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AMDCA Newsletter January 2021  
Volume 8, Issue 1



## 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.*

*Properly cared for Milking Devons will work for you, not you work for them.-- Diurna Kibbe*



### **THE NEARLY IDEAL AMERICAN MILKING DEVON**

**This is an artist rendering of the nearly ideal (there is no perfect cow) triple-purpose American Milking Devon based on the Standard Score Card. It has everything we like in a dairy animal except they are a bit more compact and should carry more flesh, especially in the rump and thighs. This edition of the newsletter is dedicated mostly to the discussion of the Breed Standard.**

To stop receiving the newsletter or if you have suggestions, content or announcements to be included, please contact Tom Slater  
[patriotsretreatfarm@yahoo.com](mailto:patriotsretreatfarm@yahoo.com) Submissions should be in Microsoft Word Format.

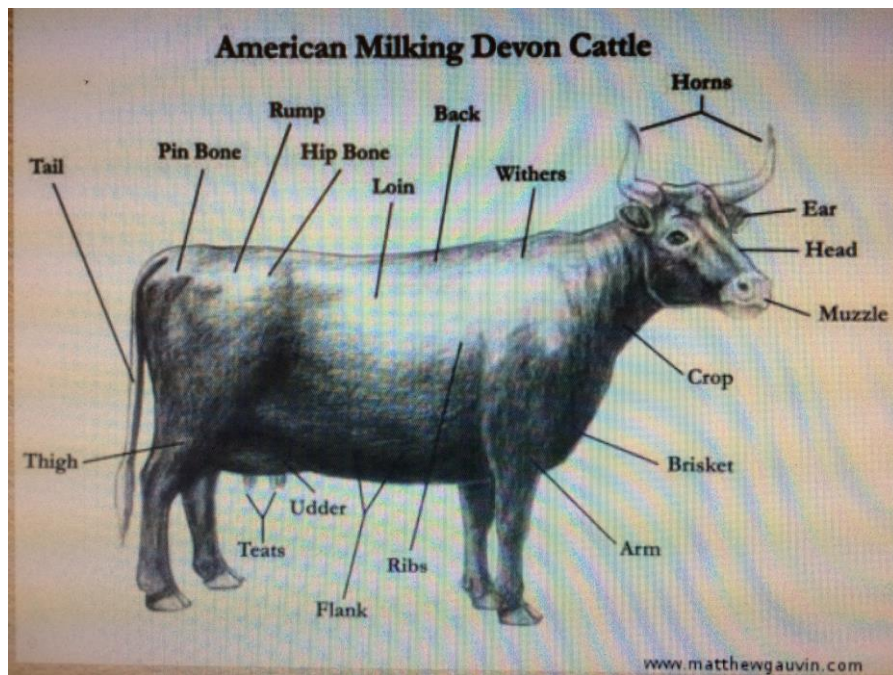
### **Feature Article: Addressing the Breed Standard**

This article was prepared by Editor Thomas Slater from information provided by Dr. Drew Conroy, AMDCA Director Jeremy Michaud and Association archival material.

## **The Ideal Animal**

In November of 2019, the Association held a Judging Clinic at Bardwell Farms in Remsen, New York, home of Drs. Stephen and Jude Burton, with noted Devon expert Dr. Drew Conroy running the clinic. According to Dr. Conroy “when judging you must have an image of the ideal animal in mind....there is no animal that is perfect or that will get a perfect score, but you still need to keep in mind what makes an animal an excellent example of the breed. Part of this is knowing which body parts are going to affect the health, productivity and longevity of the animal.” These various animal parts will be referenced in this discussion and a companion article in this newsletter entitled “WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD ANIMAL,” published in 1868, provides the rationale for breeding good animals.

## **Body Parts – can you identify them?**



During the clinic Dr. Conroy stated that “Regarding the Score Card, I know that feet and legs are more important to me as a breeder and ox enthusiast who likes Milking Devon Oxen, than the Score Card above states. It is also surprising that skin, ribs and withers rank higher than feet and legs.” Other AMD breeders had similar concerns, so the Association’s Board of Directors decided to address those concerns. Under the leadership of Board Member Jeremy Michaud, a new Scale of Points was developed for both the Devon Cow and Bull and a nationwide

conference call was held to determine the thoughts of the membership. The newly proposed scale of points was to be voted on at the 2020 Annual Meeting but was tabled as a result of the Annual Meeting being cancelled due to COVID-19. So this new proposal will be addressed as soon as practicable given the COVID circumstances.


### So What Are We Working From?

The AMD Score Card was developed in 1926 by the Devon Association of that time period and was adopted by the current Association, The American Milking Devon Cattle Association, in May of 1991. This is the scale by which all AMDs are currently judged. The Score Card can and does change in breeds and types of livestock over time to change with the times and demand for certain products or animals. The points on the AMD Score Card has not changed since 1926, however on April 13, 1996 the American Milking Devon Cattle Association approved a document that is part history and part breed description. I will include the entire document language here for members' edification.

### April 13, 1996 Approved Breed Standard

American Milking Devon Cattle are triple purpose cattle and are most closely descended from North Devon Cattle which have been found in Devonshire, England since Roman times. Earliest importations to America were by the Plimoth Colony in Massachusetts in the 1600s. Subsequent recorded importations began in 1817.

When showing these cattle competitively, it must be remembered that the breeding of triple purpose cattle in America has not been encouraged for many years, so comparison with either beef or dairy criteria is inappropriate. When American Milking Devon Cattle are being shown,



**Standard of Excellence  
and  
Scale of Points of Devon Cow**  
From the American Devon Record Book, 1926

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HEAD moderately long, with a broad indented Forehead, tapering considerably towards the Nostrils; the Nose of creamy-white, the Nostrils high and open, the Jaws clean, the Eye bright, lively and prominent; Throat clean, Ears thin, the Expression being gentle and intelligent; Horns matching, long, spreading, and gradually turned up, of waxy color, tipped with a darker shade.	10
NECK of medium length, growing from the Head to the shoulders, and spreading out to meet them.	4
WITHERS fine, Shoulders flat, sloping and well covered.	6
RIBS well sprung from the Backbone, nicely arched, deep and fully developed.	8
BACK straight and level from the Withers, to the setting on of the Tail, Loins broad and full, Hips of medium width and on a level with the Back.	12
RUMPS moderately long and level.	8
HIND-QUARTERS deep, thick and square.	10
UDDER not fleshy, coming well forward in line with the Belly, and well up behind; Teats large, and squarely placed.	20
TAIL thick at the root and tapering, with a brush of strong hair, reaching to the Hocks, and hanging at right angles with the back.	5
THE UNDER LINE as nearly as possible parallel with the top.	6
LEGS straightly and squarely placed when viewed from behind, not to cross or sweep when walking.	5
SKIN moderately thick and mellow, covered with an abundant coat of rich mossy hair of a red color; white about the Udder is admissible, but it should not extend beyond the Navel forward, on the outside of the Flanks or any other part of the Limbs or Body.	6
Perfection	100

**April 13, 1996 Approved Breed Standard** (Continued)

they should be well-groomed, but it is not necessary to clip them. These cattle are always shown with horns and excluded from the ring when polled.

