

Health charts sold unlawfully

(Continued from Page 1)
 cattle re-tested," he emphasized, "otherwise it's a game of Russian roulette." According to Guss, some cows have been sold in Pennsylvania for dairy purposes which had been branded on the cheek with a 'b' for brucellosis. He revealed that one Pennsylvania cattle dealer has been responsible for half of the herds in the state which

were depopulated because of Bang's disease.

In spite of the charges, Guss defended the Bureau of Animal Industry in the Commonwealth as "the best we've ever had." He believes strongly that there is a tremendous opportunity available for farmers because of the healthy, purebred animals raised in the state. Furthermore, he would like to see disease-free

goats certified as such, for example, and challenged the industry to bring it about.

"Because of the unique position we have in the numbers of healthy livestock, we should exploit this," he suggested. Nothing that Pennsylvania has more purebred Yorkshires than any other state, and more purebred Holsteins than Wisconsin, he proclaimed that a cooperative effort

should be started to promote "this unique thing."

Guss mentioned several disease which Pennsylvanians should be on the look-out for and made a couple of suggestions to help overcome them.

Testing is one method he strongly recommends for keeping herds healthy and Pennsylvania on top health-wise. Vaccination is another.

A form of cancer in dairy cattle is infecting as many as 20 per cent of the dairy cows in some parts of Wisconsin, Guss warned. Another disease to beware of is John's disease, which reportedly has the potential to destroy a herd in a very short time. Mastitis and infectious bovine rhinitis (IBR) weren't overlooked. Guss termed the first as "the most expensive cattle disease we have," and the latter as "the most serious."

The number one disease in swine is mange, according to Guss. An effective way to detect it early is to examine the ears. "Unfortunately it isn't detected very often - we think it's natural for a pig to scratch himself that much," the veterinarian stated. He observed that the disease was especially strong in northern counties.

Swine dysentery is confined to animals which had been brought into Pennsylvania from the Midwest, and "we're in awfully good

shape as far as this one is concerned," Guss related. Metabolic disease are on the rise and "the present problem," he continued.

"The milk quality program has literally gone down the drain," Guss revealed, and according to him, "no effort is being made by either government or the industry to upgrade requirements."

He believes that maybe farmers would be moved to do something about it if the resulting milk losses (due to mastitis) can be made clear to them. Don Ace, dairy specialist from Penn State who also spoke at the meeting, noted that an 800,000 leucocyte count cuts production by about 20 per cent, and at 1.5 million (when the dairy complains and threatens to cut the producer off) the loss is more than a third.

Both Guss and Ace revealed that a new somatic cell tester is being tried out at the University and it may be a valuable tool in detecting mastitis (especially sub-clinical cases) directly from the DHIA samples at some time in the future. "This somatic cell tester offers great possibilities for us," Guss remarked.

Another research development which has some potential in reducing cattle disorders is a strand of alfalfa with a balanced calcium-phosphorus ratio. "We're really excited about it and believe it would be of

great benefit to farmers," the retiring veterinarian exclaimed.

Parasites and breeding problems are two other areas of animal health Guss commented on. As far as worms are concerned, Guss said medicines are a good tool, but not the complete answer.

Breeding problems have a variety of causes, but the "biggest new problem in this area is the farmer-breeder," Guss said. After a short pause, he added: "And I don't know how to handle it." According to his findings, some herds have turned into disasters because of farmers not knowing how to breed a cow properly. At one point Guss asked the audience if it could be that an entire generation of dairymen may have emerged who do not even know the signs of heat in cows. One fellow in the group interrupted with: "Maybe farmers never did know, but in the old days the bull knew."

Guss claimed that at one farm 160 cows were bred and out of that number five conceived - "and these were purely accidental," he added. "The farmer was killing the sperm before he even got it into the cow."

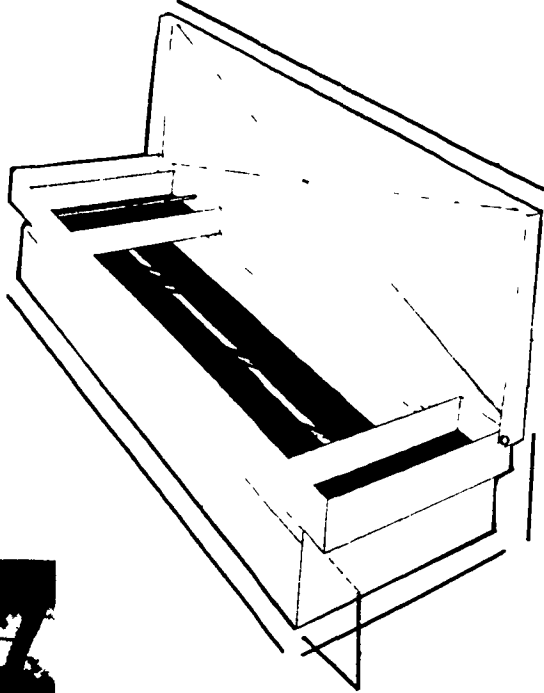
In concluding his remarks, Guss reminded the audience once more of the importance of testing cows, vaccinating against IBR, and controlling mastitis.

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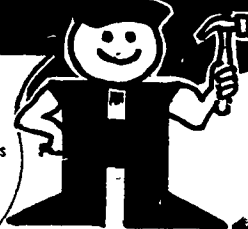
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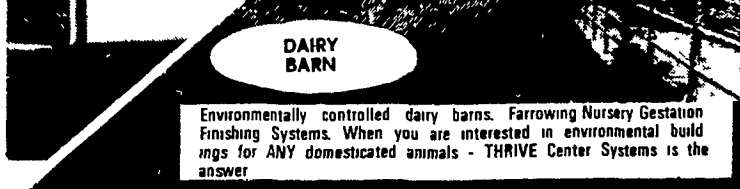
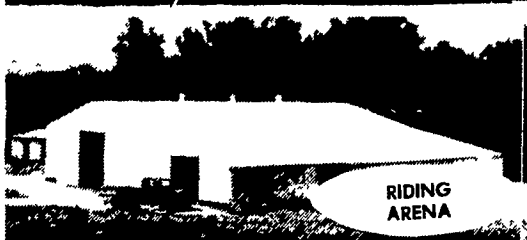
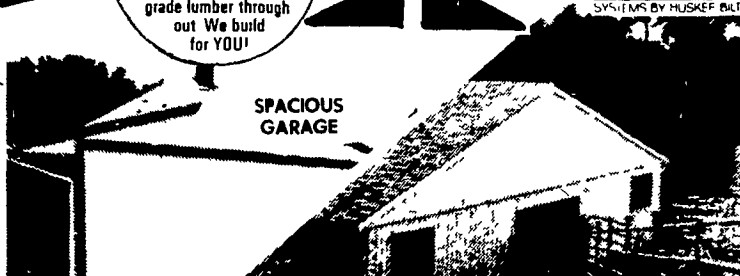
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