. The daily yield of butterfat shall be calculated by the following formula:

\[
\text{Daily Milk} \times \text{Test} \div 100
\]

20. Calculation of Averages. — The annual average yield of a herd shall be calculated by dividing the sum of the individual complete “A” class lactation yields by the number of lactations concerned. It shall include all “A” class lactations completed during the testing year irrespective of whether they commenced prior or subsequent to the start of that year. For the purpose of recording, a complete lactation shall be between 90 days and 300 days, provided that in the case of lactations between 90 and 300 days the recorder is satisfied that the animal has dried off normally.

21. Annual Report. — Each member shall receive after the end of the testing year a report showing yields of the individual “A” class cows in his herd, which have completed lactation, and the average yield of the herd.

22. All members of the scheme must abide by these Rules.
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