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Although the cattle market looks promising for the future, several variables are still lurking on the horizon.

Cattle market future looks promising

By MELISSA PIPER
LANCASTER - Although the cattle outlook for the bicentennial year still remains a "confusing situation", an overall view shows improvement in the industry but without a sizeable increase in profit, according to Lou Moore,

Penn State extension economist.

Moore delivered his forecast at the annual Cattle Feeders Day held at the Farm and Home Center here on Tuesday.

Early 1976 reports have shown that cattle on feed are up 28 percent in 23 leading

states including Pennsylvania, according to the economist, with the total cattle slaughter to be up about 10 percent.

"Feeder cattle prices should be a little higher about spring," Moore noted, "when pastures turn green, producers are going to be

competing for steers to fatten out while now only packers are bidding for the animals."

Moore told the producers that 1975 had been a "disaster" for the cow-calf operations but the feeders had in general made money

because of the low number of cattle on market.

"Feed prices came down and a lot of feeders made money," he explained, "which wasn't exactly what we had predicted."

However with the price margins squeezed more this year, producers may not

experience the profits realized in 1975.

Commenting on hedging, Moore cautioned the producers as there was not much "optimism" indicated for this year. "Hedging potentials are too close to

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Area tobacco averages 58 cents per pound

LANCASTER - As of Thursday afternoon, about one-tenth of Lancaster County's tobacco crop had been purchased for an average price of 58 cents per pound. "Some went for a little less and some for a little more," said a spokesman for the A.K. Mann Tobacco Co., here,

who went on to describe this year's crop as not being as uniform as last year's but comparable to last year's in quantity.

Tobacco buying is going on strong, but several companies are still inactive, leaving less than a half dozen bidders in a market which perennially keeps growers

and buyers haggling. As far as growers are concerned, there's also a lot of guessing.

This year's crop is turning out to be "mixed" - meaning that there is a lot of good tobacco in the area, but also some which is damaged or not first rate in other quality criteria. Most of the County's crop is used in the

manufacture of cigars and chewing tobacco.

Tobacco buyers have been out scouting around for over two weeks, but it wasn't until about a week ago that the first few purchases were made - and then only a few. Early reports indicate that the highest price paid so far was 63 cents a pound. The

highest quality tobacco such as this is likely to go into cigarettes - a very small portion of the market in this area, according to the A. K. Mann Company.

Most of the tobacco purchased so far has been of better quality, so it remains to be seen what sort of prices will be paid for the leaves

which are still hanging in tobacco sheds. According to Arnold Lueck, Lancaster County assistant extension agent, the market is very unpredictable.

So far the average price paid (58 cents) is identical to

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Lancaster Auction sees volume increase

By MELISSA PIPER
LANCASTER - At a time when many livestock auctions are experiencing low measurable receipts and even less profit, the large stockyard complex situated near the city here has seen a steady growth since 1972. William McCoy, president of the Lancaster Stockyards, recently announced that

since 1974, his market had realized a 23.2 percent increase in saleable receipts. One of the few such complexes in the east, the market according to McCoy has seen "a good rate of growth."

In the past year the percentages of livestock flowing through the stockyards has been on the increase except

for sheep which declined by 17 percent in the past year.

Veal calf receipts were up 35 percent with total cattle numbers up 19.4 percent. Slaughter hogs were up 4 percent with the largest and most outstanding increase being in the feeder pig division. An increase of 325 percent in feeder pigs has

been the overwhelming figure in growth.

McCoy noted that the sharp increase had been helped by the increased sales of feeder pigs which now takes place every other week instead of once a month. Weekly feeder cattle sales have also sparked growth for the concern.

The complex, located on

the corner of Marshall Avenue and the Lititz Pike, is a beehive of activity almost every day. Unlike many auctions which operate once or twice a week, the complex is being used as much as possible. "We have been trying to create an active atmosphere every day," McCoy explained.

"Increasing our sales and

adding more auctions has stimulated interest."

The stockyard president, explained that many farmers liked the idea of direct sales through bonded commission firms, as are offered at the complex rather than selling in by other means.

"Farmers seemed con-

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