

What to consider when selecting cattle to keep

It is wise for a crop farmer to also keep livestock. This is referred to as mixed farming. When a crop harvest is poor, the farmer will get some income from livestock products. Another reason for growing crops and keeping livestock is that the two complement one another. Crop residues can be used as feed for livestock such as cattle, goats, and sheep. Banana peelings, maize straw, and green bean husks and leaves can be fed to sheep, cattle, and goats. Livestock droppings and urine can be used as manure to boost soil fertility and crop production.



Michael J. Ssali

Farmer's Say

The farmer should however be strict about the type or breed of the animals to purchase. If his real aim is to produce milk, for example, he should make some crucial inquiries about the young dairy cow that he wants to purchase. He should also seek the guidance of the area agricultural services extension officer or an experienced dairy cattle keeper. This may involve establishing if the animal's inherited genetic characteristics are suitable. Its historical background should be considered. You don't want to buy a cow whose milk yields are poor.

It should have a good appearance. Since it will need a lot of food in order to produce a lot of milk, it should have a large stomach. Most people recommend a cow that should be shaped like a wedge with strong legs capable of supporting the weight of the animal especially when it is pregnant. It should not be fat but instead it should carry little flesh. Check if it has a large udder and well developed teats. The cow you want to buy should not be dangerous or unfriendly. It is better to buy a docile calf with a good temperament. Some farmers have been attacked and severely injured by hostile cows.

Make some enquiries about the performance of its parents and grandparents. What is their calving index like? Do they produce one calf each year, or do they produce twins sometimes or always? How is their growth rate? Do they have good disease resistance? How old is the animal?

Selection of a good breed of the dairy cow is one thing; but are you in a position to take good care of it? Do you have the capacity to feed it well? Do you grow enough grass on your farm? Do you have a good source of clean water?

China North MACHINE

Head Plot 1

Em

DIESEL GENERATORS (SILENT)

WOOD WORKING THICKNESSER

WOOD WORKING

90 HP Tractor

WALK