

# MARAWILA CATTLE SHOW

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*Animal Husbandry Officer.*

**N**OW that we are becoming alive to the importance of milk as a wholesome, nutritious and essential food, which could be produced on a much larger scale in Ceylon by improving the standard of our livestock, the success of the recent show held at Marawila is indeed heartening and should be regarded as a stepping stone towards our goal. *We can produce more milk from fewer and healthier cattle thereby avoiding the danger of over-grazing our coconut lands and impoverishing our soil, which is the heritage we pass on to our children.*

In view of the fact that this was the first cattle show ever to be organised in this District, it was indeed a remarkable success as evidenced by the tremendous interest taken in it by the public and by the large number of exhibits. This shows that the efforts of the Officers of the Department of Agriculture to improve the livestock of the Island are beginning to bear fruit, because the majority of the exhibits were cross-breds which had been sired by Government stock.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, in his address said that cultural operations and livestock-breeding should go hand-in-hand and that it was a National Service which should form the principle on which coconut growers should organise their work. He suggested that milk produced from such sources should go to milk-feeding centres. It would certainly be a great achievement if everyone in the Island could have a pint of quality milk a day at a reasonable price. At present we are still a long way behind this target and to achieve this end it will be necessary to whip up enthusiasm and organise shows such as those recently held at Marawila, Moratuwa and elsewhere.

A tremendous number of draught and milk cattle, pigs, poultry and goats, exhibited by rich and poor men alike were on show at Marawila. The judging which was done by two livestock experts, Messrs. T. M. Z. Mahamooth and P. G. Malkani, left nothing to be desired either in showmanship or technical efficiency, and the keenness of the competition and the enthusiasm of the exhibitors was most heartening. I must, however, take this opportunity to stress the importance of better management of livestock. It was most evident at the Show that the majority of the exhibitors had resorted to eleventh-hour methods of feeding and preparation which resulted in their animals being unruly and sometimes unmanageable or stubborn in the Show ring and in consequence it was not easy for the judges to carry out their work.

It was apparent, too, that the importance of good grooming is not realised by many cattle-lovers and, judging by the staring, dirty and rough coats of the majority of the exhibits few of the animals had been groomed for the Show. Grooming not only removes from the animals all dirt and skin debris, but it also improves the circulation of the blood under the skin thereby improving the texture and flexibility of the skin and giving a healthy, glossy and smooth appearance to their coats.

Breeding of improved strains of cattle is now being done on a very extensive scale by the Officers of the Department of Agriculture and this was proved at the Show by the number of "Sinhala-Sindi" cross-bred cattle to be seen there. A subject, however, which requires intensive propaganda is the urgent need for better feeding. Efforts to improve the breed will be of no avail if we continue to feed our animals on meagre rations or only on grass and herbage in con-

sequence of which their capacity for producing milk is far below what it should be. I am positive that with selective breeding, better management of pastures and better feeding we can improve the production of milk from our Sinhala cattle and make them adequate for our needs. *Good breeding without good feeding is not much use.*

Credit for the success of this Show is mainly due to the Officers of the Department of Agriculture, to the Organising Secretary, Mr. Simon, Assistant Veterinary Surgeon, Marawila, and to the exhibitors who supported this Show in such large numbers. The success of the Show this year will be rewarded by even greater support next year and the interest and enthusiasm that has now been aroused will result in even better exhibits and so provide a material contribution towards raising the standard of livestock in this area. We cannot expect to produce better cattle overnight, it will definitely take time, may be several years, but we can be consoled by the fact that "Rome was not built in a day." If we continue to progress on these lines we can rest assured that our livestock industry is being established on a sound foundation.

### LIST OF PRIZE WINNERS

Class	Name of Prize Winner
European Cow	1. Titus Peiris, Marawila
Indian Cow	1. Don Eugene, Keenakalle
	2. W. Elaris Perera, Marawila
Indian Bull	1. W. W. Lodwin Fernando
	2. A. J. C. Peiris
	3. W. Albert Fernando
Calves	1. W. F. Elaris Perera
Sinhala Cow	1. W. Lous Fernando
	2. J. E. Fernando
Sinhala Bull	1. Don Amros Appuhamy
Cross-bred Cow	1. P. S. Perera (Coconut Research Scheme)
	2. Titus Peiris
	3. A. F. C. Roelofs
Cross-bred Bull	1. Maximus Fernando
	2. A. J. C. Peiris
Cross-bred Calves	1. W. D. Fredrick (Coconut Research Scheme)
	2. T. D. Francis
	3. Titus Peiris
Heavy-draught Bull	1. Viani Fernando
	2. Viani Fernando
	3. T. Almeida
Medium-draught Bull	1. D. C. Jayasuriya
	2. Polycarp Thamel
	3. A. J. C. Peiris
Castrated Bull	1. Wilbert Fernando
Light-draught	1. Julius Fernando
	2. P. D. J. Appuhamy
He-Bufferaloes	1. A. M. Wijesena
She-Bufferaloes	1. A. M. Wijesena
Calves born to Government Stud Bulls	1. D. E. Hettiarachi
	2. W. M. Herath Singho
	3. A. S. Perera
He-Goat	1. Albert Fernando
She-Goat	1. D. C. Wanigasekera
	2. A. F. C. Roelofs
Kid	1. D. C. Wanigasekera
	2. Titus Peiris
Boar	1. Siyadoris
Sows with Litter	1. Harold Peiris
Best Male Exhibit in the Show	Viani Fernando
Best Female Exhibit in the Show	D. E. Hettiarachi
Champion Breeder	Titus Peiris

(It is regretted that this report has been delayed. It is included now because this Show is a landmark in the history of the coconut industry of this country.—Ed.)