

# USDA proposes increase in produce licenses

LITITZ—Produce traders and the public have until November 25 to comment on a U.S. Department of Agriculture proposal to increase license fees for produce traders by \$15 per year.

Produce traders are licensed by USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service under the Perishable Commodities Act, which establishes a code of good business conduct for the produce industry.

John J. Gardner, USDA official, said the new fee schedule is required because of increased operating costs. He said fees paid by licensees

cover all costs of administering the program, and no tax funds are used.

Under the proposed fee schedule, a firm required to be licensed under PACA would pay an annual fee of \$150 plus \$50 for every branch or location above nine, up to a maximum of \$1000. The current fee is \$135 plus \$35 for every branch or location above nine, with the same \$1000 maximum.

In administering the act, the Agricultural Marketing Service provides a consultation service to help buyers and sellers of fruits and vegetables make sound business disputes. The act

also provides for payment of damages by anyone who fails to live up to contract obligations in buying and selling these products.

The law requires all commission merchants, brokers and dealers who buy, sell or handle fresh or frozen fruits and vegetables in interstate or foreign commerce to be licensed.

The proposal was published in the November 10 Federal Register, available at local libraries. Two copies of all comments should be sent to hearing clerk, rm. 1077-S, USDA, Washington, D.C., 20250, where the comments will be available for public review.

## How to decide where to market hogs

NEWARK, Del. — The pork outlook is rather uncertain right now, but whether prices go up or down, swine producers want to sell their hogs for the best possible return.

Where you sell your market hogs can make it a big difference in your final profit. The highest price quoted won't always put the most money in your pocket.

For instance, a distant packer may offer more than a local buyer, but after you've subtracted shrinkage during shipment and the cost of transportation, in some cases you may find you're better off, in terms of net

profit, selling your pigs for a bit less close to home.

Before you settle on a buyer, take a look at all the figures involved, not just the price, advises University of Delaware marketing specialist Carl German.

Find out who's responsible for paying transportation costs, and where pigs will be weighed. Get price quotes from all the packers you're willing to ship to. Get quotes, too, on the cost of transportation from shippers, or compute your own cost if you'll do the hauling.

Note those packers and markets who pay shipping themselves. And don't forget

to consider shrinkage due to shipping—especially over long distance.

This may seem rather complicated, but it really just takes a few phone calls and some simple arithmetic, says the economist.

To help swine producers do this, he has put together a circular describing the calculations involved, using practical examples. To obtain a free copy write: Mail Room, Agricultural Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, DE 19711. Ask for the extension circular on "Where to Sell Market Hogs."

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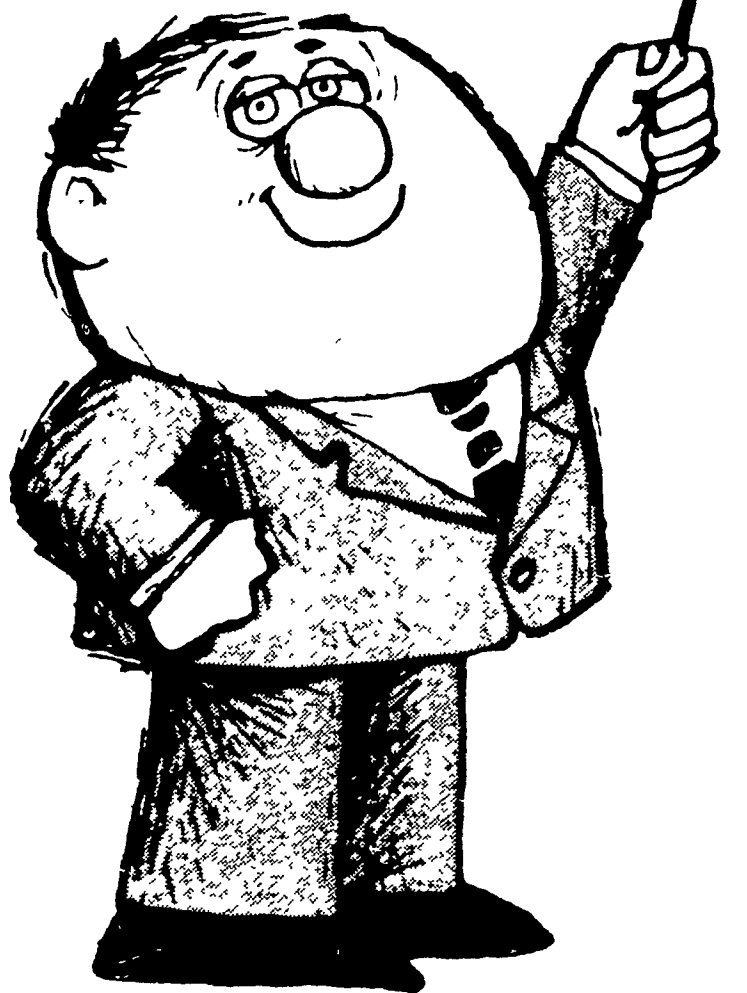
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