

# Tips given on buying animal health products

By Robert J. Frattaroli by the director of marketing  
 Editor's Note - The at the Animal Health  
 following article is written Operations, Pfizer, Inc.

NEW YORK, N.Y. - Buying animal health products doesn't have to be a hit or miss proposition. The following checklist will help one to become an informed consumer, define what a person can rightfully expect from his dealer, and save valuable time when one doesn't have much of it to spare.

On walking into a farm supply store, one should look to see if the dealer has set up a special animal health department. This step may seem elementary, but there are good reasons for it.

A special animal health department, if well organized, is the best guarantee of doing satisfactory business. Orderly displays eliminate buyer confusion. Moreover, neat and attractive displays usually go hand-in-hand with shelf products that are fresh and accurately priced.

Conversely, one could be taking a chance and gam-

bling with the well being of his animals if he buys health products from a jumble of assorted farm merchandise.

Farm store dealers, who are serious about their business, have a large inventory of animal health products a person might need. One can check this quickly if the dealer has taken the time to display his stock in a well-organized manner.

A knowledgeable dealer knows he will keep his customers satisfied only when he is a full-service operation, and a large inventory is an integral part of full service.

There are times when animals will need immediate help from animal health products. A dealer should be prepared for the crisis. He also should be farsighted enough to meet seasonal demands.

A reliable dealer should know the products he sells. He should be able to elaborate on the basic information given in product literature. Farmers can make use of this knowledge and not be afraid to ask questions. A good dealer can help make buying decisions based not only on product performance, but on hard economics such as cost/benefit ratios so one can be sure his investment is a sound one.

To augment his product knowledge, a dealer should have, on hand reference material, including necessary textbooks, extension information and recommendations for the area.

A conscientious dealer has a channel of communication open between himself and university specialists. This hotline can prove a valuable information source.

A specialist in parasitology, for example, likely will have at his fingertips such information as how continuous swine worming with an anthelmintic pays dollars-and-cents dividends to hog producers.

A dealer should also be able to inform a person on how the products he sells are working for other

customers, and his research should be thorough enough to provide one with facts and figures to document customer experiences.

A reputable dealer will have trained personnel who can provide service when needed, not from behind the counter, but out in the heat or cold of day where the problems are. A farmer's day is not confined to a 40-hour week or an eight-hour day so one should only do business with a supplier who has a schedule similar to his own - one that can always take care of his requirements. A wise producer will, of course, continually review his herd health program with a veterinarian.

A dealer should know and understand the farm operations and should be up-to-date on the details of specific nutrition and disease control programs that are adopted on the advice of veterinarians. Remember that the dealer's advice is no substitute for that of the professional although he is well trained in certain areas.

One should expect his dealer to attend meetings, seminars, and training schools to keep abreast of new practices or changes in old ones. He must, in turn, hold his own meetings, tours and demonstrations not only to demonstrate new techniques, but to prove that established products work as claimed.

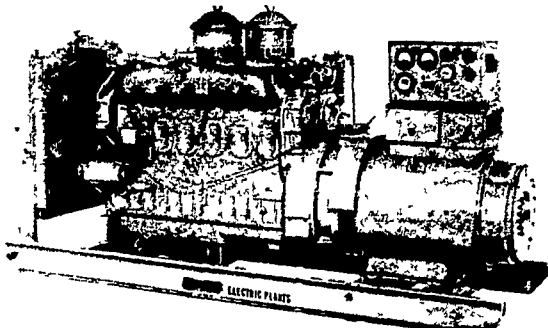
A full-service supplier must understand the farm operation and objectives to extend the credit and terms that maximize profit. One should not depend on his animal health products dealer to be his sole financier; this is not in the best interest. But, he can assist or direct a person to the best money source.

In selecting a dealer, one should place a high premium on attitude, looking for dealers who are willing to take pains to set up an attractive, well-organized animal health department, who are dedicated to customer service, and who are serious about upgrading their business and, moving the products.

One, too, should choose a dealer who is genuinely interested in a person's operation - who sells and services to accommodate a farmer's needs, not his.

A person should always read the label on any product he buys, looking for use instructions, guarantees, and a manufacturer whose name he recognizes. One shouldn't order new or unfamiliar products over the phone unless he has confidence in the dealer, or is sure of what he is buying and when to expect delivery. A farmer should beware of "good deals" on unknown products. Established products earn their reputations the hard way, in the marketplace, by proving over and over again their effectiveness.

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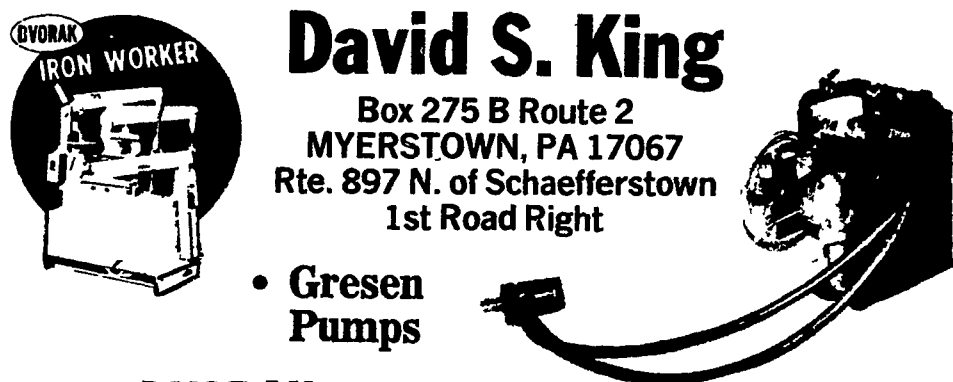


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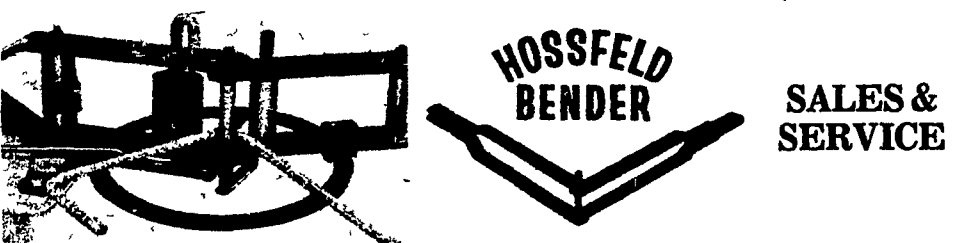
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