

## But Muscle Quality Drops Off in Some Herds

# Pork—More Meat, Fewer Calories

With swine testing and better selection techniques, producers have greatly modernized the pork they offer consumers.

Today's hog has less backfat and a higher percentage of lean cuts than yesterday's. In fact, today's hogs yield just half the lard of those 20 years ago, and Eugene Allen, University of Minnesota meat specialist, says a 3½-ounce pork chop now has only 240 calories, compared with 377 two decades ago.

With such vast improvement in the quality of lean meat on a

hog carcass, you might think pork would automatically taste better. But too frequently, this isn't the case.

V. R. Cahill, meat specialist at Ohio State University, says the genetic relationship between meatiness and quality appears to be slightly unfavorable. What's needed, he says, is selection that will emphasize flavor of pork, as well as the lean-to-fat ratio.

"Muscle quality slips in our certification programs because so much emphasis is placed upon

This report on improved pork quality and some factors determining quality appeared in a recent edition of The Farrow, a John Deere publication.

meaty carcasses," Cahill explains.

He tells of one farmer who joined the Ohio Pork Improvement Association in 1966 and increased lean pork quantity but decreased quality.

His herd went from 55.96 per cent lean cuts to 58.33. Average loin-eye area increased from 4.04 to 4.42. But color ratings dropped from 2.58 to 1.88, on a scale on which 3 means dark, 2, normal, 1, pale.

On similar three-point scales, firmness dropped from 2.75 to 2.17 and marbling dropped from 2.58 to 2.30. Such alarming breakdowns in pork-muscle quality have been noted in a few other meaty herds.

### Stress

Some scientists studying the problem are looking for possible connections between stress and poor-tasting pork.

Iowa State University's veterinary clinic, among others, has noted an increase in unexpected deaths of market-sized hogs. David G. Topel says animals that die from this stress syndrome have the same pale, soft, exudative (watery) meat that means trouble in muscle quality tests like the one in Ohio.

PSE pork, as the problem meat is called, loses a larger than normal amount of meat fluids and juices before and during cooking.

Overall, PSE pork affects the entire industry. One U.S. packer says it gets 17 to 20 per cent

PSE pork carcasses, it figures its loss from extra shrink alone at \$2 million a year.

### Work It Out

The silver lining in the pork quality cloud is that we can work it out with selection and breeding.

The experts say there are many hogs with both quantity and quality of muscle, all we have to do is identify these

through slaughter tests during certification, and keep only good-quality hogs for breeding.

In the meantime, there are a few practices pork producers should watch, such as limited feeding. Restricted feeding over the entire feeding period or a few weeks before slaughter may decrease pork-muscle quality, according to Richard Epley, meat specialist at the University of Missouri.

### Pig Fights

Other research shows that even environment can affect pork muscle quality. Fighting in pens, especially in hot conditions, increases the chances for PSE pork.

Stress effects are complicated, however, and they are among the many factors still being studied.

## FARM WOMEN SOCIETIES

### Society 24

Mrs. Roy Hollinger was elected president of the Society of Farm Women 24 for the coming year during a recent meeting of the group held in the home of Mrs. Leo Snader, outgoing president.

Other officers include Mrs. Glenn Shultz, vice president; Mrs. Joseph Greiner, secretary; and Mrs. George Ebersole, treasurer.

In other business, members approved a \$10 donation for items for ditty bags for servicemen and women. The project is being held in cooperation with the American Red Cross Program.

Plans were announced for a rummage sale Oct. 6 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., at the Bareville Fire Hall.

Following the business session, Mrs. Roy Hartmann, Intercoarse, demonstrated the making and arranging of Flemish flowers in a work-shop-type program.

Members of the group will visit Embreeville State Hospital Sept. 18 where they will serve refreshments and play games with the guests. This visit will take place of the regular monthly meeting.

## Don't Bury Trees

You may be killing your prized shade tree by burying it alive. Valuable trees are in danger of dying because excessive soil is piled around their bases or because they have been planted too deeply.

These practices occur most frequently where new homes are built. When the lots are graded, tree roots are often buried under the fill and the health of the tree declines. The supply of water and air is restricted by this soil covering and the tree becomes susceptible to disease and insects. It is also likely to suffer die-back.

New home owners often notice that their trees are dying from this condition in a period as short as six months or as long as two years.

The property owner can tell if a tree is buried by examining the base of the trunk. The trunk should flare, or spread out, as it enters the soil. If it doesn't, the tree is buried.

The following remedial steps which can also be employed as a preventive measure when grading should take place:

1. Scrape away the excess fill.  
2. Place tile pipe around the tree to allow air, water and food to reach the roots.

3. Then spread stone or coarse gravel and cover this with a layer of salt hay or a similar substance.

4. Finally add top soil to bring up the grade level.

### Engineering Manager Named

Edward A. Magalski, 153 W. Main St., New Holland, has been named engineering manager for Victor F. Weaver, Inc.

During his career he has been responsible for the design and installation of new machinery to eliminate labor and production waste. He directed a 4 million dollar plant improvement program for the R. T. French Co., Rochester, N.Y. and also initiated numerous project studies pertaining to packaging and processing equipment as well as building requirement studies.

Before coming to Weaver Magalski was employed by William Underwood Co., Watertown, Mass. where he served as chief of the engineering section.

In his new position as engineering manager, he will be responsible for directing the design, construction, installation, and maintenance of all processing systems, equipment, facilities and buildings of Victor F. Weaver, Inc. and its subsidiaries.

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