

Today's cattle breeds will be here tomorrow

By **JERRY WEBB**
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NEWARK, Del. — Consumers of the future can expect to get their steaks from the same breeds of cattle as they do today. The

idea of a completely new type of animal that can profitably turn tough grass into tender steaks is appealing, but research suggests that such an animal isn't likely anytime soon.

Interest currently centers on "exotic breeds" such as the "beefalo", which is a cross between a buffalo and present breeds of cattle.

Developers of the beefalo say their animal makes more efficient use of grass and other inexpensive forages than do regular cattle. The beefalo has not been tested by the Department of Agriculture or any land-grant university in the United States. However, the Canadian Department of Agriculture tested buffalo-cattle crosses for 4½ years - from 1916 until 1935. Only they called their animals "Cattaloos" rather than beefaloes.

The Canadians found cattaloos to be harder than cattle and concluded that they might have a place on northern ranches where

cattle cannot be grown profitably. But the Canadians also found that cattaloos had many reproduction problems. For example, bulls with as little as three-sixteenths buffalo blood were practically sterile.

Their conclusion was that most farmers should stick to more conventional animals.

Research by the Agriculture Department does show that larger breeds of cattle do make slightly more efficient use of forages than smaller breeds. For example, the large Simmentals put on 100 pounds of meat for each 661 pounds of feed they consumed in a 279-day test involving seven breeds of cattle. The smaller Jerseys required 707 pounds of feed for each 100 pounds of gain. All animals in the test were getting a ration of

about one-third grain and two-thirds forages. Research by the Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station shows that breed size did not affect feed efficiency as much as animal maturity.

Cattle, like people, use feed most efficiently when they are young. After they reach maturity, much of the feed goes to produce fat.

Since small breeds of cattle mature more quickly than larger breeds, the results from feed tests

depend somewhat on the length of the test. For example, results may be one thing if all breeds are tested for the same number of days. They may be different if each breed is stested only until optimum maturity.

The experts seem convinced that much progress remains to be made in cattle breeding, feeding and management. But they say we'll make this progress with the breeds that are available today.

Farmers have options with their grain loans

NEWARK, Del. — If your corn or grain sorghum loan is about to mature, you have two options besides redeeming it or forfeiting your crop to the Commodity Credit Corporation, according to Joe Penuel, an official of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS).

First, Penuel says, you can extend your loan on the same terms for an additional 30 days. Of, if you choose, you can place your crop directly into the farmer-owned grain reserve.

Expanding the loan gives farmers more time to weigh the other options. In addition, the loan program for 1977 corn and grain sorghum has been reopened, giving farmers who didn't take out loans earlier a chance to enter the grain reserve. Farmers signing up for new loans on their 1977 crops must agree to enter the reserve.

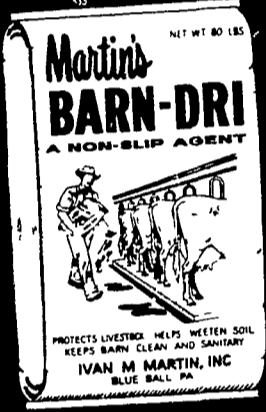
Through the reserve program, farmers shield their commodities from the market to help strengthen prices. They receive payments to store the commodity on their farms or in commercial warehouses. In turn they pay interest

charges the first year, but not the two succeeding years, and agree to leave their commodities in the reserve until prices climb substantially or for three years.

For more information on commodity loans and the farmer-owned grain reserve, contact the local county ASCS office.

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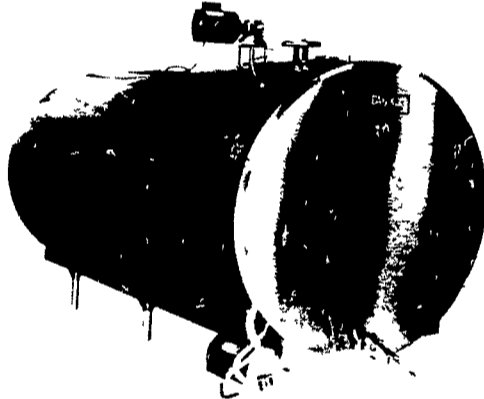
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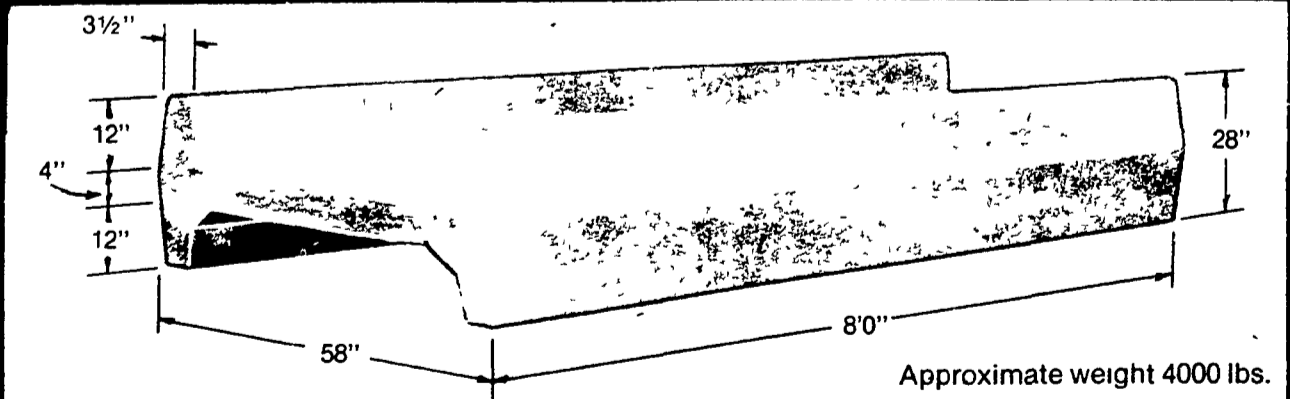


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