

**OUR READERS WRITE,
AND OTHER OPINIONS**

(Continued from Page A10)

program. Net farm income may drop to the levels of 1930 this year. Many farmers today are in desperate straights trying to pay their debt and operating expenses.

Farmers today should be advised not to increase added expenses by supporting this promotion program.

Question II: Pennsylvania law allow for milk advertising costs to be included processing and distribution expenses. The point is made that the producers of raw products should not bear the cost of advertising the finished product. The strongest supporters of milk promotion see the wisdom in having the funds come at least in part from processing and distribution. Many farmers express concern that there will be no end to adding cost to farm expenses with one program after another if this one is approved.

Question III: Professionals in the field of advertising have periodically presented well prepared papers indicating "that these programs are almost completely unsatisfactory because they have no control over product and product lines, packing and branding, distribution, personal selling and pricing.

Responsible economists point out "hard statistical data fail to show conclusive evidence that these programs improve milk and dairy product sales." Some point out that if the program was successful, price would be enhanced, producers would increase milk production and benefits derived would be wiped out. Many who

referred to advertising and promotion at the Dairy Symposium in Kansas City said advertising and promotion is not the solution to the problem facing the industry today. It has not been proven this program will increase Class I sales or be beneficial.

Question IV: Congressman Jeffords, member of the House Agriculture Committee, speaking at the recent Northeast Dairy Conference, assured the group that his Milk Promotion legislation is not compulsory. It provides for cooperative block voting, undermines the freedom of choice for the individual dairymen. Moreover, many make the charge that block voting undermines our democratic system of government. They argue that eventually labor unions might want to exercise an equal right for block voting or any organization including a political party.

What concerns me very much is that perhaps dairy farmers have been given wrong signals and false hopes of increased sales and consequently, the industry has been led into trouble. Hopefully, those who help shape dairy programs will learn from the mistakes of the past and start using their energy on programs designed for producing milk to fit the needs of the market.

It is quite obvious the weight of arguments as I hear them fall on the side of voting against this mandatory five year milk promotion expense. Even Wisconsin has voted a similar

Reef grade changes, unhealthy cure

I'm an Angus breeder, so everyone expects me to be opposed to the beef grading changes and everyone is right.

But let me tell you, my opposition has little to do with the breed of cattle I raise — Angus cattle have enough going for them to get along pretty well in whatever grading system is used.

Unfortunately, our industry is far from healthy today — and those who believe the proposed grade change will return it to health would treat a broken leg with a dose of salts and exercise.

Let's review some of the facts. We are told our product is no longer in demand — matter of fact, the chairman of the NCA beef grading committee in an interview with the Wall Street Journal, was quoted, in an article that went nationwide, as saying that — talk about promoting your product!

Fact is, beef is still by far the number one American meat counter purchase, though per capita consumption has dropped steadily since 1976. Interestingly enough, that was the year cattle industry leadership last convinced the USDA to add water to the soup.

We are told the reason our product has dropped from favor is because it's too fat. Sorry, but you can't plow that mule either — our present grading system makes available Prime, Choice, Good and Standard beef.

If leaner beef was really what the people wanted, the Good grade would very quickly replace Choice as the number one seller at the

program down. I urge every dairyman to vote.

John C. York, president
York & Associates
Consultants Dairy & Food Industry

supermarket. Safeway is quoted in headlines as reporting tremendous acceptance for their house brand Safeway Lean — in small print well down in the article they say, "it does not appear customers will pay as much for Safeway Lean as they will for USDA Choice." The kind of preference I have always paid attention to is expressed with the pocketbook!

We are told the new grading system will shorten feed lot time and thereby make beef production more efficient — this one is no doubt true — but more efficient for who? No one has come up with a program to shorten the gestation period for a cow, or pre-weaning time for a calf. Of course, the implication is if the feeder is allowed more efficiency, he will pay more for his feeders — and if you believe that, see me soon — I've got some tooth fairy stock I'd like to move.

We are told the new grading system will cut down on the number of yield grade 4 and 5 cattle produced. Perhaps, but one thing that has always bothered me is why more 4s and 5s always show up on a down market than when it's up. Fact is, holding cattle, hoping for an improved market, has always produced more over fat cattle than any grading system — and believe me, that won't change!

We are told the new grade change will be popular with the consumer. They told us the same thing in '76, but I can still remember a nice looking little lady appearing on the 6 o'clock National news, so mad she was shaking, but still saying very distinctly, "The new beef grade change is of the cattle people, by the cattle people, for the cattle people to rip off the consumer" — and you think it will be different this time?

"The USDA proposal is great for

cattleman and bad for consumers" said Tom Smith, an agricultural economist with the Community Nutrition Institute in Washington.

"What the cattlemen proposed is a system that would lower quality standards for all beef," said Smith. "What we feel should have been done is...change the nomenclature to give consumers a new lean grade of beef."

