

Different views seen on cattle herd rebuilding

SARASOTA, Fla. - Has the rebuilding of the North American cattle herd begun? It depends on what region one is talking about, according to veteran livestock marketing businessmen who gathered here recently.

They provided conflicting answers to that key question during "Livestock

Marketing Survey '79" held as part of the annual meeting of Livestock Marketing Association. Participants in the survey were LMA regional directors, representing all sections of the U.S. and Canada.

The directors were generally optimistic about livestock prices for the coming year and into the

1980's at the Jan. 13 survey, but were wary about whether the liquidation phase of the current cattle cycle is now over. A capsule summary of the directors' comments, including the region they reported on:

Jack Torpey, Torpey Cattle Corporation, Los Angeles (Pacific Southwest); noted that cattle breeding stock "has been depleted during the last two years, and I don't know whether it's being rebuilt." His region will be short of feeder cattle this year, along with fat cattle, he said.

Earl Britton, Montana Livestock Auction Co., Butte (Pacific Northwest); said that with "very good" feed supplies and a "good" hay crop, his region will be rebuilding cattle herds this year. Markets in his region sold about 25 per cent less cattle last year than 1977, he said. The cattle market should be "fairly good for several years," Britton said.

Joel Bennett, Saint Paul (Minn.) Union Stockyards (Northern Plains); reported that total cattle slaughter this year should be "slightly below" 1978 as the herd will be rebuilt. "1978 was an excellent year for our part of the country and 1979 looks even better," he said.

Paul DenHerder, Tri-State Livestock Auction Co., Inc., Sioux Center, Ia. (Northern Plains); noted that his region needed cattle since it was in a "livestock deficit area," DenHerder said "People who are replacing cattle are getting a little scared (about whether to rebuild or not), including some very stable

operators." He said that his area's feed situation was "excellent, both in quantity and quality."

J.D. Sartwelle, Port City Stockyards Co., Sealy, Texas (Southern Plains); Sartwelle, a veteran of over 40 years in the livestock business, said the cow/calf operator "has the best run at profitability than at anytime in history." He also predicted "\$900-1,000 cow/calf pairs in a year or so," but added "We're in a very nervous situation right now. The cattle market might fall back on us in the next few weeks...some correction is coming."

Charles Lughill, Lughill Brothers, Inc., Archbold and Columbus Grove, Ohio

(Midwest); said that because cattle numbers are down in his region "it will take longer to rebuild the herd," Lughill said. He also predicted a "big demand for feeder calves," but said he wasn't sure where they would come from.

E.D. "Buddy" Neal, Chipley Livestock Inc., Chipley, Fla. (Southeast); Neal said he had "very little or no experience" that the cattle herd is being rebuilt in his region. The buildup will come, he said, "when people decide that this market is for real."

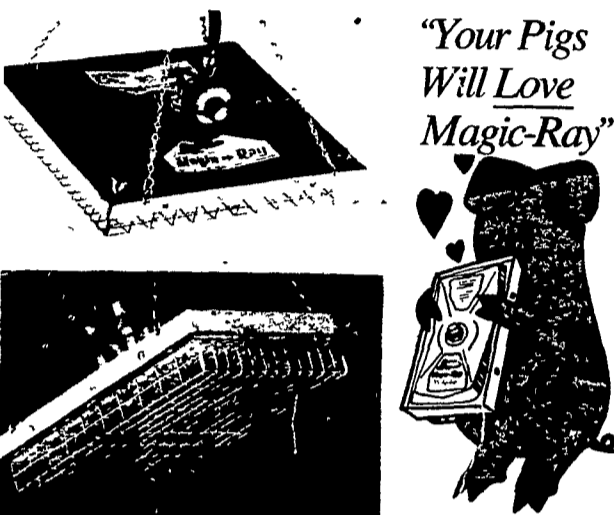
Charles Leask, Livestock Division, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Regina (Western Canada); Leask

said his region was "moving into herd rebuilding" and that he expected about six per cent fewer cattle marketings than last year. One notable exception to the liquidation phase, he said, has been British Columbia. "Producers there never really sold off the cow herd. They have 4 per cent more cattle than they did in 1975."