The **head**- Lean in flesh, is rather short, the forehead broad, the face slightly dishing, tapering gracefully to a fine, clean, *yellow* muzzle. A dusky muzzle is permitted but discriminated against.

The **eye**-bright, prominent, and surrounded by a ring of orange-colored or yellow skin.

The **horn**- upright and curving outward, cream colored with black at the tips, graceful in its setting and rather long for the size of the animal.

The **ear**- well set and lively in action.

The **neck**- on a level (in the bull, slightly arching) with the head and shoulders, full at its junction with the breast, clean and without dewlap.

The **shoulders**- fine, open (somewhat slanting, like those of the horse) and on a level with the back.

The **neck-vein**- full and smooth.

The **arm**- delicate, and the leg below the knees small, terminating in a clean, dull brown and somewhat striped shoulders.

The **back**- straight from the shoulders to the tail.

The **ribs**- spring out roundly from the back, and running low down, to enclose a full chest, and setting well back toward the hips, giving a snug, neat belly.

The **flanks**- full and low.

The **hips**- wide, and level with the back.

The **loin**- full and level.

The **thigh**- well fleshed and full, the lower part somewhat thin, and gracefully tapering to the hock; the leg below small, flat and sinewy.

The **udder**- should be soft and pliable with well-portioned teats. Slightly sloping floor with rear quarters somewhat lower than fore is permissible. Small areas of white hair may occur on the udder or on the scrotum of the male; white on other parts of the body is strongly discriminated against.



**April 13, 1996 Approved Breed Standard** (continued)

The **twist**- (the space between the thighs) well let down and open.

The **tail**- tapering, like a drum stick, and terminating with a brush of *white* hair.

The **color**- invariably a cherry red, sometimes showing a lighter or deeper shade, and the skin, under the hair, a rich cream color.

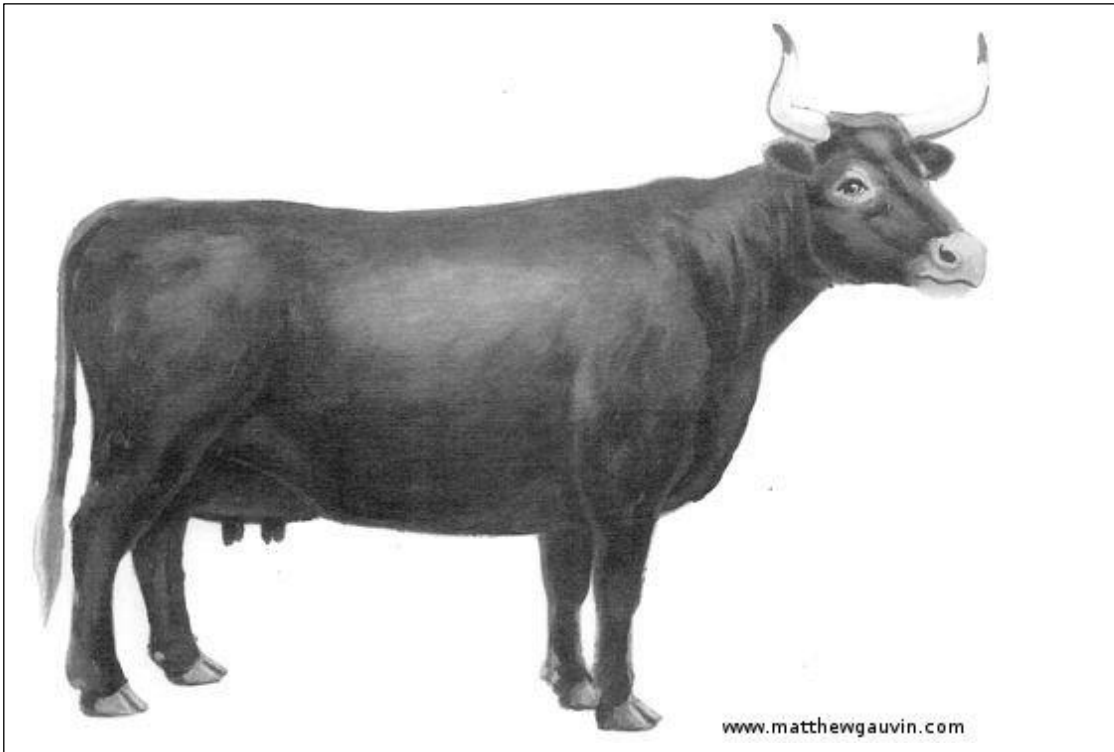
In size the Devon is medium, compared with our native cattle. A well-grown ox, in good working condition, will range from 1,400 to 1,600 pounds live weight. The mature bull will weigh from 1,200 to 1,500 pounds and the mature cow from 1,000 to 1,200 pounds.

The bull, of course, will show the stronger, and masculine characteristics of his sex, while the ox will develop the finer points of his condition, and the cow all the delicacy and refinement belonging to her race.

