

# Darden's Dairying System is Profitably Different

Buys Milkers, Raises Feed, Maintains Three Gallons Average Production, Sells Direct

By GEORGE H. DACY

FROM postal employee to record dairyman, from ownership of one cow to a herd of 200, from no private business whatsoever to management of a strikingly successful milk farm—that is the long jump which B. H. Darden, Norfolk County, Virginia has made in a short time.

Our countryside is speckled with practical dairy farms. But there are few like Darden's. He has modified methods to harmonize with his particular conditions. Various other southern dairymen would be better off if they followed Darden's trail and tuned their operations more closely to accord with their local conditions and opportunities.

This man Darden produces both Grade A and special baby milk of low bacterial content for the Norfolk market. He sells directly to the consumers and operates one of the most practical milk routes in Dixieland. His daily production corresponds to his stabilized market demand. That is why he buys all his cows instead of raising them. Service sires are absent on this farm. Darden buys springers from five to six weeks prior to freshening, milks the animals for a single lactation period and then sells them for beef. He drives his automobile some 12,000 miles annually through seven different states, inspecting and purchasing cows, a practically continuous quest. This unusual system of dairying management enables him to produce plenty of milk perpetually for his retail trade.

## Fat Cows For Beef

This dairyman is an excellent judge of cows, a good buyer and a seasoned seller. He feeds his cows scientifically and liberally. They are fat when their milk supply is exhausted. Mr. Darden has developed a special trade with the Kosher butchers of his locality. They pay him fancy prices for the fat "she stuff" which exactly suits their requirements. Thus Mr. Darden, by wise discriminating buying and organized selling is able to dispose of the fat cows for beef for only an average of from one-fifth to one-fourth less than their purchase price. Which illustrates the wisdom of supplying a special beef market such as he has developed and now caters to.

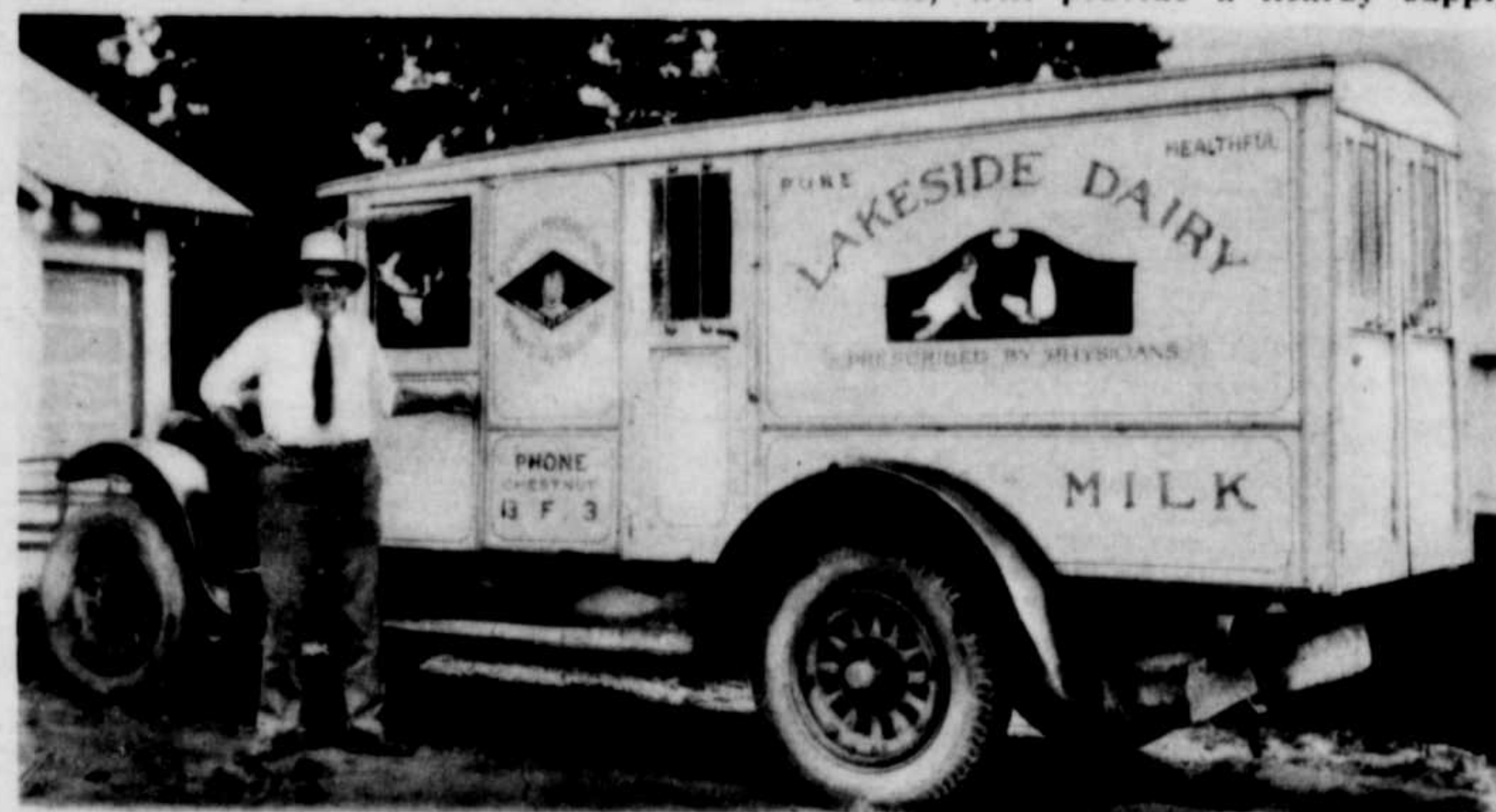
Darden bought his first cow in 1900 when he worked for Uncle Sam's post-office department. He sold the surplus milk above family needs. The neighborhood demand was always much greater than his supply. Gradually, he increased his suburban herd until he had 12 cows.

