

Trouble-free daughters impress visitors at NRM 2010

# Cows 'wow' the crowds

The All-Holland Dairy Show (NRM) is a biennial feast for commercial and pedigree producers alike. Nowhere in the world can they see so many daughter groups on display as at this event.

text Hans Siemers, Veeopro Holland

There are not many places in the world where a national cattle show attracts as many visitors as the NRM in the Netherlands. This year 11,000 people (including more than 2,500 from abroad) were watching the ring from the stands in Utrecht. In two days, they were presented with an unprecedented number of progeny groups, plus the individual shows which produced the Dutch National Champions.

## Problem-free cows

The progeny groups in particular offered a great display of the current position of Dutch breeding. Producers can see with their own eyes whether the daughters of bulls live up to the figures on paper. Are the feet and legs really as outstanding as the type score indicates? That high score

for udder, is that justified? For some the show serves to confirm that they have made the right choice of sire.

The presentation of progeny groups also clearly demonstrated the shift to problem-free, durable cows with good production. While in the past cows that oozed dairyness were preferred, today producers want their cows to have outstanding production over many lactations without any problems.

"The Netherlands was one of the first countries to opt for breeding healthy, problem-free cows – cows that are fit and in top form. With this breeding goal we lead the world," says Arie Hamoen, chairman of the cattle board that selects the cows and heifers for the NRM.

This breeding goal results from developments in the dairy world, namely

increasing herd size. This means that producers need cows that are easy to manage and that just get on and do their job – they don't require special attention. It is a different type of cow from the ones that are paraded at the shows. For show cows top type is everything.

"The difference between a farmer's cow and a show cow is increasing. You could clearly see that during this NRM," Mr Hamoen says.

## Wide offering

From the total of 23 groups that appeared in the ring, the daughters from Delta Paramount and Goolstar Diamond from the black and whites, and from Fidelity with the red and whites, attracted the most attention.

However, there were other groups that certainly surprised the crowd. There was something for everyone. That, too, is one of the characteristics of current breeding in the Netherlands.

There is a wide offering, which enables breeders to improve any specific traits. The presentation of three groups of cross breeds – MRI, Brown Swiss and Montbeliarde – was also remarkable. The

event organisers wanted to demonstrate that crossbreeding with other breeds, in order to improve health and longevity, is receiving a lot of attention. See the Etvei German Brown Swiss daughter group on the Avoncroft breeding news page.

Five second-crop heifers by Delta Paramount (Jocko x Fatal) stole the show. Paramount is a bull that perfectly fits the character of this era with outstanding type (109 udders, 110 legs and feet) and high, very persistent production (+643kg of milk and 22kg of protein) that his daughters easily cope with. Nice teat placement and very high rear udder attachments emphasised the qualities of this most-used bull in the Netherlands. The uniform and well balanced group was effortlessly parading around the ring, showing a little more condition than dairyness.

The opposite was the case where Goolstar Diamond's (Jocko x Willis) second-crop progeny was concerned. The five second calvers made a sharper impression than during a previous show, which is typical for their progression in milk production from first to second lactation (+228kg of milk) which the Diamond daughters show. On farm they are easy to handle cows – not too big – with good longevity (+417days).

Diamond distinguishes himself with good plusses for contents, +21kg, +0.15% of fat and +15kg, +0.09% of protein and a PLI of £161, very good type with 108



Goolstar Diamond: his second calvers made a sharp impression showing great dairyness



Fiction: his daughter group demonstrated that they are great producers



Delta Paramount: the uniform, nicely balanced group effortlessly paraded around the ring

Radiant Fidelity daughters: by far the most popular group



udder and 106 legs, high udder health (107) and calving ease (107).

The O Man son Fiction, from a Ronald dam, was represented by a first-crop daughter group demonstrating that they are great producers (+401kg of milk, 30kg fat and protein, £143 PLI). He showed a group of strong and robust 'producers' cows' full of character. He is a perfect partner for cows that need improvement for too high pins. Another point of interest is that Fiction also has the red factor.

## Red-and-white group

Lightning was clearly leaving his mark. Of all the bulls that presented a group, he was either the sire or the maternal grandsire. It was also remarkable that in the daughter groups of the red-and-white

bulls, several black-and white daughters were on display, a sign that these bulls are also in demand for black and white. The two groups are getting closer to each other.

The daughter group from the first-crop period of Delta Fidelity (Kian x Lightning) stood out. They were voted by spectators as by far the most popular red-and-white group at the show. It is obvious why this topper is leading the index ranking and he currently is much in demand, also among black and white breeders.

His daughters made an outstanding impression. His strong point, superb feet and legs (112), was clearly demonstrated by his dairy-looking daughters. Fidelity has great pluses for production and type, (+183kg of milk, +17kg, +0.12% of fat and +20kg, +0.18% of protein, PLI £148.) |