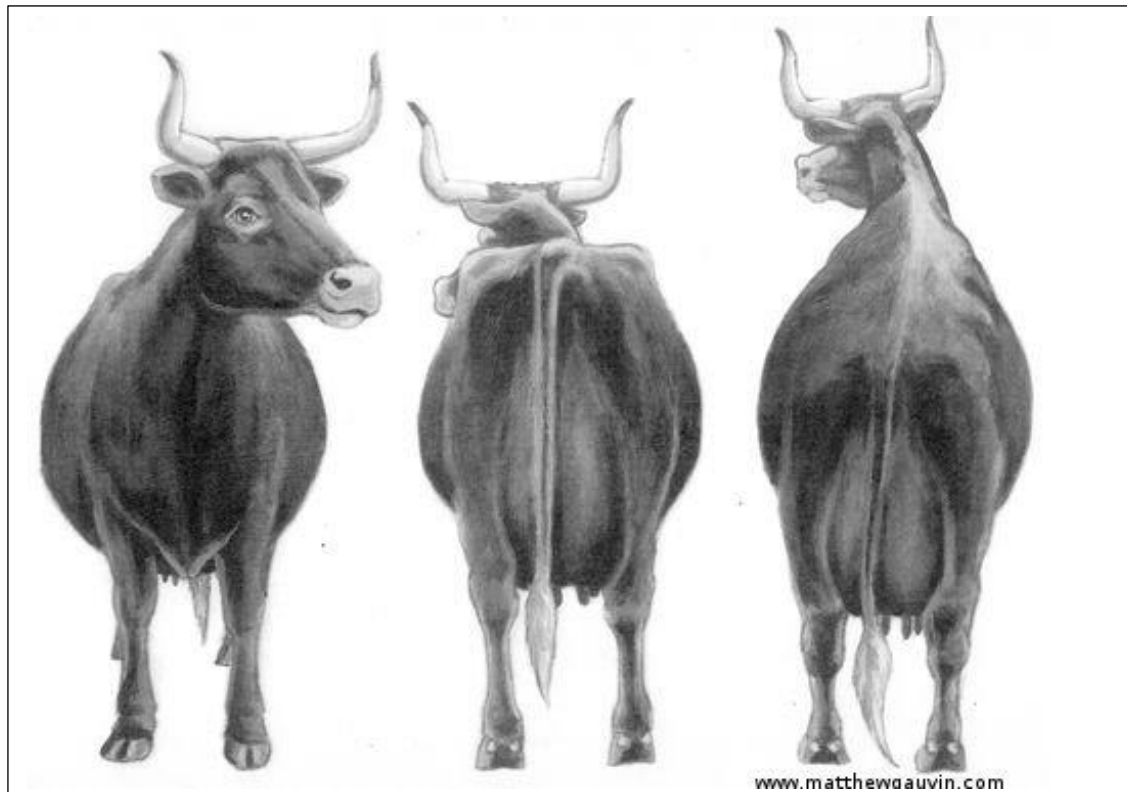
**The New Proposal and Rationale**

These are the changes Director Michaud alerts the reader to look for in the new Scale of Points.

- 1) The HEAD values have been reduced for both the cow and bull
- 2) The NECK value has been reduced for the cow
- 3) The WITHERS score has been reduced in the cow
- 4) The CHEST category has been added for the cow
- 5) Removed THE UNDER LINE as a category for both the cow and bull. The rationale being that if the ribs, back, chest, withers, barrel and rump are correct the underline will be correct
- 6) Added BARREL category for both cow and bull. This would be the general appearance of the withers, chest, ribs, and back as they function together. This is the new term more commonly used today to describe the function of multiple carriage parts related to strength and width
- 7) Replaced the LEGS category with a new FEET AND LEGS category for both the cow and bull. The value of this category was increased
- 8) Increased the UDDER in value, with a focus on depth, fore and rear udder height, cleft, teat shape and placement
- 9) Decreased the value of the SKIN in both the cow and bull
- 10) Decreased the value of the TAIL in the cow
- 11) Decreased the value of the CHEEK in the bull



**STANDARD DEVON COW ARTISTS RENDERING**



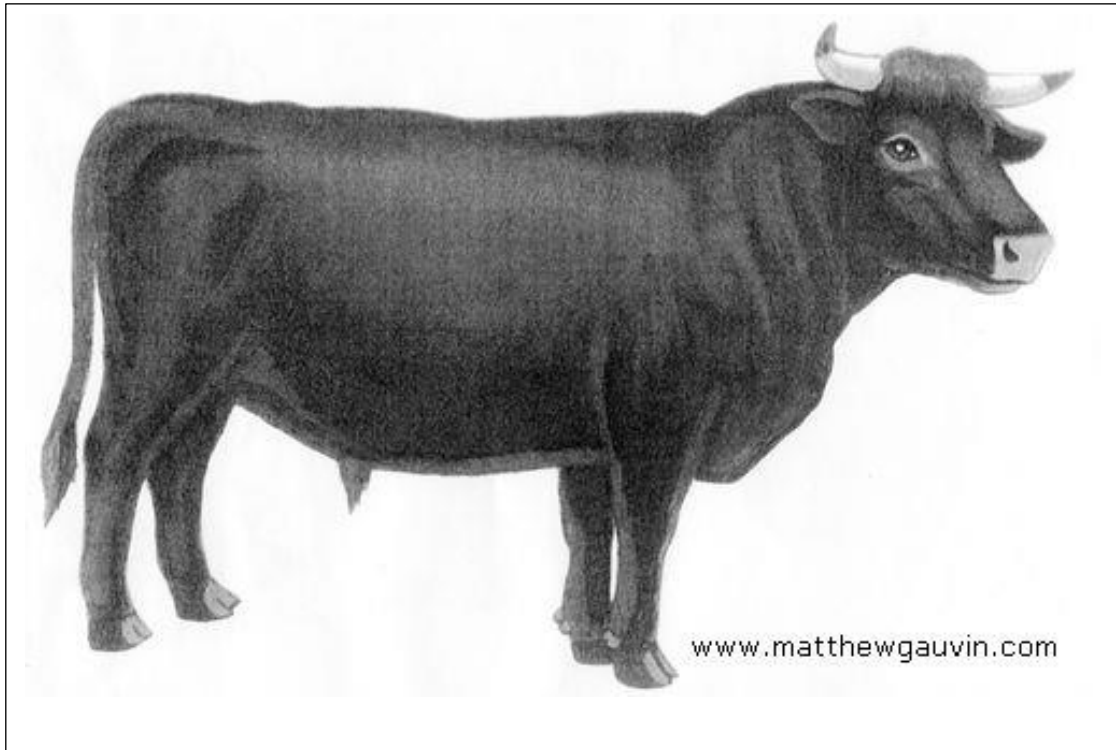
**STANDARD DEVON COW ARTISTS RENDERING**

**STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE AND SCALE OF POINTS OF DEVON COW  
PROPOSED CHANGES**

COW PART	Current Description	Current Points	Proposed Description	Proposed Points
Head	Moderately long, with a broad indented Forehead, tapering considerably towards the nostrils; the Nose of creamy-white, the Nostrils high and open, the Jaws clean, the Eye bright, lively and prominent, Throat clean, Ears thin, the Expression being gentle and intelligent; Horns matching, long, spreading, and gradually turned up, of waxy color, tipped with a darker shade.	10	No change	6
Neck	Of medium length, growing from the Head to the shoulders, and spreading out to meet them.	4	No change	2
Withers	Fine, Shoulders flat, sloping and well covered	6	No change	5
Chest	Not a category	0	Deep with a wide floor showing body capacity for vital organs with well sprung fore ribs when viewed from the front and side	5
Ribs	Well sprung from the Backbone, nicely arched, deep and fully developed	8	No change	8
Back	Straight and level from the Withers, to the setting on of the Tail, Loins broad and full, Hips of medium width and on a level with the Back	12	No change	12
Rumps	Moderately long and level	8	No change	8
Hind-quarters	Deep, thick and square	10	No change	10
Tail	Thick at the root and tapering, with a brush of strong hair, reaching to the Hocks, and hanging at right angles with the back	5	No change	2