## Buyers All Milkers

Then a city ordinance forced him out into the country. He bought a small farm. That was the beginning of what has later grown into a big business. Mr.

Darden has been buying cows and farms from then until now. He now owns five adjoining farms aggregating 350 acres close to the core of the famous Norfolk trucking belt, one of America's profitable garden spots.

The Lakeside Dairy Farm milk retails for from 17 to 24 cents a quart. The whole milk has too great a market value to feed to heifer calves. Furthermore, Mr. Darden was cured of the heifer-raising itch years ago. He devoted a plentitude of feed, care and labor to the development of 55 as fine Holstein and Guernsey grade heifers as you will see in many days' travel. Time came to tuberculin test the youngsters. More than one-half of them reacted and had to be slaughtered. From that time on, Mr. Darden bought all his milkers from



B. H. Darden and one of the motor trucks which delivers the perpetual milk flow from Lakeside farm.

known sources subject to 90-day retest. This system has minimized bovine tuberculosis losses and has provided a regular production of sanitary milk for his retail trade.

This resourceful Virginian buys from seven to ten carloads of grade Holsteins and Guernseys each year. Extensive rural travel and investigation have enabled him to ferret out centers where he can obtain cows that suit him. Farmers save their surplus animals each year until Darden comes to see them. Correspondents in different states keep him advised regarding supply and market conditions. You can't fool him on cows. He knows what he wants and will take nothing else. His sources of supply by experience have become acquainted with his likes, dislikes and actual needs. It took time, travel and educational efforts for Darden to perfect his dairy cow traffic system. The ends have amply repaid the means, measures and methods.

## Never Leave Stalls

The calf crop leaves Lakeside Farm as soon as possible after birth. This is ordinarily four to five days after calving.



When 124 cows enter the stanchions in Darden's milking stable, they're in the stalls to stay during the entire lactation period.

First of the astonishing "sights" to flabbergast many visitors at Lakeside Dairy Farm, Norfolk County, Virginia, is this battery of five silos. Never empty, with a capacity of 900 tons, utilizing the products of six farms, they provide feed for the amazing "milk factory."

As soon as ensilage is depleted, the silo is refilled with whatever green crop is available. Shock corn, sprinkled with water to restore moisture during filling, is used if nothing else is at hand.



Local farmers buy the calves, paying an average of \$10 for heifers and considerably less for bull calves. Mr. Darden is now developing a unique contract system with neighboring farmers. He sells heifers to them on the understanding that they will give him first chance to buy back the same animals when about to freshen the second time. This scheme, in time, will provide a nearby supply

and doctor's prescription milk except the supply for the largest Norfolk hospital which is delivered in bulk. Two trucks deliver the milk daily. Mr. Darden's son maintains an office in Norfolk and devotes his time to marketing of the milk, collections, and similar duties.

## Hold Customers

The Dardens have built up a permanent business on the sole slogan of "Integrity." They have kept faith with the public, have provided a healthful, clean, low bacterial milk which has won the commendation of Norfolk physicians. They have conducted their business in a business-like manner, which, however, has not been devoid from the use of the "milk of human kindness" when occasions for charity and good deeds have arisen.

Competitors say it is impossible to wean veteran customers away from the Lakeside escutcheon. Banteringly, these competitors explain: "Small wonder, for the Dardens are kith or kin to most of the old families in Norfolk County, and those that are not related to Mr. Darden are relatives of his wife."

The Lakeside Dairy baby milk satisfies rigid certified milk requirements while the Grade A milk ranges from 15,000 to 40,000 in average bacteria per cubic centimeter. All the dairy products which Lakeside can produce are marketed at profitable prices. There is no carry-over.

## System Really Works

To maintain the fixed milk quota needed to serve the clientele, cows are freshening almost constantly. That means replacement of dairy stock and sale of fat cows almost every week. A surplus of fat cows never accumulates. The special butcher trade is always waiting for the meat, blessed by Rabbis and marketed exclusively among Norfolk Jewish families. Mr. Darden buys springers in season so the animals will be acclimated and fully accustomed to new surroundings by the time their calves are dropped. He keeps the average production of the herd at about three gallons daily per cow. Animals that cannot hold that production pace are disposed of as soon as detected.

Darden's dairying may not suit you but it has worked out satisfactorily under his conditions. Using mind more and muscles less is a prescription which many producers may apply to their personal affairs to guide them from the darkness of red ink records into reaping net profits recorded permanently in blue.

Before leaving Lakeside Dairy Farm, meet the family.

