



MORE



LIVING WITH ANIMALS

The first three contributions on the subject of "Living With Animals" have expressed some of my own feelings. I, too, take it very seriously about getting in the best possible hay for my cows and otherwise trying to make their lives as pleasant as I can.

As has also been mentioned, they can definitely try anyone's patience at times, but it's extremely important not to let them become the target for other frustrations. Mostly I can avoid doing anything worse than hollering at them and try to keep that to a minimum.

My part-Husky has become quite a devoted pal after a very rough beginning up to the age of about two years. He looks much like a wolf and I took it to be a wolfish characteristic that he didn't accept me as boss of our "pack" but very often challenged me at the beginning. I had to hit him with my hand many times, something I'd never had to do with previous dogs. He took it in good part, however, and would try to get into my good graces again immediately after being hit. His tendency during his "roughneck" stage was to treat me just as he would another Husky or wolf, such as chewing vigorously on my arm in playfulness. That's mainly why he had to be hit.

Sometimes it's a bit difficult to walk into the barn because of several friendly cats which swarm around my feet, usually purring. Anybody want a very friendly fluffy yellow cat which someone left off here? She's very lovable but is definitely surplus.

I used to keep two or three goats, thinking I'd eventually sell the cows and have goats only but gradually realized that I have a greater attachment to cows. Also one problem I had about goats is that the young ones are just too lovable to be killed for meat when they happen to be males. It's not much better for bull calves, but they can be kept for a longer time than young, unaltered goats can.

I quit eating meat many years ago, in large part because I didn't (and don't) like the way beef cattle on ranches have to be treated. However, it seems much better for homesteaders to take good care of a smaller number of meat animals and be sure they're killed in the most human way possible.

-- Helen Ashworth

