

## Cattle feeders, buyers share ideas

LANCASTER — Two cattle feeders and two cattle buyers "took the bull by the horns" Tuesday as each shared with more than 200 fellow beef farmers the secrets to raising marketable cattle.

Leading off the panel was Marty Eberly who voiced his likes and dislikes in a "no room for doubt" manner.

"I like big, growthy calves," said Eberly. "Give me 400-450 pound medium frame number ones, either Angus or an Angus x Charolais steer."

The Lancaster County farmer buys calves several times a year and feeds them for about 300 days

— until they reach the ideal weight of 1,250 pounds and will grade high choice or prime, he laughed. Eberly noted that most of his heavy cattle are sold during the months of July and August. "That's when I feel there's a bigger price spread between grades," he said.

Eberly's feeding program combines the benefits of haylage for protein, corn silage, protein supplement, corn, and a feed additive, Rumensin. He pointed out that his steers are implanted three times with Ralgro.

"I like to finish up with a good conformation steer — real thick and not gobby," explained Eberly.

"I like to open up and get them outside where they can move around and exercise, not have them all the time on slats. And I don't hit them with too hot a ration too fast."

Showing that there are as many differences in cattle feeders as there are in steers, Lancaster County farmer Jim Kettering explained that in his beef feeding business, steers are bought in at 750-800 pounds. Kettering said he prefers a crossbred steer; its color can be black, black white-face, red or mouse-gray.

Kettering takes his steers to the 1,200-1,300 pound finish by feeding 5-7 pounds of high moisture ear corn and silage to start, after being fed hay their first week in the lot, wormed, deloused, medicated and implanted. After a period of two to three months, the steers are increased to 14-16 pounds of high moisture shelled corn with Rumensin.

His ultimate feeding goal is to get his cattle to a Grade 2 or 3, said Kettering. "To go any higher would take too long and more feed," he said, adding that he could also risk a cut in price for over-heavy cattle.

Although Kettering said most of his steers are farm-fresh from Virginia, West Virginia, or Maryland, he explained that he tries to buy feeders year-round.

"If we sell some fat cattle and get stung in price, we turn right around and buy another load that same day," he said, adding that

sending steers to market all year allows him to average out the market highs and lows.

"I don't board steers, I feed steers," concluded Kettering with confidence.

Bob Summy and Rick Marshall, meat packing company cattle buyers, shared their thoughts on the ideal fed steer or heifer — stressing the cattle should be yield

grades 2 or 3 and should weigh more than 700 pounds without too much fat.

Said Summy, "I don't care what color they are, just so they grade." He added that the exotic cattle breeds "don't grade as well as English," noting that these bigger cattle are "meat builders instead of fat builders."

Marshall stressed the need for more beef promotion.



Cattle Feeders' Day Committee Member Ken Meck, center, reviews the day's agenda with Lancaster County Livestock Agent Chet Hughes as cattle marketing panelist Jim Kettering, left, looks on.

(Continued from page 19) poor economy. I per capita cons peaked in 1976 a person, and has off to the point w at 104 pounds.

"The price of steadily increa Moore, adding t feel they can aff prices-up and m still maintain margin.

Looking at 198 a gradually deci meat, not only ir and poultry, al first seven mont see an increase i of 3-5 percent, months will ring drop in supply. i this decrease, h cull cows goin smaller numbers and only a sligh amount of poultry.

Less meat, h higher prices at feeders. Moore p increase roughly year, despite petition from the consumer dollars.

Using what he witchcraft," t economist took a future prices f February - 62.0 June - 64.00; an Breakeven price in these respec said, would be: 6 and 66.00.

## Banker assures

(Continued from Page A1)

War II lasted only 16 months. Since the current recession has exceeded this record by two months, Boyd said he is "optimistic the recession is close to ending."

Some good signs, he said, are "little chance of reacceleration of inflation," coupled with a lower production cost for farmers.

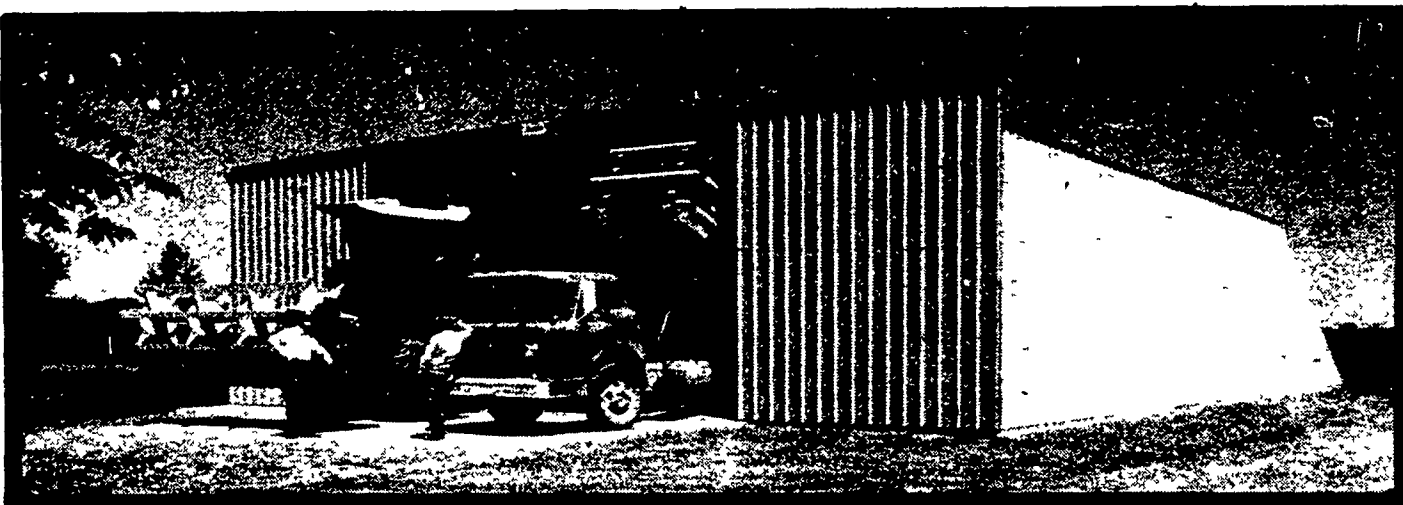
"Things will remain rather tough on the farm," concluded Boyd, "but it's good to see favorable costs of production of which interest rates will be a significant factor."—S.M.



Darvin E. Boyd

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