

Iowa's Dairy Story Dairy Breeds Lesson

Objectives:

1. Students will learn interesting facts about dairy cattle breeds.
2. Students will recall information about each of the dairy breeds.

Iowa Core Curriculum Met:

Mathematics Standards

- Content Standard 4: Students can interpret data presented in a variety of ways.

Science Standards

- Content Standard 2: Students can understand concepts and relationships in life science.

Literacy Standards

- Content Standard 1: Students can comprehend what they read in a variety of literacy and informational texts.

Supplies Needed:

Dairy breeds video

Duration: 15-20 minutes

Teaching the Lesson:

Watch dairy breeds video created by Dairy Princesses in Iowa. Each Dairy Princess provides information about each of the seven breeds of dairy cattle in the United States. Ask students to choose their favorite breed as they watch the video. Then, use the information below to review information about the breeds with the students.

Dairy Breeds Information

Breed Specific Information: Go through each breed one by one and give some brief details for the bullet points below.

Ask who had this animal breed as their favorite?

1. Ayrshire
 - a. Originated in Scotland, County of Ayr
 - b. Graze rough pastures and tolerate cold winters
 - i. *What does grazing mean?*
 - c. Red and white in color or reddish brown mahogany (wood color)

- d. Medium sized cow, weighs more than 1200 pounds
- e. Known for udder conformation.
 - i. *Where is the udder located on the cow and what does it do for the cow?* Holds milk, located between back legs.
- f. Good legs and feet.
- g. Were known for long, elegant horns, but now horns are removed at an early age. It happens when the animal is very small and would be similar to the animal getting an ear tag or you getting earrings. It will heal in a few weeks and they will not grow horns that may hurt people or other animals.

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

- 2. Brown Swiss
 - a. Originated in Switzerland
 - b. Noted for outstanding legs, dairy strength.
 - i. *Why is this important for cows to have good feet and legs?* They need to be able to walk around with more the 1,000 pounds of body weight each day.
 - c. Reputation for longevity.
 - i. *What is longevity?* It means the cow will live for a long time.
 - d. Extremely docile.
 - i. *What is docile?* It means they are a nice animal and easy to work with.

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

- 3. Guernsey
 - a. The Breed came from Isle of Guernsey off coast of France
 - i. *What does it mean they came from the Isle of Guernsey?* From an island
 - b. Introduced to America around 1840 when three cows were imported to New York. Came by boat
 - c. Intermediate sized animal that produce high quality milk while consuming less feed per pound of milk produced than larger dairy breed.
 - d. Milk is high in butterfat and protein, and contains gene that is good for cheese processing.
 - e. Research shows lowest incidence of calving difficulty of any of the major dairy breeds.
 - f. Very commonly found in their own herds and not mixed with other breeds of dairy cattle.

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

4. Holstein
 - a. Originated in the Netherlands
 - b. Known for outstanding milk production and patterns of black and white
 - c. Mature cows weigh 1500 pounds and stand 58 inches high (largest breed)
 - d. Calves usually weigh 80-100 pounds at birth
 - e. Normal production life is 3 to 4 years
 - f. In the United States 9 out of 10 dairy producers milk Holstein cows.
 - i. *Why?* Most people milk Holstein because they give the most milk.

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

5. Jersey
 - a. Originated from the Isle of Jersey off English Channel Coast of France
 - i. *Do you remember what an Isle is?* It's an island. So the Jersey also originated from an Island.
 - i. *Who can tell me which two breeds originated from an island?* Jersey and Guernsey
 - b. Tolerant of heat more than larger breeds.
 - i. *What does it mean to tolerate heat?* It doesn't mind the heat
 - c. Produce more pounds of milk per pound of body weight than any other breeds.
 - d. Mature cows 800 – 1200 pounds. Jersey is smallest of the other breeds as an adult.
 - e. Color light grey or mouse color to dark fawn or almost black

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

6. Milking Shorthorn
 - a. Oldest Breed
 - b. Known as Durham's in early days and furnished families with milk, meat & power (oxen). Like pioneers in Little House on The Prairie books, animals were used for multiple purposes.
 - c. Color either all red, all white, red & white spotted or Roan colored.
 - d. In 1912, the beef and dairy breeds separated. They made their own organization and now the two breeds have become more specified for each area. This made the dairy breed a better milker and the beef breed better at making meat
 - e. Known for high protein to fat ratio, desirable in milk marketing today.
 - i. Explain that this type of milk can be used for making special dairy products like milk replacer for calves which will help them grow better.

Ask who had this animal as their favorite?

7. Red & White Holstein
 - a. Became its own breed organization in 1964
 - b. They milk similar to a Black and White Holstein just a different color.
 - c. Focus of Holstein breed was to develop a red & white Holstein
 - d. Only breed to originate in the U.S. (Holsteins come from Holland)
 - e. Their coloring is caused by a recessive trait.
 - f. Weight – 1500 pounds