



Farm Talk

Jerry Webb

Elsie making comeback

One of the hottest stars in Hollywood these days is after all only a farm animal. No doubt the sexy Miss Piggy would be offended to hear herself described that way, but truth is truth. Despite her efforts to be beautiful and desired, she is still a pig.

Miss Piggy is not the first farm animal to jump the barnlot gate and head for the bright lights. There have been others, most notably a Jersey cow named Elsie. The American Jersey Cattle Club reminds us that Elsie, the advertising symbol for the Borden

Company's milk products, enjoyed unprecedented popularity a few decades ago and is now making her media comeback.

Elsie the cow started out as a print media logotype — an artist's caricature that began showing up in milk ads in national magazines back in 1936. The popularity of the campaign soon sent Borden executives on a nationwide hunt for a real cow.

The real live Elsie made her debut at the 1939 World's Fair in New York City, according to J.F. Cavanaugh, executive secretary of the American Jersey Cattle Club. He was one of a group of college students assigned to the task of caring for a herd of 150 dairy animals on exhibit at the fair.

It soon became evident, he says, that everyone who stopped by the display wanted to see Elsie, and the Borden Company wasn't about to disappoint them. A special booth was hastily prepared and a registered Jersey cow, Elm Hill Farm's You'll Do Lobelia, became Elsie.

Elsie was given the very best,

including a boudoir featuring all the whimsical farm-related props a big-time advertising department could think of. There were churns made into tables, milk bottle lamps, a wheelbarrow chaise longue, and oil paintings of Great Aunt Bess and Uncle Bosworth.

Elsie outdrew everything at the 1940 World's Fair, including the multi-million dollar General Motors Futurama, as thousands of fans stopped by her stall. Taking advantage of this popularity, the Borden people created her family, a husband named Elmer (still featured on Elmer's Glue), and a calf named Beulah.

Then it was off to Hollywood to make a movie while Elmer kept things going at the fair. Elsie co-starred with Jack Oakie in a film called "Little Men" and received star treatment, including a stay at the Ambassador Hotel and a cocktail party at Ciro's.

Following the World's Fair closing in October 1940, Elsie and Beulah went to New York's exclusive Bonwit Teller to get the young heifer ready for school, then on to Philadelphia where they drew 228,000 admirers during a three-week stint at Gimbel's. The lines of lookers were so long, Santa Claus had to be relocated to the rug department.

Elsie then became an un-

paralleled fund raiser collecting more than 10 million dollars in War bonds between 1941 and 1945. She traveled all over the United States in her own private rail car — even received a Doctor of Bovinity degree from the University of Wisconsin.

Recent surveys show that even after more than four decades since her World's Fair debut, Elsie remains the most beloved trademark in America, with the Campbell Soup twins a distant second.

And now the Borden Company is bringing Elsie back as a living symbol of the vitality and excitement that goes with milk.

Bordens now owns several Elsies. They're housed at Ohio State University where ag students provide for their health and well being. Instead of a box car, the modern Elsie, still a pert and pretty Jersey cow, travels by air or in a fifth-wheel trailer dubbed a "Cowdillac."

So once again Elsie makes the rounds of fairs and grand openings, delighting kids who may be seeing for the first time the real source of milk. And standing behind those kids some misty-eyed parents or grandparents who can still remember when they saw that first Elsie at the World's Fair so long ago.

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Start checking corn now for ECB

NEWARK, Dela. — Now's the critical time to start checking your crops for European corn borer activity — particularly your corn. Peak first brood egg laying activity occurred 7 to 10 days ago, so larvae should be hatching out now, says University of Delaware Extension pest management specialist Mark Gruastein.

Though some egg laying will continue during the first two weeks of June, borers emerging right now are the ones to watch for, in terms of how much damage you can expect this season. Overall in-

festations in corn are still expected to be light to moderate as predicted earlier this spring, he says.

The most important corn to check first is the earliest planted conventionally tilled corn (that planted before April 20). This was the tallest and thus most attractive when female moths were laying their eggs.

Recommendations for ECB control are no different than they were last year, says Graustein. So follow the same prescribed guidelines for determining if and when insecticide treatment is needed.

Fact sheets outlining scouting procedures for ECB in corn are available at county Extension offices. These fact sheets also list recommended chemical controls, should treatment be required.



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