

Blocking chutes at Farm Show, victory in communication

BY SHEILA MILLER

HARRISBURG — One of the key issues confronting this year's Farm Show was the cattlemen's concern about the Commission's ruling which banned blocking chutes from the beef barns.

As a result of positive communications and understanding, the Farm Show Commission and the cattlemen reached a compromising position. The Commission decided to allow the blocking chutes to be kept in a specific location inside the barn.

The exhibitors found a reserved spot marked off at one end of the beef barn, close to the dairy barn, that was for blocking chutes only. And some exhibitors kept their chutes in the stall area next to their cattle.

But, the chutes were out of the alleyways which was the main reason the chutes were banned in the first place. The state police fire marshal said that the chutes posed a fire hazard the way they were kept in the walkways in previous years.

At the first Polled Hereford exhibitors

banquet, held Tuesday evening at the Hanover Trail Restaurant, Show Director Charles Itle said the Commission originally had made the ruling to make more room for everyone so that all livestock could stay an entire week.

Itle explained that to accomplish this "great chore", his boss, Hugh Coffman reduced the number of commercial exhibits by ten per cent. He also cut the livestock and poultry exhibits by seven per cent in order to get enough room.

Itle said the Commission felt the blocking chutes took up too much space; for each chute, one animal was eliminated.

He said even with the limited entries this year, there were six animals where there only should have been five tied in the beef barn stalls. Two rows of stalls had been eliminated to make room for the commercial exhibitors in the barn. This left one row for the chutes.

Itle expressed his appreciation to the cattlemen for doing an excellent job of

keeping the aisles free of obstacles. He pointed out there would be no problems with entries or space for chutes if there was more room.

He stated that the cattlemen could do a lot as individuals and as an organization. "You need to support the idea of a new complex by voicing your opinion and letting the Pennsylvania legislators know that it is needed," he said.

The Farm Show Director stressed the need for his department to be funded at its current level for 1980. He pointed out the present administration is willing to spend the money it takes to keep the Farm Show building clean.

He also said the present domestic water system will need to be replaced. The pipes of the original system are disintegrating and over 20,000 gallons of water are being lost each day. This loss adds up to a lot of tax payers dollars, and the Commission needs money to replace the water system.

One of the cattlemen pointed out one area the

Commission could save money was in heating the beef barn. Don Sunday, York County, said he felt the barn was too hot for beef cattle and the heat should be turned back. He also questioned the show director on the possibilities of having new tie outs in time for next year's show.

Itle commented that they "need to strike a medium" in temperatures in the Farm Show complex, but said he would check into the possibilities of setting the beef barn thermostats at a lower level. Concerning the tie outs, he said the Secretary of Agriculture will try to work on the possibility.

The present tie outs are used by beef exhibitors to

keep their cattle outside at night because the cattle, for the most part, are not used to being kept indoors. The facility is located a distance away from the beef barn, and consists of three rows of staked-down, weathered fence, the strength of which is questionable.

Another item of concern for the cattlemen was the announcement that the Keystone Livestock Exposition was tentative. Itle told the group the Commission would like to hold the show earlier in the Fall to match up better with the Timonium show. But, he said, the complex's calendar was already booked up.

The present date is too conflicting with other

national shows. There are also conflicts in moving livestock into the barns because of the Standardbred sale running the week ahead of the Keystone show, according to Itle.

Les Midle, Washington County, told the show director he felt it might be better to change the date and have two good shows than what has been held in recent years.

Two other safety problems were pointed out to the director. One major concern was the use of power washers in the large wash rooms. With plugs and cords in water without ground fault receptacles, one cat-

tlemen said he felt the

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Livestock market and auction news

Joliet Cattle

Thursday, January 10

Weekly cattle: Friday through Wednesday's salable receipts 6,000; 4 days last week 4,061; same period a year ago 6,750. Trading slow on Monday; turned active on Wednesday in a forced trade. Slaughter steers and heifers ended the week steady to 50 lower than

Wednesday of last week. Cows ended the week 50 to 300, instances 400 lower than Wednesday of last week.

SLAUGHTER STEERS: Mixed high choice and prime 3-4 1150-1300 68.50-68.75, mostly YG 4, few 5, 1250-1430 60.00-66.00. Choice 2-4 1050-1300 67.50-68.50. Mixed Good and Choice 2-3 1000-1250 66.50-67.50. Few Choice holsteins 1500 62.00. Wednesday Few good grade

weaners 1100 61.00 Monday. **SLAUGHTER HEIFERS:** Mixed choice and prime 3-4 950-1100 66.50-67.00, 1 load Monday 67.25. Choice 2-4 900-1150 65.50-66.50. Mixed good and choice 2-3 800-1000 64.50-65.50.

COWS: Utility & commercial 1-3 48.00-51.00 Monday; 46.00-49.00, 1 load high dressing utility 50.50 Wednesday. Canner & cutter 40.00-45.00 Wed.



Grayson Fair, Dauphin County, used a blocking chute to get his crossbred 4-H steer ready for the show. While he was blowing the water off the Angus x Chianina he had just watered, the animal kicked out with his hind foot, which fortunately connected with the metal chute instead of Grayson.



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