COW PART	Current Description	Current Points	Proposed Description	Proposed Points
Udder	Not fleshy, coming well forward inline with the Belly, and well up behind; Teats large, and squarely placed	20	Not fleshy coming well forward in line with the Belly and well up behind. Moderate depth relative to the hock and consideration for age, good clearance. Firmly attached both front and rear udder and uniform in size and shape. Clearly defined halving of the udder with teats centrally placed. Teats of medium length and diameter and cylindrical. The udder floor and quarters are evenly balanced when viewed from the side and the rear, the udder is soft and pliable with no deformities.	25
The Under Line	As nearly as possible parallel with the top	6	Eliminated as a category	0
Legs	Straightly and squarely placed when viewed from behind, not to cross or sweep when walking	5	Eliminated as a category	0
Skin	Moderately thick and mellow, covered with an abundant coat of rich mossy hair of a red color, white about the Udder is admissible, but it should not extend beyond the Navel forward, on the outside of the Flanks or any other part of the Limbs or Body	6	No change	3
Barrel	Not a category	0	Long and adequate depth and width from the withers to the brisket proceeding to the hips and down to the flank	4
Feet and Legs	Not a category	0	Straight and squarely placed from behind not to cross or sweep when walking with adequate width. Movement should be smooth and consistent, the stride long and fluid. Steep angle to the feet with a deep heel, with short and strong flex to the pastern. Thurls positioned centrally between the hip and pin bones. Some flex to the hock but not excessive when viewed from the side and no swelling of the hock.	10
Total Old Score		100	Total New Score	100





**STANDARD DEVON BULL ARTISTS RENDERING**



**STANDARD DEVON BULL ARTISTS RENDERING**

**STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE AND SCALE OF POINTS OF DEVON BULL  
PROPOSED CHANGES**

BULL PART	Current Description	Current Points	Proposed Description	Proposed Points
Head	Masculine, Forehead broad, tapering toward the Nose, which should be flesh-colored; Nostrils high and open, Muzzle broad, Eyes full and placid, Ears medium size and thickness, fringed with hair; Horns growing at right angles from the head or slightly elevated, stout and waxy at the base, tipped with a darker shade	10	No change	8
Cheek	Full, broad at the root of the tongue, Throat clean	4	No change	2
Neck	Of medium length and muscular, growing from the Head to the shoulders, and spreading out to meet them.	8	No change	8
Withers	Fine, Shoulders flat, sloping and well covered	6	No change	6
Chest	Deep, broad, and somewhat circular in character	5	No change	5
Ribs	Well sprung from the Backbone, nicely arched, deep and fully developed	8	No change	8
Back	Straight and level from the Withers, to the setting on of the Tail, Loins broad and full, Hips of medium width and on a level with the Back	12	No change	12
Rumps	Moderately long, full and level	10	No change	10
Hind-quarters	Deep, thick and square	10	No change	10
Tail	Thick at the root and tapering, with a brush of strong hair, reaching to the Hocks, and hanging at right angles with the back	5	No change	5
The Under Line	As nearly as possible parallel with the top	6	Eliminated as a category	0

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BULL PART	Current Description	Current Points	Proposed Description	Proposed Points	
Arms and Thighs	Muscular	5	No change	5	
Legs	Straightly and squarely placed when viewed from behind, not to cross or sweep when walking	5	Eliminated as a category	0	
Skin	Moderately thick and mellow, covered with an abundant coat of rich mossy hair of a red color; a little white in front of the Purse is admissible, but it should not extend beyond the Navel forward, on the outside of the Flanks or any other part of the Limbs or Body	6	No change	3	
Barrel	Not a category	0	Long and adequate depth and width from the withers to the brisket proceeding to the hips and down to the flank	6	
Feet and Legs	Not a category	0	Straight and squarely placed from behind not to cross or sweep when walking with adequate width. Movement should be smooth and consistent, the stride long and fluid. Steep angle to the feet with a deep heel, with short and strong flex to the pastern. Thurls positioned centrally between the hip and pin bones. Some flex to the hock but not excessive when viewed from the side and no swelling of the hock.	12	
Total Old Score		100	Total New Score	100	

### **So Where Do We Go From Here?**

Please take the opportunity to study these changes and what they may mean for the breed. Any feedback you have should be provided to any or all Board Members, whose contact information is listed toward the end of the newsletter. This proposal is likely to be voted on the next time the full Association is able to meet.

## **WHAT CONSTITUTES A GOOD ANIMAL**

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This article comes from Chapter XVIII of a **FREE e-book available through Google Play titled AMERICAN CATTLE: Their History, Breeding and Management**, written by Lewis F. Allen and published by Taintor Brothers and Co., New York, 1868, pages 187-191, now in the public domain. The first few paragraphs of the article may seem harsh to those of us who raise AMDs for pleasure and conservation and not necessarily for profit. However, it seems the outcome is likely the same as we should endeavor to raise the very best cattle that we can. This article is also interesting as it seems to argue all the way through for a breed standard and then at the very end disses the “scale of points” system—stating that it’s “fanciful” and essentially confusing and unutilized. My how things have changed.

It should be the object of every breeder to rear as good cattle as he can; that is as perfect in their various points as their natures will permit, for the uses required of them; and this perfection of points gives the most profit in flesh, labor, and milk, according to the development of the various parts of the animal in its anatomy, and their general making up.

There are certain parts of the animal, economically, of little value, but indispensable to its life and welfare, as the head, ears, horns and bones. If these are too large, or ill-shaped, they detract from the value of the carcass by giving more offal than is necessary, and render the animal less profitable in feeding, as it costs a greater proportionate expenditure of food to make this offal, than it does to make either flesh or milk. Cattle having an undue share of bone, we call coarse, and all coarseness is bad, as such animals are gross feeders in proportion to their actual weight. A big-headed, narrow-chested, flat-ribbed, hollow-backed, narrow-hipped, and droop-tailed ox, is a poor worker, and such a cow, if she be not a poor milker, is seldom a profitable one, for both ox and cow are huge feeders. The ox has no room in his narrow chest for full lungs to play. Therefore he is short winded. His flat ribs and narrow hips allow him but a small development of muscular power. His strength is therefore contracted. His anatomy being sacrificed in breadth and depth, he has no place to lay on flesh as a beef animal, and he is worthless, comparatively, for any purpose. So with the cow; if she take flesh poorly, she gives a less quantity of milk; but if she do happen to milk well, it is because her food is chiefly thrown into the secretions of her milk veins, which happens, in such instances, to be extraordinarily developed. We have seen such, but they were the exceptions, not the rule, and all such cattle are to be avoided. There is no profit in them, any way; as a calf, the butcher does not want him, except at a reduced price; as a steer, the grazier jells down his price; as a working ox, nobody wants him, except he can get him “cheap;” as a fat bullock—if he ever can be fatted—the butcher “blows” on him; and as for the consumer—he is to be pitied. Soups, and dried beef—and poor at that—is all that he is fit for. He is a drag on every one’s hands unfortunate enough to own him, from birth to slaughter. And so with the cow; poor in every quality, she goes through a miserable life, an object of contempt, and ill-usage throughout, simply because her breeder did not veal her at six weeks old, for she has never been good for anything in the hands of anybody

since, and has taken the place of a better creature, which might have been profitable in every condition of her life, and a pleasure to every owner.

