

Practices begun to curb rustling

ANNAPOLIS, Md. - Consumers and cattlemen are not the only ones aware of the value of beef animals these days. The rustlers are becoming more active in Maryland.

The Maryland State Police have informed the State Department of Agriculture that for the first three months of 1979 livestock theft is up 15 per cent.

Therefore a Livestock Alert Program has been worked out involving the State Police and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

According to MDA marketing specialist Rick Baker, "the key to recovery of stolen livestock is expediency. Most are moved for sale that day or the next morning to a local

auction market usually just over the state line.

"Auction market personnel do not as a matter of routine ask for proof of ownership from people bringing in livestock for sale.

"Therefore, the Maryland Department of Agriculture and Maryland Cooperative Extension Service are now urging farmers to report

stolen livestock immediately to the local barracks of the State Police."

The State Police, upon receipt of such a report will then alert Baker of the theft so that he can contact auction markets, slaughter houses, dealers and individuals in the area where it is likely the stolen animal might be offered for sale.

"The point of the program is to have a uniform reporting system set up

using the State Police as the eyes and ears of the program," according to Baker. "MDA will then makes its contribution by trying to locate, and hopefully recover the stolen livestock. Successful recoveries can also lead to the arrest and conviction of the rustlers."

Baker says for all practical purposes preventing theft of livestock is almost impossible. Farmers are urged to brand or tattoo their animals and maintain

written records of all identification numbers.

The economics of livestock theft, namely cattle rustling make it an attractive crime to criminals today. A 1,000 pound steer can sell for \$720 on today's auction market. A week old female Holstein dairy calf, weighing 100 pounds, could bring \$140 at auction.

Grange week proclaimed

HARRISBURG - Governor Richard Thornburgh signed a Proclamation declaring April 22 to 28 as Pennsylvania State Grange Week last week in Harrisburg.

Each year, Grange Week is set aside for the purpose of commemorating the founding of the Grange.

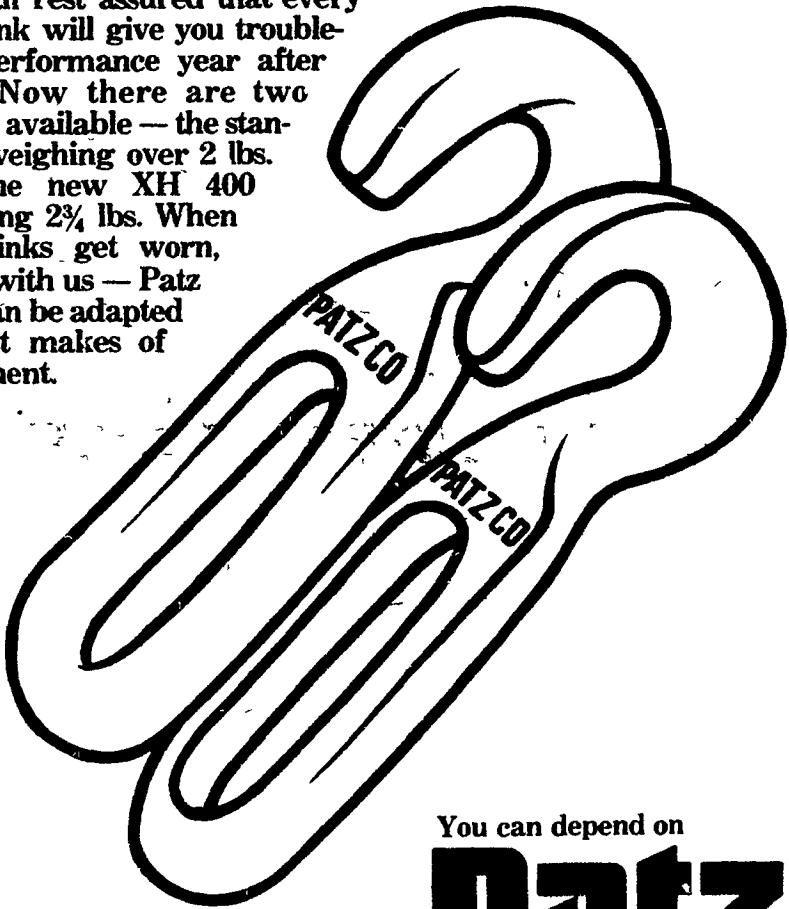
During last week, many Granges held open house meetings in order that the public may become more aware of Granges in their communities.

Penrose Hallowell, Secretary of Agriculture, and J. Luther Snyder, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, were both present at the proclamation's signing.

Representing the Grange at the signing were Robert E. Steese, State master; George W. Rodgers, State secretary and Mary Bufington, State lecturer.

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