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Cattle prices unpredictable

by DIETER KRIEG
LANCASTER — Cattle producers and dealers alike are not getting definite answers as to why prices are as low as they are and why they're going back and forth so much. But there are some definite opinions on the situation. To begin with, those close to the scene — marketing specialists and analysts in particular — point out that many of their predictions fail to come true because once something is said, quite a few producers and buyers are affected by it, react and eventually tip the market in the other direction.



Bill McCoy

June cattle prices, for example, have been forecasted to hit 50 cents per

pound. William G. McCoy, president of the Lancaster Stockyards, Inc., is cautiously optimistic that prices will reach 50 cents per pound. Explaining that lots of cattle are being held right now, he's concerned that a rush on the market next month will have depressing effects.

Although the Lancaster-based cattle dealer can't point a finger at any given reasons for unpredictable cattle prices, he did express some opinions recently which he believes could explain some of the

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Mr. and Mrs. John Marstellar, Stewartstown, are owners of one of the largest beef producing operations in York County. "If beef prices are going to pay the mortgage," says American Farmer Degree winner,

Marstellar, "then we'll have to have 50-cent beef and get it to stay there." The couple has plans for retailing their own beef. How soon will depend on the availability of credit and stability of beef prices at the auctions.

Hay exceeds expectations

by DIETER KRIEG
Farmers this past week checked their plows, corn planters and sprayers, and prepared for hay fields with mowers and choppers.

surprised at how good yields were. The dry spell earlier in the growing season and generally cool conditions lately had caused some producers to have doubts about what to expect.

A survey among Lancaster County farmers indicated that as much as half of the first cutting is in. A few have close to two thirds in the mow. One man assessed the

situation for himself and many others by saying he had one third in the barn or silo and another third laying in the field. Much of that has since then gotten soaked.

Rain during the middle of the week and predominantly unfavorable drying conditions may have been the biggest problems of this hay

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Baler twine prices drop

by MELISSA PIPER
LANCASTER — With the corn planting completed, many farmers in this area are preparing for the first cutting of hay. At least from the machinery and equipment side, the price outlook is bright. The surprise awaiting the baler makers is the price of twine. With a wince, farmers remember the highly inflated prices of last year's supply when a foot of baler twine cost more from \$26. to \$32. According to a survey of equipment stores conducted earlier this week

by this reporter, the average selling price for baler twine is expected to range from \$13.25 to \$13.95 for 9000 foot packages. Almost half the amount charged last year, both farmers and dealers seem pleased that the price has come down.

Few people are sure of what made the price of baler twine soar so high last year but the popular opinion seems to be that the manufacturers of the twine held supplies back so that inflated prices would increase profits on their sides. And while many farmers did buy the twine regardless of the price, the supplies

remained high as other haymakers found alternatives to paying the increased prices.

A surplus of the twine along with newly manufactured proportions of the commodity, flooded the market early this season causing an overabundance and the lowering of prices.

Commenting on the prices for this season, Dick Bomberger, salesman at C. B. Hooper's in Intercourse stated, "Last year there was a real shortage of twine and the price climbed up past \$30. for a 10,000 foot roll of

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Billion eggs marketed

ELIZABETHTOWN — "The factor that has enabled us to grow in ten short years is the dedicated effort of each and every employee of the Plain and Fancy Egg Ranch, Inc.," Paul Hess, Sr., president of Plain and Fancy Egg Ranch, Inc., said to 170 employees, spouses, and family members attending the company's Tenth Anniversary recently held in Elizabethtown. "From the many of each of your daily

efforts is why we have grown to be known for our top quality, fresh eggs, and why we have good customers who know that yesterday's lay, is really delivered today!"

The Plain and Fancy philosophy of dedicated efforts and effectively controlling every phase of egg production has worked extremely well for this progressive Elizabethtown R3 firm, which was started in 1966 by Paul Hess, Sr. and two partners who are no longer with the firm. From a

humble start of 15,000 laying hens in 1966, the egg ranch has grown - in ten short years - to processing and marketing eggs from over a million chickens annually.

By controlling every possible phase of egg production, Plain and Fancy has developed to a high degree of efficiency. Day-old chicks are raised for Plain and Fancy by several local pullet farmers. "By controlling the growth and feed

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Community effort continues as Solanco Fair keeps on expanding

QUARRYVILLE — A year ago Quarryville resident and businessman John Hoffman of the Lancaster Bone Fertilizer Co. surprised his community by donating a sizable sum of money towards a Fairgrounds expansion and improvement project which probably even he didn't fully envision.

Ever since then the southern end of the County has been buzzing with activity related to the Solanco Fair Association's projects. Just recently, for example, a group of farmers — as many as 50 one day — erected a second permanent barn for show animals. The construction project lasted only four days and the only costs involved were those for materials.

This continuation of an enthusiastic, voluntary effort on the part of Hoffman and hundreds of others has

made it possible for the Solanco Fair to expand beyond even their wildest dreams.

Last year the Fair Association put up a Community Building which is now being considered for

year-around activities. To bring that about the Association will need to put in a heating system, insulation, panelling, a ceiling, and tables and chairs. They're currently on another fund raising campaign to make the project a reality.

Also constructed last year was the Association's first permanent barn for show animals. Like the one put up two weeks ago, it was a volunteer effort. That in itself has saved the community a lot of money. Add to that the eliminated costs of renting all those tents, like they used to have, Fair Association leaders point out, and they're saving quite a bundle. The project continues to have the momentum of enthusiasm and there is a possibility that a third barn will be put up in time

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