Now, reverse the picture. Here is a creature with a small head, a fine muzzle, and a light bone. He has a clean, sinewy neck, and deep, wide chest; springing ribs, giving ample room for vigorous lungs to play; a straight back from the shoulders to the tail; broad hips, and a deep flank—symmetrical throughout. He is so anatomically framed as to admit the largest supplies of flesh in the best points; he has much less offal, even to the same amount of consumable flesh than the other, and no more offal to all the additional flesh which can be piled on to his carcass. As a worker, he is better than the other. His large lungs give him more wind, and better endurance; his broad, well-spread anatomy gives more sinewy power—of course he is a better worker as a laboring beast. He is remarkable through every stage of his life, from calf hood to maturity; to the

feeder, to him who wants a working ox, to the butcher, and finally, to the consumer. He is good all through his life, and always in demand, at the top price, for one purpose or another. So with the female. If the breed be not of the dairy quality, spayed at a proper age, she thrives apace, fattened readily, and is fully ripe at three or four



**The Alderney Cow**

**Source: William Youatt, Cattle: Their Breeds, Management and Diseases**

years, according to her breed, and is a profitable beast altogether. If a dairy cow, her full development of frame gives room for her milk secretions in their proper places. Her food, not only keeps her in good flesh, but assimilates into milk abundantly; and finally, done with milking, she readily takes on flesh for the shambles, and dies profitably. [paragraph deleted as it refers to something on a prior page not included here]

It may be asked, is beauty of form a highly desirable quality in a neat animal? Most certainly. But the eye and the judgment must be educated to know in what that beauty consists. A greyhound is a beautiful creature, as a dog; such a figure would not be beautiful in a bull, an

ox, or a cow. Beauty is relative in economical animals, and in the eye of the judges should always comport with utility. Yet there are outlines of beauty which no one, not a simpleton, can mistake; and beauty is always preferable to ugliness, even when an ugly form, as it sometimes does, embraces some desirable qualities. Beauty in a Short-horn would not be altogether beauty in a Devon, or Hereford; neither would the latter be altogether beautiful in a Short-horn figure. So with the rotund, long-haired Galloway, the wild, rough looking Highlander, or the meek, domestic, housekeeping Ayrshire; while the unique, diminutive Alderney—a gem in her blood-like and picturesque little ugliness—would lose every attractive characteristic feature, if clothed in the perfect contour of a Devon.

We say, then, perfection of form—according to its breed—is a great excellence in neat cattle. They should be good all over. One most desirable point, unnaturally developed, is apt to be so at the expense of another part equally desirable, which is deficient, for nature usually has its compensations, and is apt to square her account of super abundancies and deficiencies as she goes along, even in animals which are otherwise almost faultless. Thus, if a certain outline of anatomy, when fully fleshed, gives the proportionate quantities of valuable flesh in their proper places, such outlines, according to the breed, is always to be sought for that object. If another outline better develops the milking properties of the cow, such a figure is to be sought, as near as may be, because of its likelihood to furnish the requirements wanted. To sum up the whole matter, perfection of form, *according to its kind*, should be the aim of every breeder who aspires to success and profit in his pursuit.

Some nice and discriminating breeders and writers on cattle, have given “scales of points,” amounting to a hundred in all, to constitute a perfect animal; they give to every feature so many in number, as the importance of that feature may have to all the others, as two to the muzzle, one to the horn, four to the neck, ten to the brisket, twelve to the loin, and so on through the entire animal. We look upon all these nice discriminations as fanciful, rather than real, and have never known anybody governed by them, even when on committees to judge of the relative merits of animals on exhibition, and charged to do so. We doubt even their ability to do it with anything like accuracy; and as these “scales of points” are made to differ in divers breeds, as they should do, they only serve to confuse, instead of simplify and make clear the general judgment of the whole. The eye, the touch, the weight, and measurement, must, after all, tell the story.

### **Fatty Acid Summary of American Milking Devon Milk**

Submitted by The Livestock Conservancy

To better understand the particular fatty acid composition of American Milking Devon (AMD) milk, The Livestock Conservancy and the American Milking Devon Cattle Association partnered with thirteen different farms to sample milk for fatty acid analysis. The samples were frozen and



mailed to Dr. Robert Ward at Utah State University in June 2019. In all, 31 samples of milk were submitted for testing.

Dr. Ward's laboratory compared the 2019 AMD results with a reference sample of typical milk sold in the United States. Dr. Ward also included results from a 2012 AMD milk study that compared grass-fed versus grain-fed diets. Overall, the 2019 samples had a similar fatty acid composition to the 2012 samples.

The minor fatty acids that were measured compose about 1-5% of milk fat samples. Two of these are essential fatty acids that cannot be produced by the human body. Of these, alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) is an omega-3 fatty acid, a group of fats that are generally presumed to be heart healthy. ALA was present at a greater amount than the reference sample. Linoleic acid is an omega-6 fatty acid. The omega-6 fatty acid was present in lower amounts than in the reference sample.

Levels of conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) were higher in AMD milk than in the reference milk sample. **CLA is marketed as a human dietary supplement for presumed anti-cancer benefits and weight loss.** Such benefits have been demonstrated in laboratory mice and rats, but the evidence is far less strong for humans. Increased CLA in milk is found in cattle with grass-based diets.

Overall, the 2019 study of fatty acid composition in AMD cattle was not very different than the 2012 study. It is not clear from this particular study whether AMD milk is more or less healthy than other milks. Exploration of the diets of the tested cattle and consultation with Dr. Ward will help us make final conclusions about the fatty acid research for the AMD.

## **Cattle Training Grows Farmers**

Submitted by Victoria Reck Ames

There may come a day when it feels like your life would be incomplete without cattle. You set your sights on American Milking Devons because—sensibly—only beautiful cattle will do. Now you're committed, all in. Those who came before remember taking that leap. As you'll soon learn, you're in good company.

