

Efficiency - A Must Dairy Program Theme

"Efficiency - A Must" has been selected as the theme for the 10th annual Southeastern Dairy Conference scheduled for February 4th at the Guernsey Barn on Rt. 30, Lancaster.

Sponsors of the event who include: Curtiss Breeder's Service, John W. Eshelman and Sons, New Holland

Supply and the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company, chose the theme since the constantly changing times and economic conditions call for the utmost efficiency especially for dairymen.

Eugene C. Meyer, Managing Editor of "Hoard's Dairyman" will be the keynote speaker. Meyer has traveled extensively

throughout the United States as part of his editorial responsibilities with "Hoard's Dairyman," a national dairy farm magazine published in Wisconsin. Meyer is well known to the dairy industry as he was active in the FFA and 4-H dairy program and majored in dairy science from Iowa State University. He is presently working with the magazine's dairy herd in Wisconsin.



Eugene C. Meyer

Beef

[Continued from Page 1]

eight animals a week go from the Groff herd directly to a nearby butcher shop. "Last year, we figured we made about \$50 more per head by selling direct," Jim said. "The butcher pays the trucking, which is usually about \$5, and we didn't have to pay any commissions which is usually another \$35. And we averaged another \$10 per head because our buyer always pays the top market price."

Their outlet likes his cattle finished to choice and prime, and that's what the Groffs aim to supply. And they do it entirely with homegrown feed. "Our only feed purchase, which figures out to around \$2.50 per month per animal, is liquid protein supplement," Jim said. The LPS is fed free choice to all the animals in the herd.

Actually, there are two herds of about 220 animals each. When the steers first come into the operation, usually at around 500 pounds, they are put into a starting group of animals and fed corn silage and LPS. "We figure it takes about a year to get a steer from 500 to 900 pounds on our feeding program," Jim said. "When

they're up to 900 pounds or so, we move them from the feedlot on the farm where I live to the lot on the farm where Carlton lives. There they get 15 pounds of shelled corn a day, along with LPS. It takes about 120 days to get the steers from 900 pounds to market weight. They gain about two-and-a-half pounds a day on finishing ration." Feed efficiency is boosted with Ralgro implants, two on each animal. When the steers arrive in the first feedlot, they're wormed, they get a nasal IBR vaccine, and a Ralgro implant. The second implant comes a year or so later when the steers are moved to the second feedlot.

The Groffs expect to do better this year than last. "Last winter, when we were buying 61-cent feeders," Carlton said, "we needed 48 cents to break even. The feeders we have now came a lot cheaper than that. About a third were put in at 40 cents and the rest at 30 cents. So our breakeven point is down a lot from last year. It wouldn't be a good idea for us to sell our corn, because 39-cent cattle are just as good to us as \$3.40 corn."

"We did sell some corn out of the field this year for \$3.40," he went on to explain. "It cost us \$1.50 a bushel to grow it, which includes seed, fertilizer, taxes, lease rent and equipment depreciation. There's very little labor included in that cost. So, \$3.40 a bushel looks pretty good. But in addition to the cost of planting, we had to pay trucking and drying out of that \$3.40, and that was about 80-cents a bushel. I doubt that we'd be better off selling corn."

In the coming year, Carlton expects to see a shift which would be even more conducive to feeding corn rather than selling it. "If \$1.50 is a realistic figure today for growing a bushel of corn, then it's going to cost 35- to 40-cents more this spring. There's no way a farmer can grow corn shell it and dry it for less than \$2.25 this year. But I see mighty cheap corn next year, maybe even under \$2.25. Especially if we get good weather, and if the seed quality is there, and if farmers can get the fertilizer. We'll have a big crop. And there won't be any animals around to eat it, either."

The Groffs had an exceptionally good corn crop in 1974. They shelled some 165 acres, and averaged 150 bushel yields. They sold some of the shelled corn, but put most of it in a Harvestore. They chopped another 120 acres, which was stored in an conventional silo. Sometime in the spring, they usually find themselves running out of silage, so they feed rye chop instead. Besides the corn, they grow about 80 acres of small grain, and have another 60 acres in orchards.

In the spring, they like to buy an extra hundred head to take advantage of the rye chop and pasture. "If you can put them on pasture and feed rye chop too, they'll gain a pound a day," Jim said.

Feeders are bought from a [Continued on Page 24]

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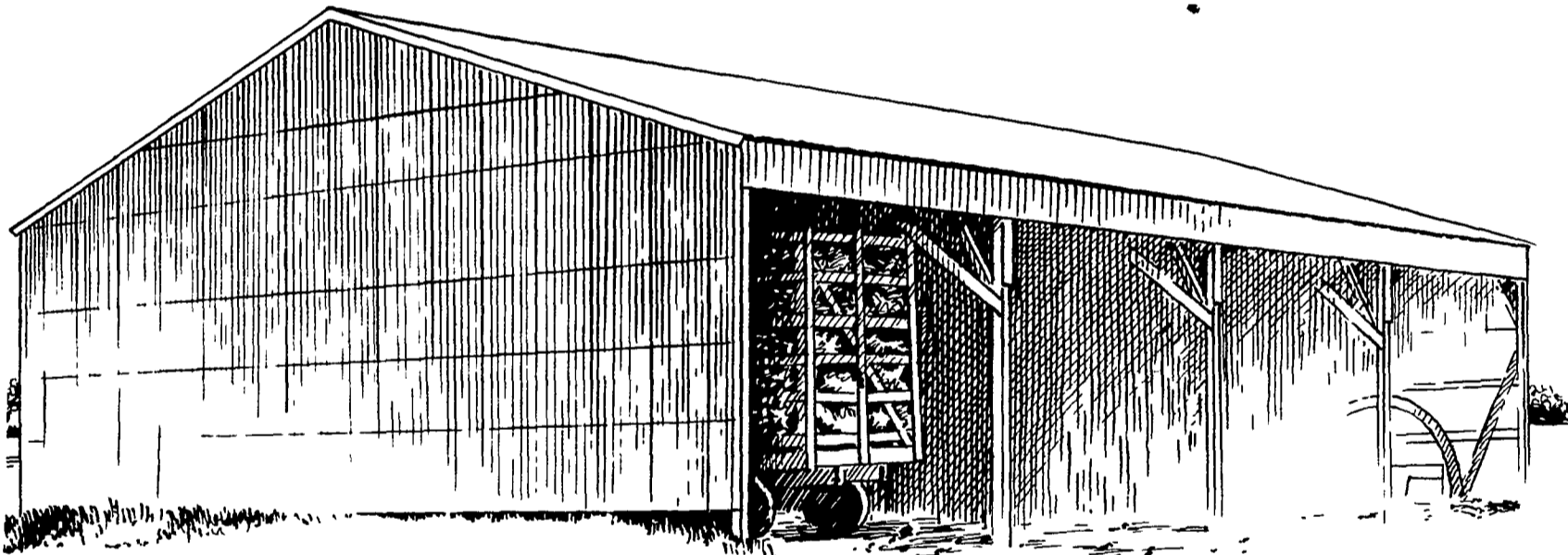
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