



Photo courtesy Hoosier Farmer magazine.

Donkeys Teach Stubborn Calves To Lead

Here's a new twist to breaking a stubborn calf to lead.

"We tie him to a donkey for a day, and he soon learns to follow," cattleman James Kirkendall, of Tipton, Ind., told FARM SHOW.

He and his children have been using this method for several years with good results. "It works," he says, "because a donkey has more patience than a man. We use it on weaning age calves and larger."

Kirkendall says there are several important things to consider in using a donkey to halter break a calf. The first is to hook them up properly, using a breaking halter on the calf and a neck strap on the donkey. A double swivel on the chain keeps it from getting twisted.

"They should be hooked up at least two feet apart but no more than three feet," explains Kir-

kendall. "At this distance, the donkey or burro can't kick the calf and hurt it. We leave the calf tied this way for 24 hours, and that breaks most of them. If we leave a slow learner longer, it's never for more than two days. Although the method usually works, it isn't fool-proof. Some of the most stubborn calves have to come back for a second lesson."

Kirkendall uses a castrated jack or a jenny. "An uncastrated male could be too bad-tempered," he cautions. "You can buy a jack for about \$100. Size is not important because the donkeys are very strong. I'm not afraid to put a 500 lb. burro with a 1,000 lb. calf," he says.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James Kirkendall, Route 3, Tipton, Ind. 46072 (ph 317 963-2626).

Rent-A-Barn Plan Helps Young Dairymen Get Started

At today's sky-high investment and interest costs, there's just no way a young dairyman can get started on his own. Right?

Wrong! Greg Johnson and a few other young tigers like him in Western Wisconsin are doing it the Rent-A-Barn way.

Greg, 19, rents a barn from a neighbor along with the silo, pipeline system, bulk tank and barn cleaner. He owns the 33 cows which completely fill the barn and buys all the grain, hay and silage. In his first full year, the herd averaged a very respectable 726 lbs. of butterfat and 19,802 lbs. of milk. During the year, Greg was able to buy most of the hay for under a \$1 a bale, corn for just under \$2 a bushel, straw for about 75¢ a bale and corn silage for right at \$33 per foot.

"At those prices, can a young dairyman afford to tie up his money in land costing \$1,500 or \$2,000 an acre?" Greg asks.

So what's a fair price to pay

for renting an unused barn and equipment?

Larry Larson, farm financial management instructor at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical Institute, New Richmond, suggests the following guidelines:

First figure out what it would cost to build and equip the barn new. Suppose the figure is \$50,000. Then, you take out 10% for interest, 3% for depreciation, 1½% for annual repairs, and 3% for taxes. Using those rates, it figures out to \$8,750 (17½% of \$50,000). Add 10% to this figure for profit to the owner and you end up with a total annual cost of owning the barn of \$9,625. For older barns that have already been depreciated, Larson recommends using 50% of the cost of replacing the barn as the figure you start with. Equipment outside that used in the barn can be figured the same way, although you may want to raise the amount charged for re-

pairs. Generally these figures include the renter spreading manure back on the owner's land. Also, established farmers are often willing to help a young farmer get established and may offer considerably lower rates. Larson points out. He believes the Rent-A-Barn system could work equally well for hog, poultry, beef or sheep operations.

If you've got an unused barn in good shape that could easily be set up for dairying, you may want to check into the possibility of renting it to a young man

wanting to get started in dairying. And, if you're a young man looking for a way to get started in dairying, maybe you should scout around the community for an unused barn waiting to be rented.

In either case, you can get helpful suggestions on how to set up a Rent-A-Barn agreement by contacting: FARM SHOW Followup, Larry Larson, Farm Financial Management Instructor, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical Institute, New Richmond, Wis. 54017 (ph 715 246-6561).

Look What He's Doing With Llamas!

Visitors' eyes usually pop when they drive past the ranch of Stan Ebel, near Edison, Neb. His cattle barns and yards are filled with long-necked woolly beasts that look like a cross between a sheep and a deer.

The exotic animals are llamas, which are domesticated beasts of burden in the Andes Mountains of South America. Ebel is building a herd of them which has now reached 65 animals.

"The market for llamas in this country is just developing," he says. "They are in demand for pack animals and pets. And the wool also is valuable to home weavers."

Ebel notes that llamas are really not hard to raise. "They are rugged enough to stand extreme cold and heat, and they adapt well to conditions in this country.

"They are easy to keep since they eat only one-tenth as much as a horse or cow, and they



thrive on low grade forages. I feed the nursing mothers only ½ lbs. of grain a day, and most of the time they get no grain at all," Ebel points out.

Mature males weigh 400 lbs. and mature females about 350 lbs. They are not subject to any serious disease problems or ailments. They do have some calving difficulties but have

only about a 5% calf mortality rate.

"Outdoor recreationists are putting so much pressure on wilderness areas that they are beginning to be closed to vehicle traffic. The U.S. Forest Service has already closed some roads to vehicles. Under the new wilderness law, vehicles will be banned and, in some

areas, horses and mules are even too hard on the environment. They tear up trails and fragile meadows in mountain areas. On the other hand, the llama has no more impact on the natural environment than a deer or elk."

Anyone who is considering getting into llama production will have to pay \$2,500 or more for a female, and about \$500 for a male. Breeding stock has to come from within the United States because it is illegal to have llamas imported. There are probably about 2,500 of the South American animals in this country, most of them in zoos or on special farms and ranches, says Ebel.

He is starting to keep performance records on his herd and hopes there will eventually be a national llama registry association.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Stan Ebel, Route 1, Box 46, Edison, Neb. (ph 308 927-2676).