

INTRODUCTION

The summary and annual report for the year 2001 reflects the main spheres of interest and achievements of Israeli Holstein cattle and its breeders. Primarily, It consists of a relatively large number of tables, arranged in four sections:

BREEDING - MILK RECORDING - PRODUCTIVITY – FERTILITY

Since ICBA summaries are compiled and edited in the Hebrew language, a major effort has been made to provide a. m. tables with titles, column and stub headings as well as footnotes in English, for the benefit of our fellow dairymen and foreign readers world- wide.

ENGLISH

HEBREW

Please remember: while European languages are written from left to right - Hebrew is written from right to left! Evidently, this fact determined to a large extent the order in which tables are constructed and aligned for presentation.

Although all tables should be self- explanatory through their contents, owing to the complexity of the subject treated some observations of a more general character seem indicated, instead of just listing them as a content of tables.

Section 1: BREEDING (tables nr. 1 - 9).

The breeding and genetic improvement of dairy cattle in Israel is being carried- out by ICBA and its subsidiary A. I. cooperative centers ON and HASHERUT (no! operating as SION Ltd., a sister company of ICBA), monitored and led by the Israeli Holstein Herdbook and common breeding committee, with full collaboration from the department of genetics, Volcani Institute of Agricultural Research. Thus, all breeders and herds benefit from ICBA's breeding activities.

Section 2: MILK RECORDING (tables nr. 10 - 19).

Official milk- recording in ISRAEL began as early as 1934. Since then all \$bog; herds and an ever- growing number of Moshav (family) herds have joined . out of appr 115 000 Israel- Holstein dairy cows 104,660 cows were milk- recorded (91%). Still; there are another 10,000 cows in about 300 family herds (26%) not yet participating in milk- recording.

For reasons of distinct differences in management , besides overall results of , separate data are given for Kibbutz herds on 3x daily milking., milk-recording and Moshav herds most of them on 2x daily milking. Thus, separate lists for Kibbutz

herds and Moshav herds are given (tables 18 and 19, respectively) , ranked according to average production of kg ECM/ cow/ year .

Section 3: PRODUCTIVITY (tables nr. 20 - 24).

The respective tables give in- depth information on values more directly reflecting on the economy and profitability of the various aspects of dairy farming under local conditions. Distinction is being made between data regarding the entire national dairy herd, and separately for Kibbutz and Moshav herds. Also portrayed are separate data for herds served by the two A. I. centers - ON in the north and HASHERUT in the south of Israel , while the dividing line between them roughly runs from Herzliya on the sea to north of Jericho in the Jordan valley. However, since all bulls are owned cooperatively by both A. I. centers, who operate also a common bank of bulls' semen, a dairy herd anywhere in this country can be served by any bulls of its choice. On the other hand, said system facilitates the inclusion of an almost unlimited number of herds in the use of young (test) bulls and their subsequent proof. Separate tables bring the data for well- defined geographical regions, namely the Jordan & Bet She'an valley at 200- 350 m below sea level, where seasonal calving is being practiced and the southern desert of the Arava, near the Red Sea.

Section 4 : FERTILITY (tables nr. 25 - 29).

As for the anterior section on productivity, this section too brings data on a national scale, for Kibbutz and Moshav herds, and the two a. m. defined geographical regions & Bet She'an valley and the Arava. -Jordan

Besides the publication of the comprehensive summary and annual report, Israeli dairy farmers adhering to ICBA receive detailed monthly reports on: milk- recording of each individual cow; total production of milk, fat, protein, lactose and SCC; closed lactations and/ or lactations of culled cows; fertility reports: health reports (the latter through "HAHAKLAIT", cooperative for clinical veterinary services, a sister company of ICBA).

IMPACT OF AGENDA 2000: In the wake of agreements reflecting the trend of a globalized economy as formulated by GATT and WTO rounds during the last few years, Agenda 2000 has become the framework for all agro- alimentary activities, including the dairy sector. By its very nature, dairy farming is bound to long- term planning and investment, while the observation of ever more demanding ecological considerations are apt to bear heavily on small and medium- sized dairy operations and their economic survival.

The number of small, and even medium- sized dairy farms in Israel might decrease further in years ahead by way of partnerships - or by closing small dairies for lack of a new generation interested in continuing, a situation well- known in many

developed countries.

While a. m. changes are under way, sometimes at unforeseeable leaps created by transfer of quota and/ or cows from one farm to another - sudden changes in the annual results of dairy herds might occur. Farsighted planning of the farm and of the entire national dairy branch indeed should minimize undesirable effects on farm economy and farmers' livelihood.