

Dual Beef Grading System Discussed By Market Specialist

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Have you recently heard a livestock expert say that beef grading has outlived its usefulness? Have you heard another say that a dual grading system would solve most of the beef grading problems? Others point out that dual grading will only further complicate an already complicated system. To say the least — grading is a controversial subject.

Why Grade?

The need for formal sorting or grading of meat arises because meat is a product in a natural state. Meat varies greatly according to age, finish and shape or conformation. Without grading the merchandising of meat in a mixture of qualities would be difficult.

Because grading improves marketing efficiency and market knowledge, the demand for Federal grading has increased in recent years.

Problems

Although nearly half the beef consumed is Federally graded, opposition to grading has grown in recent years. Many oppose the present grading system because the grades do not accurately sort out carcasses according to consumer acceptability. This is true. Tests have shown that some meat from "Good" carcasses scores higher than some meat from "Choice" carcasses. Critics feel that the range in quality within a specific grade is too wide.

A Proposed Solution

A dual grading system has been proposed to provide two separate identifications affect-

ing value for every carcass. This would be a grading improvement. This system would provide for a quality grade and a yield or cut-out value grade.

Present standards attempt to measure both factors (quality and cutability) within the same grade. A carcass showing evidence of Prime quality and Good grade conformation might be stamped Choice.

Under the dual grading system the two grades would be determined separately and independently of each other. This would enable grade standards to sort out beef carcasses and live animals much more accurately and precisely according to both quality (eating satisfaction) and cutting yield (cutability) at the same time.

How It Would Work

Present grade names would be used for the quality grade. Cutability grades would be indicated by numbers. No 1 would represent the highest yield and No 10 the lowest. On the basis of 1959-60 prices the difference in value between a Choice No 3 and a Choice No 7 would have been \$5.50 per hundred pounds live weight. This is a \$60 value difference on a 1,100 pound steer.

Under dual grading, retailers could order the yield and quality grades they desire. If carcasses of a particular yield grade were not available they could order a substitute lower yield grade with the same quality designation (Choice for example). A proper price differential would reflect the actual cutting difference between the two yield grades.

Dual grading would provide a more accurate language for price quotations and for conducting trading activities. It would help the marketplace provide price incentive to produce beef animals yielding more of the lean meat that consumers want.

We think you will be hearing more about dual grading. It has advantages for the producer, the packer and the consumer.

Clothes make the woman but often break the man.

Farm Bill Reported Out Of Committee

A bill resembling very closely the one asked for by the administration was reported out of the House Agriculture committee Thursday by the narrow vote of 18-17.

Several amendments have been added to the bill, but it remains essentially what the administration had recommended, especially in the areas of feed grains and wheat sections.

Representative Harold Cooley of North Carolina, had failed in three previous attempts to get the bill reported out.

The bill would allow the Secretary of Agriculture to set national marketing quotas for wheat and feed grains at a level low enough to use up some of the surpluses that have piled up. Acreage reductions would be mandatory.

Farmers could reject the plan in a referendum, but if they did, there would be no price support program at all.

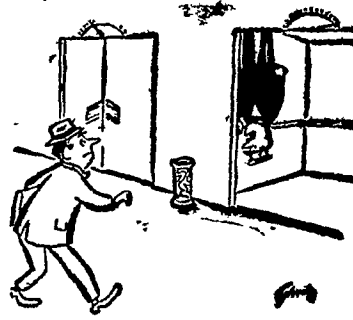
The bill's dairy section calls for voluntary reduction of production, not the original mandatory regulation.

Another section of the bill would establish a new conservation program aimed at using retired acreages for conservation and recreation purposes.



AW, NUTS . . . Jimmy Powell of Pompano Beach, Fla., uses his head . . . to carry around his 8-week-old pet, a gray squirrel named "Herkimer Gray."

My Neighbors

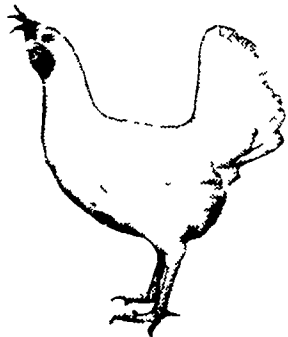


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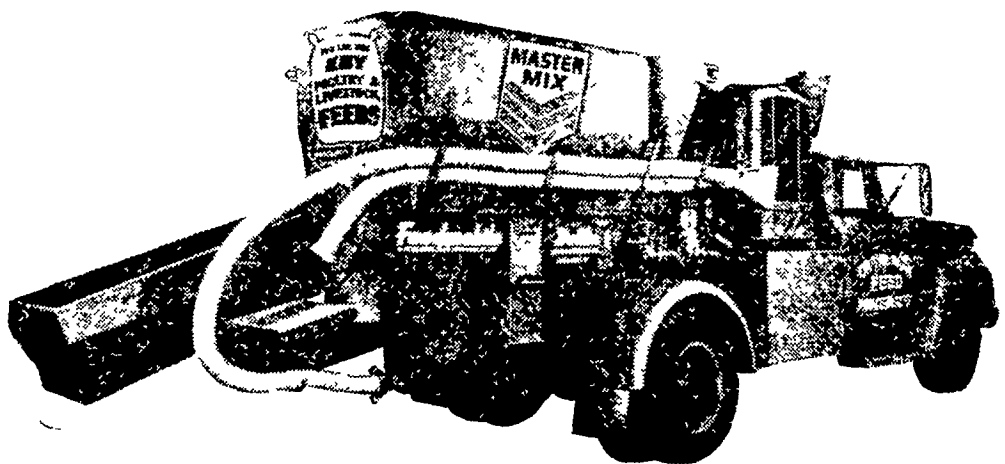
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