

Pennsylvania Now Has 364 Livestock Slaughter Plants

(Part II of a series of articles regarding Pennsylvania's livestock and meat industries. A Penn State report by H. Louis Moore, marketing specialist, and Julius F. Bauermann, food technologist.)

About 11 per cent of the nation's livestock slaughter plants are located within Pennsylvania. Each of these 364 plants slaughter over 300,000 pounds of livestock annually. The total volume of all species slaughtered approaches 1.75 billion pounds annually and ranks Pennsylvania among the top 12 slaughter states.

Eastern meat packers are highly dependent on shipments of animals from the Midwest to keep their slaughter operations running. Future adjustments in freight rates may favor the shipment of carcasses rather than live animals from the Midwest. If this happens, excess slaughter capacity could become a serious problem in the State.

Cattle slaughter in Pennsylvania reached 900,500 head in 1963, the largest since 1957. However, the State's share of national slaughter at 33 per cent is smaller than in the early 1950's. The State ranks 12th in cattle slaughter and 21st in calf slaughter.

Pennsylvania hog slaughter in 1963 reached 32 million head. This was the largest number slaughtered in the State in any year since 1944. The State ranks 9th in hog slaughter by slaughtering 39 per cent of the nation's hogs. Pennsylvania producers supplied about 17 per cent of the hogs slaughtered in the State's plants in 1963, a drop from 21 per cent in 1950.

In the early 1950's sheep and lamb slaughter in the State increased. It has declined in the past two years. The 1963 sheep and lamb slaughter totaled only 248,000 head and dropped the State to 15th position. About 157 per cent of the nation's sheep and lambs were slaughtered in Pennsylvania last year.

The livestock supply, coupled with transportation cost differentials that exist between livestock and meat, indicate a continued trend to establish slaughter plants in livestock production areas. Many of these plants will be strictly slaughter operations. New plants in the North Central, Southeastern and Mountain states will tend to increase slaughter in these areas at the expense of competing areas. Meat processing plants will tend to be established in or near consumption centers.

Meat Processing

Improvements in transportation and refrigeration have enabled producers and meat packers to our west to effectively compete with the Pennsylvania industry. It is no longer necessary for production and slaughter to take place in or near large population centers.

There are advantages, however, in processing meats in or near market areas. Specialization in meat processing and fabrication is moving ahead rapidly. It is not uncommon to find a plant which processes only one kind of meat or a plant which fabricates steaks from certain wholesale cuts and builds a national reputation and distribution for only one type of item.

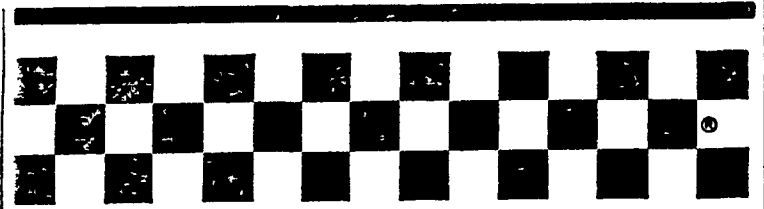
Meat processing has become the growth phase of the indus-

try in Pennsylvania. Value of sausage production in the State grew from \$93 million in 1954 to \$124 million in 1958. This four year gain of 33 per cent made Pennsylvania the fastest gainer among the leading sausage producing states. The State increased its share of national sausage production from 7 per cent in 1954 to 8.1 per cent in 1958 and to about 9.6 per cent in 1963.

The number of meat processing firms in Pennsylvania de-

clined from 102 in 1958 to 90 in 1960, but the number of employees increased from 3,117 to 3,686. In 1954 only 29 processing firms had 20 or more employees but 44 firms had 20 or more employees by 1960.

Over half of the nation's sausage products are still produced in slaughter plants but this share is declining. The amount of sausage products produced in the nation's specialized meat processing plants increased from 45 per cent in 1958 to 46.4 per cent in 1962. Between 1958-62 shipments of sausage products from meat packing plants increased 4.8 per cent while shipments from specialized sausage producers increased 9.8 per cent on a national basis.



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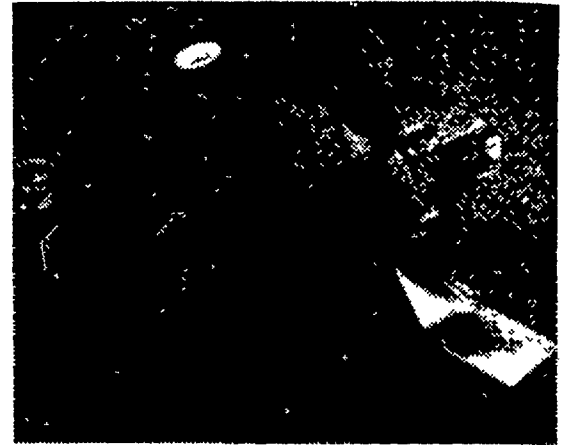
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