

Santa Cruz Farm Features...

Colts Caper In Green, Grassy Fields

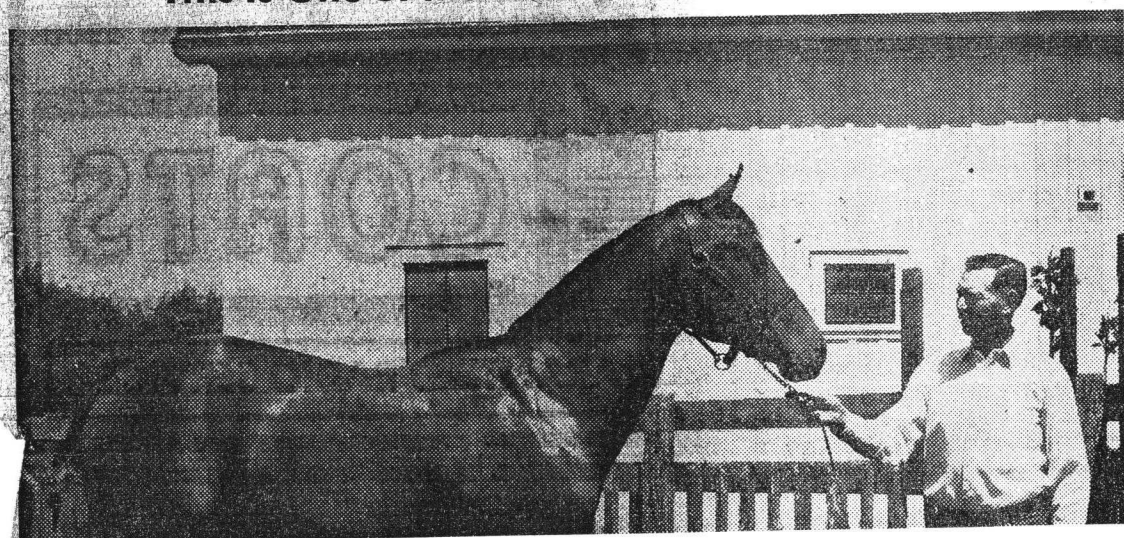


As can be seen above, quarter horse colts have the appearance of being miniature full-grown horses, having little of the gangling look of other breeds. Ranch

Foreman "Led" Engelsman does much of the veterinary work which accompanies the raising of horses and livestock. He has

been with the Wilder ranch since 1929, starting as a "rider" to keep hunters off the property. The ranch was a state game preserve for many years.

This Is One of the Wilder Ranch Prize Winners



Wilder Ranch One Of County's Oldest

Two-Mile-Square Farm Owned By Same Family Since 1863

(Editor's note: This is No. 33 in the series of regular Wednesday articles offered to provide information on this county's major industry—ranching and farming—from a business point of view.)

By Jewel E. Woods

The 87-year-old, 2400-acre Wilder ranch, Coast road, is a \$30,000-a-year business for Santa Cruz county.

It is one of the oldest businesses and farms in this area still under the same family ownership.

And it is a ranch whose owners have played an active part in this section's growth and farming activities since it was established in 1863 by Deloss Dwight Wilder, who had come west from Michigan.

Now owned by a "corporation" of five family members—who incorporated in 1906 so that continued and uninterrupted operation of the ranch estate would be assured—the Wilder ranch today is known principally for its registered quarter-horses, for its cattle business, and for its 500 acres of cultivated land planted principally to artichokes.

But in the beginning, Deloss Dwight Wilder operated it as a dairy farm, and for more than 50 years it produced a ton of butter a day. To help continue this successful business, Deloss D's grandson, Deloss Robert Wilder—one of the current owners—took college courses in dairy and creamery management.

Then came the invention of numerous and varied uses for the by-products left by butter-making and commercial creameries started to sell butter on a much smaller margin than would be possible for independent dairies, because the creameries now could make nearly as much money with the by-products as they could with butterfat and butter. And the Wilders, like many another independent dairy, found other types of ranching would be more profitable.

