Pork Value Task Force firms quality, leanness recommendations

of the Pork Value Task Force put the finishing touches on their recommendations to further improve the leanness and quality of pork marketed to consumers. The Task Force met April 5 at the National Pork Producers Council.

First among the recom-mendations was the use of a uniform basis for calculating live hog and/or carcass value. The Task Force learned from research results presented by Robert Kauffman of the University of Wisconsin and Marvin Hayenga of Iowa State University that the characteristics most often affecting the price a producer receives for his hogs are weight and backfat thickness. Kauffman and Hayenga also confirmed that weight and backfat were good indicators of the lean meat percentage as the uniform basis for calculating value.

Secondly, the Task Force endorsed the development of a value

DES MOINES, Ia. - Members matrix for use by the entire industry. This chart would be a simple set of guidelines to express carcass value difference using carcass or live weight.

"What this chart will do for a producer is allow him to use the weight and backfat levels of his hogs to determine the-relative value of that hog.

"The chart will not predict the price a producer will receive since the market price of hogs changes daily. However, it will allow the producer to estimate whether a hog at 220 pounds with 1 inch of backfat should be worth so many dollars more than a hog with 2 inches of backfat." said Wayne Walter, vice president of NPPC and chairman of the Task Force.

Walter said different segments of the industry will probably use the matrix in different ways. For instance, one packer's preferred hog may be heavier than another, but by using Matrix and comparing their standards to it,

Penn State vet shares cattle management tips for spring

UNIVERSITY PARK - Dairy producers turning cattle out to pasture should keep the following in mind to avoid health problems, says Lawrence Hutchinson, Penn State Extension veterinarian.

Be sure cattle have had plenty to eat before putting them on pasture. A belly full of new grass may throw them off feed and provide severe stress for high-producing cows.

Gradually accustom cows to green feed. Take at least two weeks to make the changeover from stored feed to pasture.

Accustom cows to living outside after they have been in the warm barn all winter. Exposed to a

sudden cold rain or lying on cold, wet ground can bring on pneumonia or mastitis.

Sunburning of the teats can seriously affect udder health and the routine of milking. A little zinc oxide ointment or cocoa butter applied to the teats can prevent serious painful sunburn.

Hutchinson adds that farmers should be sure to remove all sources of injury from lots and pastures before turning cows out. A piece of broken glass or a discarded beer can can ruin a valuable animal. Repair fences, clean up the junk, and remove machinery away from the cows.



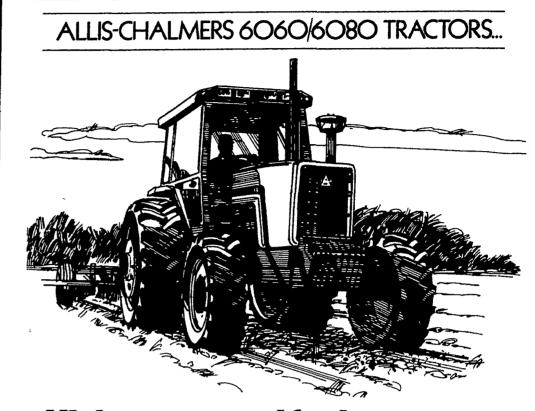
packers should be able to explain and producers and live hog buyers to producers the relative value they place on each hog.

Another recommendation adopted by the Task Force called for the development of a comprehensive educational program with materials for use by the entire industry. A companion piece to the chart could be photos or skatchag of the ideal live hog which would

in evaluating hogs and placing a value on them. The goal is to involve the whole industry including seedstock an commercial. producers, live hog marketers, buyers and packers in the use of the matrix.

Finally, the members agreed they would each communicate these goals back to their respective segment of the industry and report in August on their segment's success in implementing the recommendations of the Task Force.

The August meeting is in conjunction with NPPC's Profit Symposium. Task Force members also expect the matrix and other materials to be completed by that time.



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