Dutch Belted History

The Dutch Belted breed traces directly to the original belted cattle which were described in Switzerland and Austria. The breed was then established in the Netherlands in the 17th century. For over 100 years they worked upon this striking color marking until they produced belted cattle, rabbits, goats, poultry, and swine.

The first importation into the United States was in 1838. In 1840, P.T. Barnum imported several head from a nobleman. It is said they were secured with the understanding that they were to be used principally for exhibition as a feature of his great circus. The herdbook of the Dutch Belted Cattle Association of America was established in 1886. This is the oldest continuously registering herdbook for belted cattle in the world.

Lakenfeld cattle grazing, c. 1910

Dutch Belted Cattle Association of America

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Dutch Belted Dairy Farming

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Dutch Belted Cattle Association of America

Mission:
The conservation and documentation of the Dutch Belted cattle breed in North America

The Dutch Belted Breed

They are black, or occasionally red, with a dazzling white belt around the middle. Cows weigh from 900-1500 pounds while bulls weigh 1350-2000 pounds. They have a moderate frame size that results in high dairy beef yield. Intelligence and friendly disposition make Dutch Belted cattle an excellent choice for family farms, rotational grazing, and other systems where ease of handling is valued. Under 300 Dutch Belts are registered in the U.S.

A herd of both black and red and white Dutch Belts grazing

Production

Dutch Belted is a very versatile breed with cows flourishing under many different management styles. Their milk tests 3.5 to 5.5 percent butter fat making it an ideal drinking milk. It is said they produce a natural, soft curd, easily-digested milk. The fat globules are exceptionally small. Longevity reduces replacement costs, and there are many teenage cows still in production.

Reproductive Efficiency

Heifers breed early and produce a calf every year. An average birth weight of 70 pounds assures calving ease and less postpartum stress.

Genetic Consistency

The Dutch Belted offers remarkable genetic consistency resulting from centuries of pure breeding and selection. Dutch Belted bulls are prepotent, and their offspring are highly predictable and uniform. Dutch Belteds can impart significant hybrid vigor when crossed with other breeds. These crossbreds have found great favor in grass-based dairy production. Due to the rarity of the breed, crossbreeding can be recommended only if using Dutch Belted semen on dairy cows of other breeds. Pure Dutch Belted cows must only be bred to pure Dutch Belted bulls.
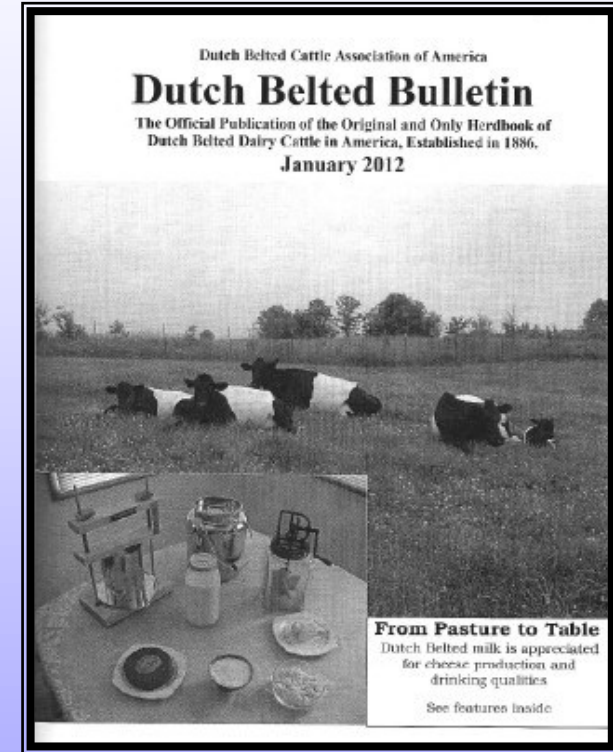
Breeding Up Program

Because of the critically low numbers of registered Dutch Belted females, a "breeding up" program has been developed. This program is based on using registered Dutch Belted sires on other dairy breed females. This provides a low cost entry for new breeders by expanding the numbers of registered cattle.

The DBCAA exhibit at World Dairy Expo in Madison, WI

Becoming A Member Of DBCAA

A copy of the membership application form is available at www.dutchbelted.com. The fee to be a Lifetime DBCAA Voting Member is $25 and $15 each year for the activation/*Dutch Belted Bulletin* subscription fee. For Associate Membership without voting privileges is $15.

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