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Selection of Deoni Cattle for Milking Characters

Selection of animals during purchase is a very important part of any dairy business. We select animals based on their performance and the performance is reflected by the records, for a successful selection program, record keeping is very important. A dairy entrepreneur/ breeder should take some points into consideration while selection of cattle. There are number of specification for choosing the exotic animals for dairy purpose, however, choosing of animals for dairying from the indigenous draft type breeds pose some very typical considerations. Some of the specifications during selection of Deoni cattle have been discussed herein.

INTRODUCTION

Deoni is a draught breed of Maharashtra and is believed to have been descended from the Gir, Dangi and local cattle. The breed shows a great similarity in conformation and austerities to the Dangi cattle (Joshi and Phillips, 1953). The breed is named from the place of origin i.e. Deoni taluk of Latur district in Maharashtra. The breed is also known as "Surti", "Dongarpati", "Dongri", "Wannera", "Waghyd", "Balankya" and "Shevera". The breeding tract of the breed includes Bidar district of Karnataka and Marathwada region of Maharashtra including Parbhani, Nanded, Osmanabad and Latur districts. There are three strains of the breed viz. Balankya i.e., complete white animals, Wannera animals are white with partial black face giving a monkey like appearance and Waghy or Shevera are black and white spotted animals.

The breed has got some typical true to breed characters along with the normal production parameters which should be satisfied during selection of a Deoni cow for milch purpose.

PRODUCTION PARAMETERS

The production parameters can best be judged on the basis of record keeping and pedigree analysis. Some of the parameters of important traits in Deoni breed have been mentioned.

- Age at first calving (Avg. Months) - 45.7.
- Calving Interval (Avg. Months) - 14.7.
- Milk yield per lactation (Avg. Kg) - 868.
- Milk Fat percentage - 4.3.

BODY CONFIRMATION

True to breed body confirmation characters along with the dairy characters have been discussed herein;

- Body color of Deoni animal is spotted black and white with pendulous ears.
- Horn appears from the side of the poll after and above the eyes in out ward and rising direction.
- Horn size is usually small and the tips blunt.
- Height at wither and hip should be proportionate.
- Straight and strong back.
- Strong Jaw and broad muzzle.
- Ribs should be wide apart and rib bones slanted towards rear.
- Thighs should be lean and wide at a distance from rear side.
- Wedge shaped appearance of the body is expected.
- Eyes must be black and neck must be lean.
- Skin should be thin loose and pliable.
- Other body measurements are tabulated below.

Table 1. BODY MEASUREMENT CHARACTERS OF DEONI BREED

Sl. No.	Character	Male	Female
1.	Height(Avg cm)	139.6	122.2
2.	Body Length (Avg cm)	135.1	120.1
3	Heart Girth(Avg cm)	173.6	151.8
4	Weight(Avg Kg)	590	340
5	Birth Weight(Avg Kg)	23	23.4

BODY CAPACITY

Body capacity determines the amount of feed the animal is able to consume, which ultimately affects milk production.

- Dairy cows should be long, deep, and wide through the barrel.
- Chest floor should be deep and wide with well sprung fore ribs.
- The triangle formed by hump point, pin bone and hock joint should be spacious with straight back, this angle is indication of capacious rumen, hence more digesting capacity and more milk production.

UDDER CHARACTERS

Udder characters to be considered during selection of Deoni animals are as below;

- Moderate udder depth with adequate capacity is desirable.
- Teat should be squarely placed under each quarter and be free from any extra teat.
- Rear udder must be wide, high, firmly attached and slightly rounded to udder floor.
- Udder cleft; adequately defined leading to well-marked halves.
- Fore udder must be firmly attached and must have ample capacity.
- Teats must be cylindrical shaped; size of all teats must be uniform and must have medium length and diameter.

- Milk vein should be well capacious and bulging.
- Milk well should also be prominent and deep.

Other gross points to be considered along with their significance based on heritability, during selection include; animals with blind quarter, hanging (not properly attached) udder or those showing complete blindness must be disqualified and must not be purchased. It is also crucial to note that the animals suffering from permanent lameness affecting normal function must not be selected. Lack of halving of udder, fluid in hock joint and hard spots in udder or obstruction in teat are some other points of more significance to be considered during purchase of animals.

CONCLUSION

In all, a true to breed cattle in sound health and capacious compact body confirmation, will give optimum performance and also help in production of quality germplasm. Deoni is an indigenous breed of cattle with sturdy compact body necessary for its survival and production in draught areas of its breeding track involving Maharashtra, Karnataka and Telangana. Though the breed is low in milk production capacity, it thrives in adverse climates and produces 3-5 lits of milk per day with minimum expenditure on feed and medicine. The antimicrobial and medicinal properties of the milk have also been reported hence rearing of these animals with proper selection methods will help the upcoming generations of the animals to be true to breed as well as help maximum optimum exploitation of the milking capacity of the animals.

REFERENCES

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