

# Cattle Feeder's Day

## "Feast"

(Continued from Page A1)

poor economy. He noted that the per capita consumption of beef peaked in 1976 at 129 pounds per person, and has steadily dropped off to the point where it now stands at 104 pounds.

"The price of retail beef has steadily increased," explained Moore, adding that most retailers feel they can afford to keep their prices up and move less beef, and still maintain the same profit margin.

Looking at 1983, Moore forecast a gradually decreasing supply of meat, not only in beef but in pork and poultry, also. Although the first seven months of the year will see an increase in meat to the tune of 3-5 percent, the remaining months will ring in at a 1-3 percent drop in supply. Some reasons for this decrease, he said, are fewer cull cows going to slaughter, smaller numbers of hogs being fed, and only a slight increase in the amount of poultry.

Less meat, he added, means higher prices at the farm for beef feeders. Moore predicted prices to increase roughly 3-4 percent this year, despite continued competition from the dairy industry for consumer dollars.

Using what he termed "Moore witchcraft," the Penn State economist took a stab at predicting future prices for beef in 1983: February - 62.00; April - 63.00; June - 64.00; and October - 66.00. Breakeven prices for beef feeders in these respective months, he said, would be: 66.75; 64.50; 64.00; and 66.00.



Lou Moore

He noted that his breakeven figures "cover all costs including land and management." Just to cover cattle and feed, a farmer would have to subtract \$9-10 a hundredweight for breakeven prices.

Qualifying his forecast, Moore added that prices for beef could go even higher after June than what his "witchcraft" figures show. This will depend on consumer demand, he said.

Looking at beef feeders' alternative occupations, both on and off the farm, Moore advised his captive audience to stick with beef, saying off-farm jobs are scarce and "we don't need any more dairy farmers."

Summing up his sentiments, Moore concluded: "While things

## What's new in the beef feeding business?

LANCASTER — What's new in the beef feeding business? Penn State Extension Beef Specialist Les Burdette reviewed some of the newer products with local beef farmers Tuesday during Lancaster County's Cattle Feeders' Day.

First on his list of tools beef farmers can use to increase production were feed additives to aid digestion in cattle.

➤ Rumensin in the beef diet, said Burdette, alters fermentation in the stomach and results in an 8-10 percent reduction in feed requirement, more pasture gain, and reduced bloat.

➤ Bovatec, a new fermentation modifier, is a "more active additive," said Burdette, and reduces feed requirements by 8 percent, increases gain by 5 percent, and also reduces bloat.

➤ MGA is a feed additive restricted for use on heifers, keeping them from cycling reproductively. This additive, said

Burdette, increases gains by 10 percent, reduces feed 6-7 percent, and requires a 48-hour withdrawal period. He stressed the need to mix this additive carefully, since dosage is small.

Turning to a more modern feeding "crutch" which farmers are leaning on more and more, Burdette cited several brands of ear implants which increase rate of gain in beef cattle.

➤ Synovex, which is specific for either steers (S) or heifers (H), is a natural hormone implant which requires reimplanting every 90-120 days. Cattle that weigh 400 pounds and up can be implanted and should realize an increase of 10-16 percent in gain with 8-12 percent less feed. Synovex should not be implanted within 60 days of slaughter, Burdette pointed out.

➤ Ralgro, which is a derivative of corn mold, aids in protein deposition, said Burdette. It, too, requires reimplanting every 90-120 days, however it can be used on either steers or heifers from the time of birth. This implant results in a 9-15 percent gain with 9-11 percent less feed, which is about 1 percent less results than with Synovex, Burdette noted. Ralgro should not be implanted within 65 days of slaughter, he added.

Citing a Penn State study, Burdette reported no additional benefits were derived by reimplanting beef cattle "half way through fattening" unless the implant was improperly inserted

— into a blood vessel or crushed, either of which permit more rapid absorption.

