

# Beef forecasts miss mark

DENVER, Colo. — Retail beef prices are averaging lower than had been expected at this time. With production seasonally large, consumers can look for more featuring of beef at special prices. This was pointed out by the National Cattlemen's Assn. as it embarked on a nationwide campaign to show food retailers and the public that beef is one item in abundant supply and at favorable prices for consumers. "Last fall and winter the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other forecasters kept predicting

short supplies of beef and sharply higher prices this spring," NCA President J.W. (Bill) Swan said. "These forecasts badly missed the mark, but they were repeated so often that many people came to believe there indeed was a limited supply of beef. "As a result of the forecasts, retail beef featuring, at least until recently, has been limited and the public has not realized that beef is or will be a good buy at this time." In 1980, beef prices averaged only 5 percent higher than in 1979, NCA noted. Again this year, any

increase in the average price is likely to be less than the general inflation rate. Retail beef prices right now, NCA's latest survey shows, are down from a year earlier. And cattle and wholesale beef prices are substantially lower than last March. Swan noted supplies of beef and other meats so far this year have been considerably larger than expected. With the big supply, cattle prices have been depressed. And, has been the case for more than 1½ years, cattlemen have been experiencing severe losses. "Frankly," Swan said, "our future, and the future of adequate beef production, depend on more

aggressive movement of beef now. We have to get through the current burdensome supply. That is why we have asked USDA to call more public attention to the very ample supplies of meat in general and beef in particular. "Furthermore, cattlemen are calling on the top officials of national and regional supermarket companies, plus numerous local firms, in order to explain the beef situation. Supermarkets in some cities already are promoting beef strongly, at special bargain prices. We are asking those who have not yet done so to immediately do more featuring. Our advice to the public is to watch for good price

specials on various beef cuts, particularly now in this period of abundant meat supplies. "With large numbers of cattle placed in feedlots in the Fall, we usually have a seasonal bulge in cattle marketings at this time. This year, the supply increase has been even greater than expected. Production of other meats also has been large. "There will be some fluctuations in meat supplies and prices as we move through the year. But total per capita supplies for the year will be near record levels, and, from a consumer standpoint, one of the best supply periods is right now."

## Angus Assn. supports beef grade changes

ST. JOSEPH, Mo — The American Angus Association Board of Directors has gone on record in support of the proposed USDA beef carcass grading changes that were adopted by members of the National Cattlemen's Association at their recent convention in Phoenix, reports Myron Woolever, president of the American Angus Association. "The proposed guidelines for revising the USDA beef carcass grading standards should not measurably affect the quality of beef that is graded USDA Choice,"

said Myron Woolever. At the same time the Board believes that the grade revisions will help achieve the following goals: increase the demand for beef, decrease production costs to the entire beef industry, and produce a leaner product that will maintain the superior position of beef in the red meat industry.

Action supporting the grade revisions was taken in a formal resolution adopted by the Angus Association board of directors at their regular quarterly meeting February 23, here.



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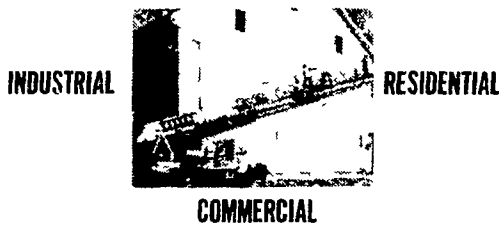
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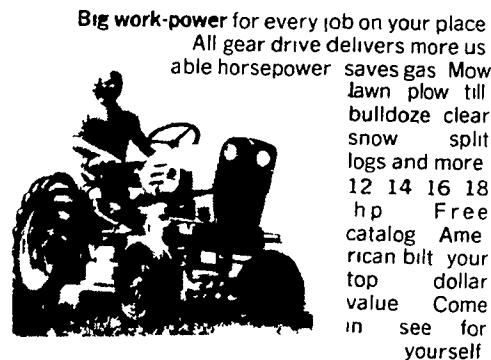


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