improvement Association, the Crops and Soils Association, scientists and techni-
cians from the Agricultural Experiment Station, the seed processing
industry, and individual citizens. This
group labors to plan and conduct a Crops Show that relates the story of Crop production in the Red River Basin.

The level of premiums paid to win-
ers in the Open, Youth, and Certified Seed Shows are rather modest. A real
challenge for the committee in the
years ahead will be to raise these premium rates to a more appropriate
level. Probably other sectors’ con-
tribution to the Crops Show itself needs to be reviewed and strengthened to maintain usefulness for the modern crop production picture. For instance, how can the potato and sugar beet community groups tell an appropriate story at the Winter Shows Crops Show? How does the importance of international markets to Red River Valley farmers become real to show visitors?

THE DAIRY SHOW

The Dairy Show, held in a garage in
downtown Crookston, began modestly in 1917, the year of the first Live-
stock Show. A few head of Guernseys, Holsteins, and milking Shorthorns were exhibited in spite of difficult transportation service. The midwinter roads weren’t very practical for the few small farm trucks that were beginning to appear on the scene. Most of the livestock from any distance at all had to be brought into town by sleigh or trailer. To Crookston on the train and led down the street to the show. Moving cattle out of warm barns into a cold transportation and preparing them for a Dairy Show put a lot of stress on the animals and on their owners. Despite that, the numbers at the Dairy Show grew as fast as space became available. The livestock farmers loved their animals, and they not only worked hard to put on a great show but they were especially loyal to the idea of the Red River Valley Winter Shows. Things were much better after the livestock buildings were built in downtown Crookston. The size of the show was generally controlled by the amount of room available in the barns, by the weather conditions, and road conditions.

The personal sacrifice and family-
based contribution made by dairymen is well described in the case of James and Darlene Muzzy in the late 1950’s. Jim and Darlene were coming up the ladder of dairy husbandry and community leadership, working hard with their young family and their dairy farm operation. They took time to show at the Winter Shows. They were among the first to give substantial personal

support to the new building fund es-

tablished to buy land and build a new facility just outside the city of Crook-
ston. They contributed breeding stock, the income from which was deposited with the board of managers. This family has continued showing pure-
bred cattle. The Daleford Farms are still among the leaders and winners at the Dairy Show today. Of course, there have been many contributions by breeders of beef cattle, swine, sheep, and horses, but space just doesn’t permit more than one such story to explain the spirit of Valley farm folks.

A dairy sale was attempted early in
the history of the Winter Shows, just after World War 1. The results were so poor that the sales committee of the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Associa-
tion decided against trying such an idea again in the middle of winter. More recently, however, in 1983 and 1984, there have been two dairy sales with a sharp increase in quality and quantity especially for the sale of 1984 and with enough success to encour-
age more such sales of top-quality cattle.

The Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association included more dairy proc-
cessors than farmers in the early years. They secured a modest appropriation from the state legislature as early as 1916 to promote the dairy industry in northwestern Minnesota and immediately began to spend some of those funds at the midwinter Dairy Show. This custom has continued throughout the 75-year history. Currently, the Dairymen’s Association, along with the dairy scientists from the Agricultural Experiment Station and the Ex-
tension Service out in the counties, provide the sustaining leadership for educational activities, for show com-
petition arrangements, for youth activ-
ities, and for the Honored Dairymen program.

This dairymen’s confederation is probably more active than ever today at the Winter Shows and expends a major amount of their modest appro-
priation for Winter Shows dairy pro-

The Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association included more dairy proc-

motion activities. The strong leader-
ship of Dr. Ed Frederick, dairy scientist at the Northwest Experiment Station in the fifties strengthened dairy activities at the show. Dr. George Marx today continues to provide the front-line leadership spark that coordinates the activities of the dairy planning committee: dairymen, extension per-
sonnel, and officers of the Red River Valley Dairymen’s Association. The leadership of dairy farmers also is stronger today than ever in the plan-
ning work for Winter Shows activity.

THE LIVESTOCK SHOW

Livestock species, including beef cattle, swine, sheep, and horses, were uppermost in the minds of the profession-
al agriculturalists and the farm leadership as the Winter Shows was being born. During the 1915 Farm Crops Show, a Red River Valley Liv-
estock Breeders Association was formed. Essentially it was a federation representative of the several county livestock breeder groups which had recently been formed by a few breed-
ers in each county. The first officers of the new Red River Valley Livestock Association were Tom Canfield (county agent from Lake Park, presi-
dent), Mike Jeffers (Red Lake Falls, vice president), and C.G. Selvig