

Information called key to taming livestock cycle

DENVER, Colo. — Furnishing the nation's livestock producers better information about current and future marketing conditions is the best hope of taming the boom and bust cattle cycle, two speakers said during session three of the recent Livestock Marketing Congress '79.

Extension Economist Clement E. Ward said that while the industry cannot

manage livestock cycles, it can influence them. Ward, an associate professor at Oklahoma State University, said the numerous state and national trade associations, along with farm organizations "have a responsibility to inform their members" about current and future conditions.

The manager of the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, Charles A

Gracey, said it would be "excessively optimistic if we presume success (of an industry-managed cycle) will be either easy or complete."

But, he said, "We cannot tame or moderate livestock cycles by voluntary means unless we are able to create much greater awareness of these cycles among the thousands of small herd

owners who make up the backbone of the industry."

Gracey ruled out any type of "compulsory program, involving supply control or quota production of some sort . . . such a system will not work and ought not to be pursued."

He favors a cycle "that is influenced by industry leadership and information programs of sufficient quality to help producers

reach and make more appropriate decisions."

Gracey described the Canadian "Beef Watch" program as a way to help tame the cycle. This program he said, has two steps: convincing cattlemen of the value and importance of moderating the cycle, and helping producers "understand the lag time that exists between their decisions and the ultimate results."

He concluded by saying that "more moderate livestock cycles are vital to the preservation of a free livestock industry. Given the capitalization that is involved in modern beef production, I am certain that we would not survive another beef cycle as severe as the last."

Ward, although ruling out an industry-managed cycle as "a workable alternative," said that "As trends toward fewer and larger firms, and increased incidence of vertical integration continue, an industry managed cycle may be possible.

However, it may not be socially desirable."

This is because "Integrated arrangements benefit participating firms, possibly reducing their exposure to cycle-generated risks, but non-integrated firms may be left at a comparative disadvantage."

Ward also noted that "several industry groups" are making current and future conditions reports available to their members, and added, "If state and federal research funds continue to be reduced, their role may greatly increase, because much of the research and extension material they rely on will be unavailable."

This year's Congress, held here from June 13 to 15, had as its theme "Riding the Cycle: Are There Workable Alternatives For the Industry and Consumer?" The annual Congress is conducted by Livestock Merchandising Institute, Kansas City, Mo., as the industry's premier conference on livestock economics.

Berks Co. reporters named

READING — Kerry Schwoyer, Rambling Riches, Fleetwood R1; Cheryl Adam, Hamburg R2; and Liane Haas, Douglassville R2, have been selected as three of 42 Pennsylvania young adults to serve on a State 4-H Reporters Team, it was announced recently by Carroll L. Howes, acting State 4-H Leader at The Pennsylvania State University.

Members of the group have recently received special communications training on the Penn State Campus and will serve as 4-H ambassadors to promote the educational youth program.

"Their activities will help the public more fully understand the 4-H program, an integral part of the Penn State College of Agriculture," Howes notes.

Team members will be available to talk to organizations at local, regional, and state levels, including 4-H Clubs, College of Agriculture alumni groups, legislators, and church and school functions. They also may make personal appearances at conventions and other large meetings.

Kerry Schwoyer has been a member of the Antietam Hoofbeats 4-H Horse and Pony Club for the past four years.

Cheryl Adam is a nine year 4-H member enrolled in the countywide Baby Beef program and Virginville Dairy and Swine program as well as the clothing program and teen leadership through the Leesport 4-H Club.

Liane Haas has been a member of the Berks County



Kerry Schwoyer, Rambling Riches, Fleetwood R1; Cheryl Adam, Hamburg R2; and Liane Haas, Douglassville R2, who recently completed special communications training at The Pennsylvania State University as members of the 4-H Reporters Team, receive Completion Certificates from Dr. Thomas B. King, Penn State associate dean for Extension.

Baby Beef Club for the past seven years.

For more information

about Berks County 4-H or to have a 4-H teen ambassador talk with an organization, one can contact the Berks

County Cooperative Extension Service, Agricultural Center, Leesport, Pa. 19533; or phone 215-378-1327.

Eastern National entry blanks available

TIMONIUM, Md.—Entry blanks and premium lists are now available for the 33rd Eastern National Livestock Show to be held at the Maryland State Fair Grounds here October 3 to 7.

More than \$50,000 in premiums will be offered at the show, largest livestock event in the East.

In addition to the junior

and open class judging in beef, lamb and hog events, the Eastern National this year will feature several activities designed to attract city dwellers. A cutting horse show will be held on the weekend and the Maryland Jousting Championship will be held on the final day of the show.

In the beef breed competition, Polled Herefords will be judged on October 4, Charolais, Simmental and Herefords on October 5 and Angus on October 7.

Further information and entry blanks may be obtained from the Eastern National, Maryland State Fair Grounds, Timonium, Md. 21093.

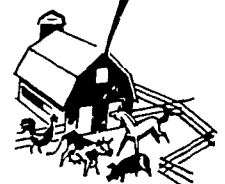
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