But what if you weren't raised on a farm? What if you didn't come up through 4H, or go to ag school? Short of quitting your day job for work on a farm—that is, if you can find a farm that can employ you—how can you learn what you need to know to succeed?

You could read everything available on the subject, search out videos, follow internet discussion groups, scour the AMDCA website and newsletters, talk to the breeders listed there, visit as

many as possible, spend hours at events featuring livestock. You could jump in and acquire some cattle, and plan to figure things out along the way. If you are optimistic and inventive and have a high tolerance for challenge as well as access to a patient large animal veterinarian, this can be a perfectly fine way to go.

You could, however, make the journey a little easier. Likely you'd still end up doing all of the above—and wouldn't every cattle-loving person want to—but what if you could get hands-on experience with the real thing? You could be like Sam.

“Interested in learning about AMDs,” went the e-mail subject line. The message came from a self-described aspiring farmer, whose attraction to AMDs had been kindled back in 2008 when Doug Flack spoke about the breed at the University of Vermont. Since then, Sam has worked in the cheese industry, from production through sales and marketing. He also is milking Holsteins part-time at a local farm. Ultimately, he hopes to have his own herd and produce his own dairy products. He is especially interested in how AMD cattle are trained for draft, his message continued. He lives nearby. Could he come to visit?



Of course, I said. Yes.

Now Sam comes to Honey Hill three or four days a week, on his way to that afternoon milking job. The heifers (like Alice, above left) wander over to greet him. We yoke up Teddy and Quentin (above right) and put them through their paces. As we work, we talk—about training and cheese, but also about fencing, pasture maintenance, housing, herd dynamics, hoof care, conformation, calving, nutrition, logging, and on and on.

We train in ways I can't accomplish with my single set of hands, and the youngsters get the benefit of diverse styles of body language and goad stick communication. I'm motivated to devise fresh challenges and more effective ways to achieve my training goals. Sam is a natural, rapidly coming into his own as a teamster.

Asked about what has surprised him, so far, Sam says:

*I've had an interest in American Milking Devons for a long time, and I had always heard that they were a very intelligent breed. But to see that in practice puts it into perspective in a very impressive way. I began my apprenticeship with Victoria exactly one month ago. At that point, she was just beginning to train a pair of six-month bull calves (and subsequently me, as well, as I had no prior experience working with oxen). Seeing their progress over the past month has been astounding, to say the least. When I first arrived, just leading these boys in halters was a huge challenge. Fast forward to yesterday when they were yoked up dragging a tire and following commands really well. Not to mention how creative and elaborate Victoria has had to get with latching her gates closed because these little guys can always figure out how to break out! My cattle experience is primarily with Holstein and Brown Swiss dairy cows. I can't imagine seeing those calves do what these little AMD guys have learned in only a month!*

What has made this experience successful, from my perspective? Little things, like Sam's chronic punctuality, and his letting me know well ahead when he has to miss an afternoon. Big things, like Sam's curiosity—his questions encourage me to consider my assumptions and practice and evolve. I appreciate Sam's willingness to set ego aside and imitate me until he accumulates the experience that will produce his personal style. And there was that day when Teddy decided he'd had enough of our long walk in the

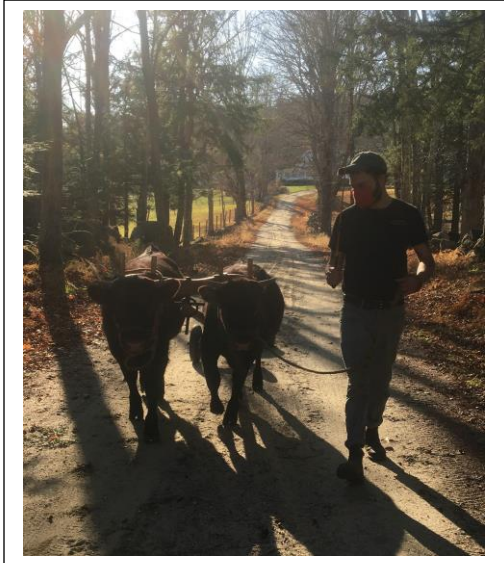
## MASTER FARMER WITH THE FARMER-IN-THE-MAKING

Mike Johnson, now 82 years old, is the lifelong dairy farmer who gave Victoria her start. His herd of 60 plus includes Ancient White Parks, Highlands, Milking Shorthorns, Holsteins, Simmenthals, Brown Swiss and others, plus all the crosses you can imagine. He and Sam had a grand old visit and tour of Mike's herd. Sam has travelled all over Europe looking at cows and cheese operations, so he and Mike had a lot to talk about. There are not too many places where you can see such a diverse collection of cattle.





woods, and bolted for home: Sam left skid marks on the forest floor, but he never let go of Teddy's halter.



**Sam with Teddy and Quentin Roadwork**

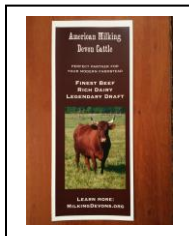
It feels good to pass along information and experience so freely given by the farmers and teamsters who have encouraged me along the way. My devotion to AMDs inspires me to do my very best to perpetuate the breed. Time with Sam shows me that “my very best” needs to go beyond conscientious husbandry, to directly helping the future stewards of these lovely cattle. Best of all, though, is simply sharing the fun.

*UPDATE: Continuing to close in on his dream, Sam now works at a Guernsey dairy, where he’s milking and making cheese.*



**Sam with Teddy and Quentin Working with a tire**

About the Author: *Victoria Reck Ames (Honey Hill Heritage Devons) got her start when she borrowed a local farmer’s 6,000-pound team of charismatic Fleckvieh Simmental oxen to promote open space protection. She cleaned the farmer’s dairy barn gutters twice daily for a year, and was generally underfoot; he taught her about cattle and a whole lot more. [HoneyHillDevons.com](http://HoneyHillDevons.com)*



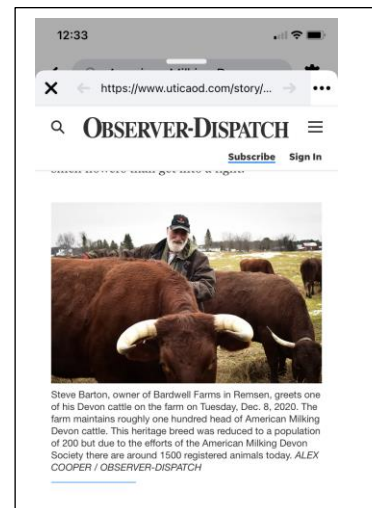
**Brochures Available-** The Association has recently had a new batch of American Milking Devon Cattle brochures produced and is offering them free of charge to AMDCA members. If you would like some, please contact Association Secretary Bruce Farr. His contact information is on the last page of this newsletter.