One of the switches was to cattle, and as recently as five years ago, one-third of all the beef cattle sold from Santa Cruz county came from the Wilder ranch. At present, the ranch runs about 300 head of cattle over 1800 acres of grazing land, and it sells all of its production to the local Walti-Schilling Meat Packing plant.

The Wilders' hundreds of acres of artichokes and other vegetables are operated by six tenant farmers and their families, three families of which represent the first tenants hired by the ranch.

offspring of "Quarter Deck" and one of their four brood mares, "Bubbles," have won a total of 35 ribbons. "Hardtack," formerly owned by John Bowman, world champion roper, now is 20 years old, but in his youth he raced 23 times and won every race but his last.

The Wilders' quarter-horses feed and romp on 24 acres of separated irrigated pastures. Water for the pastures as well as for the artichoke fields and other planted areas is provided from the ranch's million-gallon reservoir, which is supplied by Wilder creek, a stream which flows through the property.

With exception of the cultivated fields, operated by the tenants, the ranch is operated by three members of the Wilder family—Deloss Robert Wilder and his two sons, Deloss D. Wilder and Williamson Wilder—and by three permanent employees. Williamson, a bachelor, and the ranch foreman "Led" Engelsman, also a bachelor, have their quarters in the 11-room residence, now called the "ranch house," which was formerly one of the Wilder family homes. It adjoins the Deloss Robert Wilders' nine-room house, also built in the style of former years.

The five members of the family who incorporated the ranch were Mrs. Letitia Wilder, Deloss B. Wilder, Ethel Wilder Cooper, Jean W. Wilder and Deloss R. Wilder.

Like any other business, ranches and farms can change hands often. But like any business, those that remain under the same ownership for long years often build up prestige and success. The Wilder ranch is in this latter class, because since 1863 it has belonged to the same family, and since its earliest years it has been recognized as one of the county's most successful businesses.

Cherry Picking In

Round-Up Time Soon For These Herefords



Few more weeks and it will be round-up time on the Wilder ranch for this group of shy but curious steers and many dozens of their companions. The ranch buys grade yearlings and two-year-old steers and lets them feed two springs and one winter over 1800 acres of grassland. The herd

usually totals about 300 animals. The steers, accustomed to the sight of men in automobiles or on horses, gathered around when the car carrying the photographer approached . . . and promptly scattered in fright when he got out and started towards them on foot.

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Slight Decline In Kings C

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This Is One of the Wilder Ranch Prize Winners



"Triple Deck," the prize-winning stallion pictured above with owner Deloss Robert Wilder, dis-

plays the muscular shoulders, the small ears, the heavy jaws, and the alert look which are the iden-

tifying characteristics of the sprinter of the equine kingdom, the quarter horse.

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The third activity at the ranch, that of raising registered quarter-horses, is one which is receiving widespread attention.

The quarter-horse (which won its name through its ability to run at a great speed for a quarter of a mile) was developed in Virginia as a breed before the thoroughbred. Brought west by settlers it met with immediate favor among cattlemen for its natural instinct for herding cattle, for its above-average intelligence, and for its sturdiness.

For many years, cattlemen and cowboys became more interested in their horses' performance in roping and cow-work than in maintaining the horses' blood lines. In latter years, however, the original Virginia interest in the animal has been renewed and since 1940 the United States has been interested in the raising of the pure breed.

The Wilder ranch is gaining recognition. Nearly all of its quarter-horses have been so well selected and their offspring so carefully "weeded out" that nearly all of them are of high quality. The ranch's cooperation with the American Quarter-Horse association.

Many of the horses, most of which were sired by the ranch's well-known stud stallion "Hardtack," have won prizes in horse competitions. Their two-year-old, "Triple Deck," son of "Quarter Deck" sired by "Hardtack," won the class and grand champion awards at the Bay Counties horse show at San Jose this month. Three

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Cherry Picking In Full Swing In Clara Valley

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