

# Competition for fed cattle healthy

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A new U.S. Department of Agriculture study indicates that competitive forces are presently working well in the High Plains and the Iowa-Nebraska regional markets for fed steers and heifers, despite fewer meat packers competing for the available supply.

B.H. Jones, who heads USDA's Packers and Stockyards Administration, said the agency began the study in 1979 because of widespread concern that a few large buyers might be able to control the prices or terms of trade for fed cattle in local markets.

"Our findings indicate the markets in these two regions where behaving competitively," Jones said. "Average prices during the period were not influenced by local supply and demand conditions but rather by overall market factors."

"There was a close relationship in prices, showing no market isolation between the major markets or in the submarkets that were studied. The study shows that buyers and sellers shipped fed cattle between the two regional markets throughout the year, indicating there were numerous occasions when it was profitable to do so."

The High Plains area studied includes Kansas, the Panhandles of Oklahoma and Texas, the fringe areas of eastern New Mexico and

eastern Colorado. The Iowa-Nebraska area includes eastern Nebraska, western Iowa, South Dakota and southwestern Minnesota. These two areas account for about 59 percent of all U.S. fed cattle marketings.

Jones said since the study was

completed several beef slaughter plants have closed in the two areas and two new plants with over 1 million head annual slaughter capacity have opened.

"USDA will continue to monitor both the market structure and the level of competition in the two

markets," Jones said.

The study also investigated the pricing practices of an integrated packer-custom feedlot operator. The evidence showed that the firm did not discriminate against feedlot customers in the sales of their cattle, and that the cattle

were not used to the disadvantage of other packers or feeders, Jones said.

Copies of the report are available from the Packers and Stockyards Administration, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Phone 202/362-9528.

## USDA sets up Caribbean Basin ag advisory committee

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block last Tuesday established an agribusiness advisory committee to assist the U.S. Department of Agriculture carry out agricultural development aspects of President Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative.

Ray A. Goldberg, the Moffett Professor of Agriculture and Business at Harvard University's Graduate School of Business, will head the committee. Other members will be appointed soon, Block said.

The committee will advise USDA on policies and programs involving the private agribusiness sector in fostering agricultural development and economic growth within Caribbean island and Central American countries. The committee will work on a cooperative basis with counterpart committees in the Caribbean Basin.

It also will help establish an

International Agribusiness Center within USDA's Office of International Cooperation and Development to provide expanded services to interested U.S. agribusiness firms. These services would include identifying investment opportunities, organizing a series of agricultural investment missions to the Caribbean Basin area and conducting follow-up support activities.

USDA will seek the advice of the committee on how government can be more helpful to the agribusiness sector in making private investment, accelerate the investment process and make the investment climate more favorable, Block said.

Investment by U.S. agribusiness companies could represent one of the most promising means of increasing the productive capacities of the Caribbean Basin economies, foreign exchange earnings and employment, Block said. The United States would benefit through expanded markets for agricultural products, equipment and services, he said.

Agricultural technical assistance is currently being provided to a number of Caribbean Basin nations.

Goldberg is the head of the agribusiness program at the Harvard Business School where he is engaged in teaching and research activities. He has served as a consultant to agribusiness firms and organizations on the national and international level. He was a consultant to the under secretary of agriculture from 1965 to 1969.

Goldberg is the author of several books and articles dealing with food, trade and investment policies, agribusiness management in developing countries and the United States, markets and marketing worldwide.

He was a member of a team of consultants which analyzed agribusiness investment opportunities in Nigeria and Jamaica on behalf of the Office of International Cooperation and Development.

## Limousin Breeders elect officers

COLUMBUS, Oh. — The Eastern Limousin Breeders Association held their annual membership meeting recently here at the Imperial House Motel.

Three directors were elected to serve on the board of directors for three years. The directors are Bob Line, Carlisle, Pa., Gordon Briggs, Gambier, Oh., and Randy Day, Bethpage, Tn.

The following fairs were approved for the coming year: Eastern National, Ohio State Fair, Highland Co. Fair, Virginia State Fair, and Maryland State Fair. The tentative date of Nov. 6 was set for the fall sale. It is to be held at the Frederick, Md. Fairground.

A field day is being planned for early summer in Ohio. This will include a Junior show of steers and heifers. There will also be a contest to select a queen.

The association honored John Moore, Newville, Pa. with a life membership. He is the founder and first president of Eastern Limousin Breeders Association. It has been through his time and efforts that the association and the breed has continued to grow and

remain strong. He also is a founder member of the North American Limousin Foundation and served on the board of directors. He was its second president and held several committee positions.

In the board meeting that followed the membership meeting, Jim Fawley, Lynchburg, Oh. was elected president. Bob Line was elected vice president and Randy Day was elected secretary-treasurer. Appointments were as follows: Gordon Briggs, spring show and sale; Bob Line, fall sale; Keith Kissie, Charlottesville, Va.; Virginia State Fair; Bob Bell, Cooksville, Md.; Eastern National and Maryland State Fair; and Richard McDonald, Shippensburg, Pa. promotion. Other members of the board are Ron Slagle, Bruston Mills, WV; Charles McDonald, Inwood, WV; and Larry Sterling, Reedsville, WV.

Anyone interested in information on the Association or its activities should contact any member of the board or write to Eastern Limousin Breeders Association, 3540 Anderson Road, Lynchburg, OH 45142.

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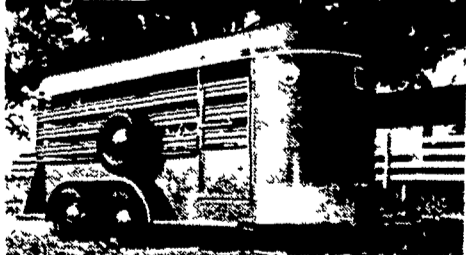


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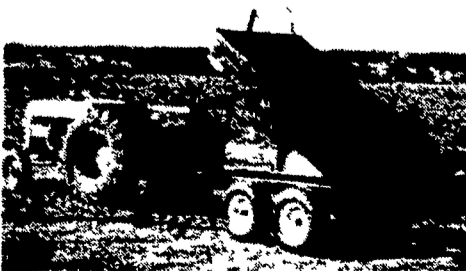
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