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Diary '81

NR 293

Cuban cow candidate for Guinness Book of Records

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Havana, July 24, reuter -- Cuban president fidel castro flew to the isle of youth to the south of the Cuban mainland to visit a cow which he thinks might have made a world record in milk production, today's daily granma reported.

the eleven hundred pound candidate for the guinness book of records is named "ubra blanca", spanish for "white udder".

last week, in three milkings during a twenty-four hour period, the cow produced 72.9 liters (64.17 quarts) of milk.

granma reported that castro seemed ecstatic as he whispered endearing words to the cow while circling and admiring her. he expressed fear that the flash of the cameras disturb her milk production and fed her a bit of sugar to reassure her.

ubra blanca is the offspring of the Cuban born bull naranjo selling jupiter who is the son, by way of imported semen, of the Canadian bull selling rockman who castro called "one of the best bulls of Canada". on its maternal side, the cow is also endowed with Canadian holstein blood.

the Cuban president, who seemed totally conversant with the subject, said that Cuba still had more than a thousand doses of semen of selling rockman and eleven thousand doses of semen of naranjo selling jupiter.

--mora/Lem

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for over fifteen years, the Cuban cattle industry under the direct guidance of fidel castro has been experimenting with a cross between tropic resistant Cuban breeds and the northern holsteins. his much stated dream is that of producing a "tropical holstein" capable of giving an average of twenty quarts of milk a day the year round.

the imported holsteins which are conditioned to temperate climate suffer ill health and production loss in the tropics. the Cuban "cebu" on the other hand, is resistant to tropical conditions but produces only a few quarts of milk day day.

the aim has been to cross the holstein and cebu to produce a "tropical holstein". ubra blanca is a mixture of seventy-five percent holstein and twenty-five percent cebu.

castro was brought up on his father's sugar and cattle farm in the mountainous region of eastern Cuba. his brother, Ramon, is the current head of Havana's cattle industry and is considered an expert in the field.

the Cuban president said that Cuba now possesses almost 100,000 registered holstein cows and that it was no longer necessary to import semen or bulls from Canada and other countries.

--mora/Lem

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hundreds of dairies have been established in cuba but average production per cow is still believed to be only slightly over ten quarts a day. there are also sharp seasonal differences in production.

while milk products such as fresh milk, yoghurt, ice-cream and butter are unrationed and in abundance in cuba, the nation still finds it necessary to import canned milk and dried milk powder. cuban planners hope that during the present decade they can achieve self-sufficiency in dairy products.

==reuter/Lem