Fact is, consumers were not an important consideration in the proposed grade change.

Fact is, the present beef production system won't produce a profit with today's cost inputs and the leadership in the American Beef Industry decided it would be easier to change the end product, regardless of consumer wishes, than to change the productive system.

We are told marbling only accounts for about 10 percent of the eating quality of beef — can you imagine how much the Pepsi Cola Company would give for a formula that would improve Pepsi 10 percent.

Here are some more facts: beef is still the meat of preference in this country for one reason; people like beef, that's our one hope and we better be sure we are not stampeded into hasty action that will jeopardize that position; American beef will never by cheap, there is not cheap land or cheap fertilizer or cheap barbwire or cheap gasoline, etc., etc.

Let's realize we have got to depend on customer satisfaction to sell our product, and be certain no action of ours will ever diminish the table quality or consumer image of that product.

Dave Pingrey
Angus breeder
Benton, Miss.

(Turn to Page A29)

AeroDry

COMPUTERIZED GRAIN MANAGEMENT

How would you like to save 90% of the energy cost of grain drying?

You can with AeroDry.

Compared with conventional high temperature grain drying, AeroDry can

- Save up to 90% energy cost.
- Reduce shrink loss by 50%.
- Increase feed value in grain.

Plus you get a 25% tax credit. The AeroDry System can be fitted to your existing bin.

Ask about our lease plan.

For more information contact:
Millford Mast
Elverson, PA. 215-286-9118

Ken Sauder
Brownstown, PA. 717-656-6519

Paul F. Detweiler
Newville, PA. 717-776-3288

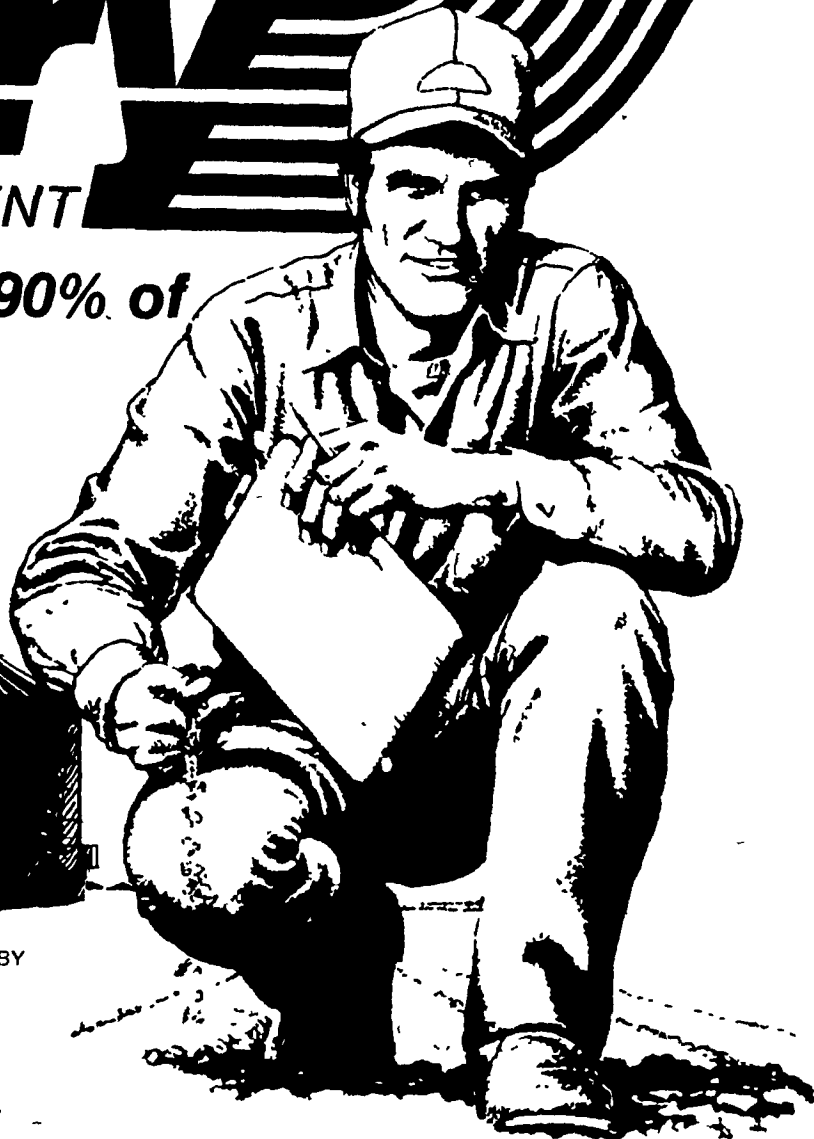


DISTRIBUTED EXCLUSIVELY BY



Advanced Ag Systems Inc.

Dealer inquiries invited



The biggest improvement in grain drying since the corn crib.