

Beef industry future 'very bright'

By DIETER KRIEG
HARRISBURG - The beef industry has a "very, very bright future," according to John Chohlis, manager of cattle chows for the Ralston-Purina Company of St. Louis, Mo. Chohlis has been involved in the industry for several decades and made the remark at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Livestock Association, held here last month.

Demand for beef and consumption of it will continue to grow if the farming industry remains in a profit-orientated economy. Chohlis unhesitatingly praises the virtues of free enterprise and profit and considers these aspects of American business to be vital to our existence as a free and prosperous nation. (See page 10 of the November 13 issue of Lancaster Farming).

With per capita beef consumption figures heading for a new all-time high this year (127 pounds per person) Chohlis described 1976 as a great year for the consumer, but a lousy one for cattlemen. "The vast majority will lose money in 1976," he exclaimed to the dinner meeting at the Host Motor Inn.

The feed company executive predicts further vertical integration within the beef business. "It will gather momentum," Chohlis said, "as the producer

discovers that the only way to get bigger profits is to go into butchering and retailing himself."

Symbiotic integration is also a happening being discussed by industry leaders. This business venture directs businesses to branch out in directions which are fairly closely related to their main enterprise. An example would be Ralston-Purina - a feeds manufacturer - going into either the grain raising or cattle feeding businesses. Chohlis claims this does not always turn out as profitable as what it may look at first and is therefore convinced that vertical integration is the stronger and dominant business trend.

According to Chohlis, vertical integration is happening faster in the beef industry than in other areas because of the turmoil beef producers have experienced during the last few years.

Not referring specifically to prices, Chohlis announced "You ain't see nothing yet if you think a lot of changes have taken place in the beef business during the last few years." He predicts many more upheavals and bases this conclusion on what he has seen and heard at packer conventions. Some significant changes in the methods of processing,



John Chohlis believes in America's cattle industry, free enterprise, and freedom.

packing, marketing and handling are on the way.

"And let's not forget the hamburger generation," Chohlis added. Of the 127 pounds of beef consumed this year by the average American, 45 were in the form of patties produced at such establishments as

McDonald's, Burger King, Hardee's and Gino's.

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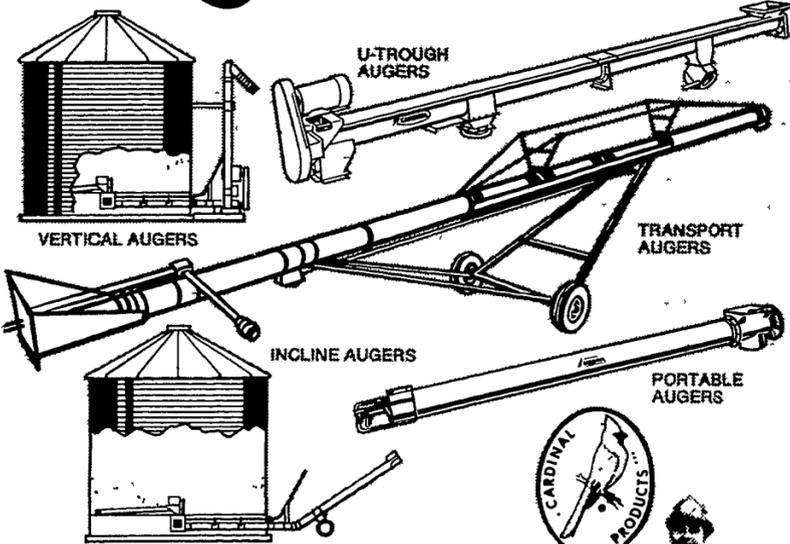
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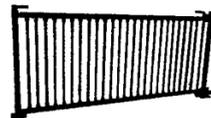
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