



My Thoughts ...

And welcome to them

By JOANNE SPAHR
Assistant Editor

It's my understanding that this weekend is a favorite All-American holiday--pool season opening day.

But, I really wouldn't know. How would I know? I wouldn't recognize a swimming pool if I fell head first into one.

Now, approximately 95 per cent of the American population wouldn't understand my ignorance, but, then 95 per cent of all Americans weren't raised on my family's farm where only "lazy" people went to swimming pools. (That's why I always contended that I should be the one to go swimming -- everybody knew I was the laziest one of the bunch.)

USDA nitrite decision pleases pork council

DES MOINES, Iowa - "Pleased and relieved" is the reaction of John Soorholtz, president of the National Pork Producers Council, to USDA's May 15 decision regarding the use of nitrite in bacon processing.

Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman announced that USDA is proposing regulations that set limits on the amount of nitrite that can be used, on the amount of blocking agent that must be used, and the level of nitrosamines that can be present in the product.

"The interesting thing," says Soorholtz, a pork producer from Melbourne, Iowa, "is that the proposed regulations are essentially what the processing industry has been doing for the past three years. In fact, the American Meat Institute recommended these levels to the industry in April, 1975."

"This is certainly a positive step and should clear up some of the confusion so that we can all get back to continuing to give the U.S. consumer the healthiest and safest pork products in the world," adds Soorholtz.

So, poor, deprived farm child that I was, I was forced to find other ways to cool off on those hot, Summer work days. One of the better ways always came during tobacco planting season. That one was the old "fall into the tobacco bed by accident" trick. Anyone who was raised on a farm where tobacco is a cash crop knows that the lush green seed beds make a marvelous soft, cooling cushion when the sprinkling system is trained on them. Of course, there's always the muddy bed lying in wait under the cool, plush plants, but a farm child finds that inviting, as well.

So, on a hot Summer day, it was not uncommon to see me over-reaching for a tobacco plant, only to topple head first "by accident" into the seed bed. Of course, at the same time, it was not uncommon, either, to hear my father, grandfather, and brother send up a united chorus of hoops and hollers as I broke the stems of the tender little seedlings beneath me.

When I had worn out my welcome on that one (which usually came after my second supposed accident), there was always the "stick your arm in the milk cooler" trick. Of course, there was always the threat of losing an arm if the lid came crashing down or withering a finger or two in the dry-ice like temperatures of the water, so that novelty wore off rather quickly.

But, the cooling trick that never wore off was hiding under a favorite shade tree and avoiding work all together. It didn't beat swimming, but it sure made working on hot Summer days a lot more tolerable.

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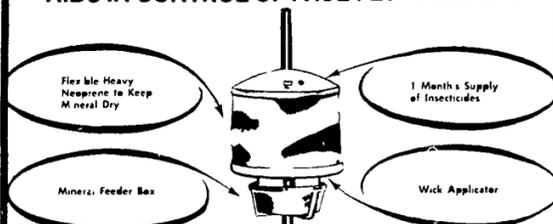
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