A product on the market which eliminates the crushing problem is Compudose, said Burdette. Made from silicon, this ear implant is uncrushable, he said. Compudose is a 200-day implant which can be used only on steers, from birth. This implant shows test results of 8-12 percent gain with 6-10 percent less feed, noted Burdette. He added, however, that this longer-lasting product has resulted in cases of more bulling activity in steers — a problem currently being addressed by the manufacturer.

Summing up his presentation, Burdette shared the following advice with the beef feeders:

— Do not implant bulls and heifers intended for breeding stock;

— Use feed additives plus implants for the most benefits;

— Read labels, and follow directions and instructions.

The Penn State specialist stated that farmers who run breeding or feeding hogs with their feeder cattle should not be concerned with using feed additives. "There have been no examples of residues passing through cattle in quantities harmful to hogs."

Burdette encouraged the farmers to "take advantage of modern technology and products to get the best use out of cheap corn."—S.M.

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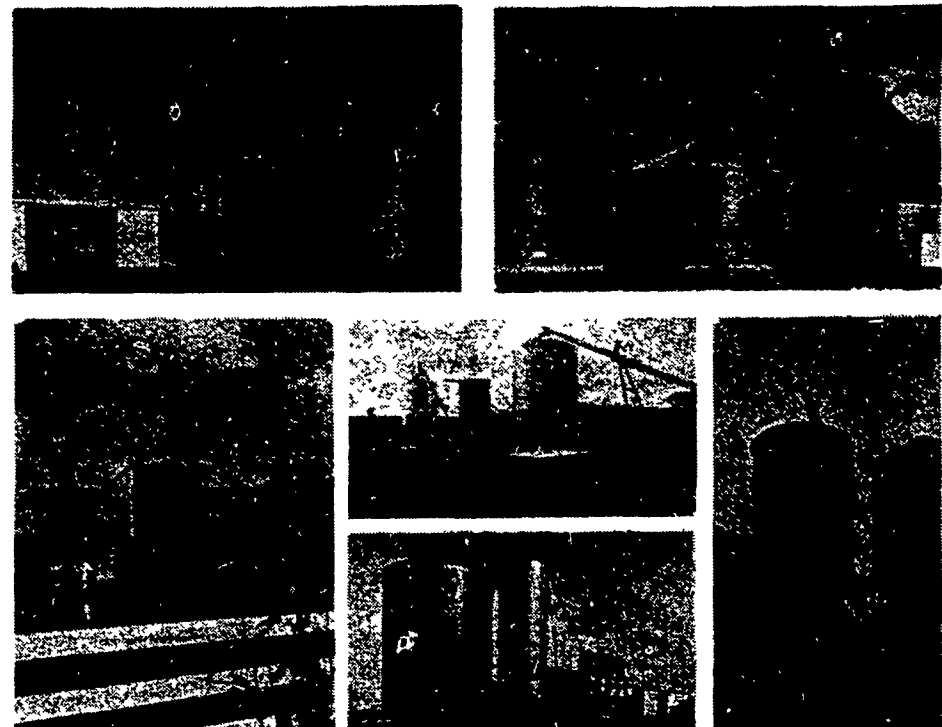


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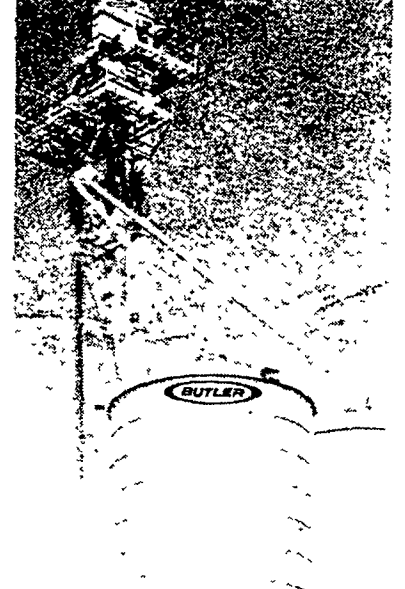
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