**IN THE NEWS**



AMD Breeder and AMDCA Director Andrew Van Ord was featured in the 174<sup>th</sup> Edition (Volume 44 Number 2) of *Small Farmer's Journal*. In a four page article titled **Andrew Van Ord-Ox Drover Interview**, Andrew is interviewed by Rob Collins of Centerville, MI, where he shares his perspective on oxen, working steers and working cows. An interesting back and forth exchange.

AMD Breeder and AMDCA Member Steve Burton and Bardwell Farms were featured in a January 4, 2021 article in the Observer-Dispatch, Utica, NY. The article is a wide-ranging good read where Steve talks about his family's start with Devons, the history of Devons, working with Devons, history of the farm, and much more. You can find this article posted on the American Milking Devon Cattle Association Facebook Page.



**Ray's Corner- On Buying and Selling Devons**  
Quotes and advice from Director Ray Clark

From the selling point of view- Devon owners should have a couple of goals in mind when selling their animals to inexperienced buyers. First, to benefit the breed in general, we want to ensure that the buyer has a good experience with the breed. This would entail ensuring that the animal sold matches the purpose of the buyer. For example, if the buyer is a family and they want a family cow, that cow should be of good temperament, easy to handle and easy to milk. This is even more important when the family has children. If the buyer is buying for beef purposes, the animal sold should be something that is going to grow rapidly and be an efficient user of feed. Ray says that some animals are hard to fatten and others will get fat on a “flat rock.” Second, the seller needs to ensure that the animal to be sold is Registered or registerable and that the paperwork is taken care of promptly. Buyers having to beg the seller and Association for paperwork is not good promotion for the Breed. Third, the seller needs to ensure that the animal to be sold is healthy. A vet check, and possibly some vaccinations, are required for animals of a

certain age that are sold over state lines. Once the animal leaves your property a lot of things can happen to it. A Health Certificate helps protect the seller from any future claims. If a seller wants repeat customers they should sell high quality cows, not lemons.

From the buyers point of view- Cheap is not necessarily the best option. If a buyer is looking to start a breeding herd, or even breed just a few for themselves, an inferior animal may be cheaper, but it is not likely to serve the buyer well in the long run. The Association has Breed Standards and pictures of what a Devon should look like that a new buyer can use. There is no such thing as a perfect cow, but a new buyer can use the point scale and picture to assess a potential purchase. Ensure that the animal is or will be Registered. At the time of the sale, ask the seller to provide you with a copy of the papers they have sent or will be sending to the Association Registrar. Health Certificates are generally not required for in-state sales. However, if as a buyer you are concerned about the health of an animal, you can condition the sale on a vet check, for which you may or may not have to pay, depending on your negotiating skills. Finally, you want to ensure that the purchase matches your purpose. Don't be afraid to ask questions as the seller should be willing to spend the necessary time with you. Questions about herd or dam temperament, herd health, husbandry practices, feeding requirements, etc. can help a buyer get off to a good start.

### **New Devon Videos Available**

Backyard Green Films worked with the American Milking Devon Cattle Association on documentaries about Milking Devon Cattle. In Parts I and II of the first documentary you can sit down with two old time Yankee farmers from New England who tell us stories as well as the history of the American Milking Devon from Roman Empire times to the present day. The second documentary is about one of the uses of this triple-purpose breed of cattle. The first documentary was partially funded by The Livestock Conservancy. All three videos, along with others, can be viewed from the videos section of the Breeders page of the Association website [www.milkingdevons.org/videos.html](http://www.milkingdevons.org/videos.html)

### Videos Available

- Part I: The American Milking Devon: Past and Present (56 minutes)
- Part II: The American Milking Devon: Past and Present (12 minutes)
- The American Milking Devon Oxen (20 minutes)



## ASSOCIATION BUSINESS

### **IMPORTANT!! TWO NEW FORMS INCLUDED IN THIS NEWSLETTER AND ALSO AVAILABLE IN FILLABLE FORMAT ON THE AMDCA WEBSITE**

Forms are available in regular and fillable format on the AMDCA Website :

<http://www.milkingdevons.org/forms.html>

**Membership Form- Reminder: 2021 Membership Dues OVERDUE NOW-** For your convenience a Membership Form is attached to this newsletter.

***Membership Policy*** - Membership is open to any individual or organization interested in furthering the purposes of the Association. An organization shall designate an individual to represent it at business meetings of the Association.

There shall be three categories of Membership:

1. Voting Members, consisting of all members owning registered American Milking Devon cattle.
2. Non-Voting Associate Members, who wish to further the purposes of the Association. The Annual Dues for these two categories as established by the Board (currently \$20) shall be due and payable on or before December 31 of each calendar year. Lapsed members shall be reinstated on payment of current year dues.
3. Non-Voting Junior Members, a category open to those under 18 years of age for a single dues payment (currently \$20), can access all membership services as the established fees.

Only Voting Members are entitled to vote at Membership Meetings. Except for voting rights, no distinction shall be made between the three membership categories as to the availability or cost of services provided. At the Annual Meeting of 2016, the Membership passed a MOTION that Members not in good standing by April 1<sup>st</sup> of each year will not receive an election ballot and will be removed from the Breeder's Listing. **If you wish to be listed on the Breeder's List a completed Membership Form is required to be submitted annually with your dues.**

**New Registration Form-** Due to the changes in Registration Policy, a Registration Form has been created and approved by the Board of Directors. A copy of the form is attached for your convenience. Failure to use the form will result in the return of your application unprocessed.

### **Call For Nominations**

Nominations are now being accepted for the position of Director (member of the Board of Directors) for the term May 2021 through May 2022. Voting will be by mail, and ballots will be counted and results announced at the Annual Meeting in May, provided we are able to have a meeting.

As an all-volunteer organization, AMDCA depends on its Directors to both manage the organization and do much of the actual work. The Board meets monthly by telephone. In addition, the Association hosts one or more Regional Gatherings each year, which the Directors are urged to attend. Directors must be voting members, i.e., must own registered American Milking Devon Cattle and have paid their dues for the current year.

Due to the cancellation of last year's Annual Meeting because of COVID-19, the membership will also be voting on the two Board candidates that were nominated to run in 2020. Last year Ray Clark and Andrew Van Ord were the only nominees for the two Board positions up for election. Since the Association did not hold the Annual Meeting, the elections did not occur. Upon the expiration of their terms, the Board appointed them as Directors until such time as an election can be held.

The terms of three Incumbent Directors expire this year. All three incumbents, Bruce Farr, Dexter Randall and Jeremy Michaud are seeking re-election.