Lex Rutherford, United Cooperatives of Ontario, Toronto (Eastern Canada); Rebuilding is "not happening...liquidation keeps going on and on," Rutherford said. He also predicted that "when the rebuilding starts, whenever that is," there will be a 25-30 per cent reduction in slaughter from 1978 totals.

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Farm forum set for Feb. 28

GETTYSBURG - "Managing for the 90's" will be the theme for the first Adams County Farm Forum to be held Feb. 28, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Schottie's Restaurant, Littlestown.

The program includes presentations by Gene Swackhamer, President Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore, on "Financing Tomorrow's Operation Today," and Ralph Lambert corporate engineer with Hanover Brands, on "Planning for the 90's."

A panel discussion on "Managing Labor For Maximum Profits" will feature Ed Lippy, of Lippy Brothers, Crop fares, Hampstead, Md., William

Moore, dairy farmer, Chester County, Pa., and Robert Powell, Jr., supervisor of personnel, Westinghouse. John Schwartz Adams County Agent, will discuss "Why Manage for the 90's."

The forum is sponsored by the Adams County Agricultural Council and The Adams County Cooperative Extension Service. It is designed for any person interested in the future of agriculture, especially those planning to be actively engaged in farming in 1990.

The \$8.50 per person or \$15.00 per couple registration fee includes the cost of the lunch. In order to

plan for conference details, reservation should be made before February 23.


Further details and registration forms are available from the Adams County Cooperative Extension Service Office, 999 Lincoln Way West, Gettysburg, Pa. 17325.

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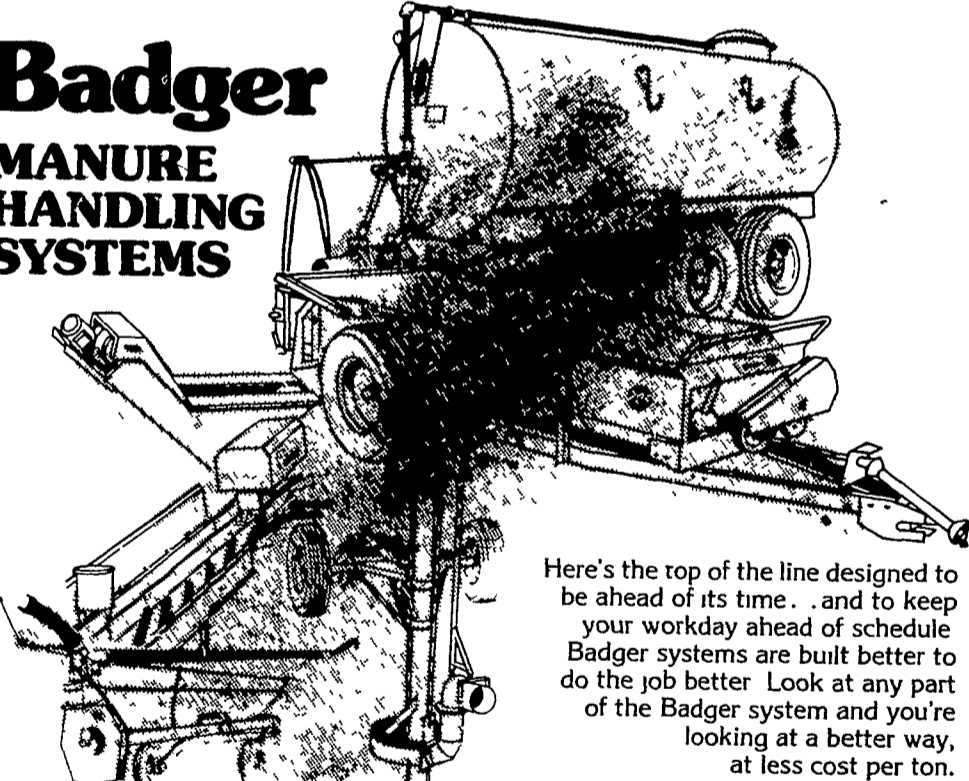
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