If you wish to put a name in nomination, please submit the following information not later than Friday, February 26th, 2021 to John L. Hall III, 610 East Pond Meadow Road, Westbrook, CT 06498; or e-mail [americanmilkingdevons@gmail.com](mailto:americanmilkingdevons@gmail.com)

1. The nominee's full name,
2. A statement of the nominee's background, qualifications and his/her philosophy and goals for AMDCA. Please limit this information to ½ page.
3. A statement *signed by the nominee* that he/she is a voting member and agrees to serve if elected.
4. The nominee's record of attendance at Annual Meetings and regional meetings over the past three years.

All nominations will be acknowledged and the Nominating Committee will ensure that all complete nominations received by the above deadline are placed on the ballot.

**Buying Registered Cattle**- It has come to the attention of the Association that some AMD buyers are not receiving their transfer registration papers in a timely fashion as the result of sellers not submitting the appropriate paperwork to the Registrar. Some of these buyers reach out to the Association to seek assistance in rectifying the situation. The Association, however, has no authority to intervene in this type of situation. The buyer and seller should discuss the transfer paperwork **prior to the sale being completed**, and if at all possible, the buyer should receive a copy of the paperwork the seller is forwarding to the Registrar at the time the cattle are physically transferred. A potential buyer could contact the Registrar prior to a purchase to ascertain whether a seller actively registers cattle. No personal information beyond "YES THEY ACTIVELY REGISTER CATTLE" or "NO THEY HAVEN'T ACTIVELY REGISTERED CATTLE" regarding a seller will be given out by the Registrar. In order to maintain the integrity of our breed registry, the Registrar cannot register animals without the proper paperwork.

**AMDCA 2021 ANNUAL MEETING**- This year's Annual Meeting is tentatively scheduled for **Saturday May 8<sup>th</sup>** in Tunbridge, Vermont, starting at 10 AM. Annual Meeting plans will be confirmed with the membership at a later date due to the COVID situation.

**AMDCA Website**- AMDCA hosts a website under the direction of Webmaster Lawrence Gilley. The website contains Breeder Information, Breed History, a Calendar of Events, a For Sale Section, Association Information, Member Services, Semen Sales, Frequently Asked Questions and Relevant Links. In September of 2020 there were 791 visits to the website from 543 visitors, 82 percent of which were new. In November of 2020 there were 710 visits to the website from 548 visitors, 82 percent of which were new. In December of 2020 there were 672 visits to the website from 515 visitors, 83 percent of which were new. The most frequently viewed pages were: For Sale, Breeders, Breed, FAQ, and Semen. The most frequently updated information is the For Sale page and the Breeders list. The website consistently shows up in search engine results at or near the top. We encourage you to use our website as it is kept current with Association-related business. Lawrence's contact information and the web address can be found on the contact page of this newsletter.



**On the left, Honey Hill's next bull—the mighty Myron Emerald. With his buddy Paul Butler, who's currently handling the work.** Photo Courtesy of Honey Hill Heritage Devons/Victoria Reck Ames

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR THE APRIL NEWSLETTER IS MARCH 15th, 2021. Please submit articles in Microsoft Word format**

***AMDCA Officers***

**Director/President/Treasurer**

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610 East Pond Meadow Road  
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**Director**

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**Director**

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(802) 744-2417

**Registrar**

Bonnie Hall  
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Westbrook, CT 06498  
(860) 399-4611  
[americanmilkingdevons@gmail.com](mailto:americanmilkingdevons@gmail.com)

**Association Contact: Please direct questions to Ray Clark @**

**(802) 626-8306**

**Website: [www.milkingdevons.org](http://www.milkingdevons.org)**

***AMDCA VOLUNTEER***

**Webmaster**

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(315) 821-6628 [lcgilley@tds.net](mailto:lcgilley@tds.net)

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*This newsletter is provided to AMDCA members in the United States and Canada for information and education purposes. The views, opinions and recommendations expressed herein are those of individual contributors and are not endorsed by, or represent the policy of AMDCA or its Directors, Officers and volunteer staff. Members must use their own judgment in deciding whether farming management practices described herein are safe and appropriate for their particular circumstances.*

**AMERICAN MILKING DEVON CATTLE ASSOCIATION**  
The Registrar, 610 East Pond Meadow Road, Westbrook, CT 06498

**REGISTRY APPLICATION**

**Registration Fees:**

< 1 yr. \$5.00; 1 yr. but < 2 yrs. \$10.00; 2 yrs. but <3 yrs. \$25.00; 3 yrs. but <5 yrs. \$50.00

Transfer: \$5.00 Name of New Owner \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zipcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Transfer \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ TATTOO \_\_\_\_\_

SEX \_\_\_\_\_ TWIN \_\_\_\_\_ SEX OF OTHER TWIN \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_

SIRE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PATERNAL GRANDSIRE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PATERNAL GRANDDAM \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

DAM \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

MATERNAL GRANDSIRE \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

MATERNAL GRANDDAM \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

ARTIFICIAL SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_ NATURAL SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_

IF Artificial Service, attach breeding receipt

IF Natural Service, give dates between which bull had access to dam: FROM \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNER OF SIRE:** \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_

**OWNER OF DAM:** \_\_\_\_\_

(At time of breeding) ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIPCODE \_\_\_\_\_

In making this application, I hereby subject myself to all the provisions of the Constitution, bylaws, and rules of registry of the American Milking Devon Cattle Association as they now exist or may from time to time be amended, knowledge of which I now have or will immediately acquire. **I GUARANTEE THAT ALL MATTERS STATED HEREIN ARE TRUE.**

**OWNER** \_\_\_\_\_ **ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIPCODE** \_\_\_\_\_ **SIGNATURE** \_\_\_\_\_

# American Milking Devon Cattle Association

610 East Pond Meadow Road, Westbrook, CT 06498

2021

Please check one.

- \$20 - Voting Member – individuals who own registered Milking Devon cattle
- \$20 – Non-Voting Associate Member – individuals interested in furthering the purposes of the Association
- \$20 – Non-Voting Junior Member (one time dues payment, non-voting, under 18 years old)

Make checks payable to the American Milking Devon Cattle Association.

Send completed form and check to:

Bonnie Hall, Registrar, 610 East Pond Meadow Road, Westbrook, CT 06498

Voting members: Please circle if you **do not** wish to be listed in the on-line breeder's list

[NO] Do not include me in the on-line breeder's list.

Please circle "no" below to indicate information you wish **to omit** from the on-line breeder's list.

[No] NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

[No] FARM/ORG: \_\_\_\_\_

[No] ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
[No] PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

[No] E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

[No] WEBSITE: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: A current membership is required for inclusion in the breeder's list, for voting at the annual meeting and for registering cattle and for transferring the registration of cattle Please ensure that your membership is up to date.*