

Beef feeders told to know market & use technology

BY ROBIN PHILLIPS
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STOUCHSBURG — "Reduced meat supplies and a strong economy indicate a good year for beef," according to Lou Moore, Penn State extension economist.

Speaking on the effect of the new dairy bill, Moore added: "the culling rate from the dairy program will not make a drastic effect on the beef market."

Moore and Les Burdette, Penn State animal scientist, addressed dairymen raising slaughter animals, commercial beef producers, and part-time beef feeders last week. The annual beef feeders meeting for southeast Pennsylvania was held at Rissers Restaurant, Stouchsburg. Throughout the day the two specialists stressed knowing the market and using the latest technology.

Regarding the new dairy bill, Moore told farmers that "what really happens in agriculture depends more on the general economy." When there are many individuals making their own decisions, he continued, "alternating periods of feast or famine must be expected." Moore went on to cite several reasons for expecting 1984 to be a better year. They included changing consumer attitudes, the election year and an economic recovery.

Calling the new dairy bill a "short-run, stop-gap solution to buy some time for the CCC and Congress," Moore said, "the biggest thing that will help will be the continual drop in the support price which will cut prices to where people will start consuming more."

Summarizing its effects on the beef industry, Moore repeated that the beef prices will be "fairly good." Because of the past high feed prices, a reduced calf crop, and fewer cattle on feed, there are reduced meat supplies. To keep prices where a producer needs them, "produce less than the market wants," Moore told the farmers.

Burdette continually told beef feeders to "know your market." "Time is money," he stated, "slow gains add to overhead costs."

"How we feed a calf in its early stages does make a difference in its total performance to market," Burdette continued. High quality hay and an adequate calf starter should be used.

Burdette also suggested the following guidelines to use when buying calves to be fed for market.

1. Buy with a dry naval. This indicates that the calf received colostrum.
2. Buy in batches and isolate.
3. Give a therapeutic dose of antibiotics for protection.
4. Vaccinate against P13, IBR,

also use a 4-way clostridial vaccine.

5. Use implants.
"If you're feeding cattle and not taking advantage of what's available, you're competing with somebody that is taking advantage of the latest technology," Burdette stated. Burdette stressed using implants. Implants have been proven to increase growth hormones reducing the finishing time.

With the new dairy bill, more Holsteins will be raised for slaughter. Burdette discussed raising of dairy beef. Stating that Holsteins are less efficient converters of feed to beef, Burdette advised marketing them by 15 months of age. Holsteins have a thinner hide and energy is lost quicker.

Burdette listed several items that producers feeding dairy beef should be aware of.

1. There are higher feed requirements. Holsteins are easier to feed in the summer than in the winter.
2. The price spread is greater.
3. There is usually a lower margin between feed cost and selling price.
4. Learn about the grades and market requirements.
5. Feed high grain rations for at least 100 days.
6. Market by 15 months of age.
7. Use all available technology.

He warned feeders, "feed efficiency and rate of gain drops as we get to these higher weights that are popular." "Every time you try to top the market, you fed your cattle too long," he stated.

"The average cattle feeder tends to overfeed roughage," Burdette continued. He discussed feeding management and alternative feeds. He also stated that moldy feeds are not avoided as much in feedlot cattle as they should be. Producers should be careful when using any off-quality feeds. Rations should be balanced considering nutrient balance versus least cost, according to Burdette.

"The combination of implants and feed additives in saving feed is really the way to go," he concluded.

Clyde Myers, Berks County extension agent, discussed live animal and carcass grades and also marketing freezer beef. Beef feeders were encouraged to budget



Commercial exhibits attract farmers attending beef feeders program.

and compute costs to make the correct market choice.

Dennis Manbeck, program director of the Berks County Cattlemans Association and Mike Firestine, secretary of the association encouraged beef producers to become involved in their organization. The association helped to sponsor this meeting and promotes beef throughout the year.

"The more we educate the people, the better off we are," Firestine told producers. Anyone interested in joining the association can send \$15.00 (includes membership in both the Berks County Association and the Pennsylvania Association) to Donald Schaeffer, RD1, Box 94, Bernville, Pa. 19506. Make checks payable to the Berks County Cattlemans Association. Include your phone number and type of farm or business.



Featured speakers who stressed knowing the market and using latest technology in beef production are Les Burdette, left, and Lou Moore, of Penn State.

Md. sheep wool festival to be held May 5-6

WEST FRIENDSHIP, Md. — Sheep breeders, wool growers, craftspeople, artists, 4-H and FFA members, young and old alike are preparing for the 11th Annual Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival to be held May 5 and 6 at the Howard County Fairgrounds, West Friendship, Md.

This festival is sponsored by the Maryland Sheep Breeders Association. The primary thrust of the festival is to bring attention to the sheep and wool industry.

Wishing to broaden the scope of this agriculturally oriented festival, new categories have been added. There is the Auction of Breeding Stock, the Shepherd's Lead Class, the Lamb Cook-off, the Fine Arts Competition, and the poster contest for young artists.

A full schedule is planned for festival visitors to enjoy on Saturday and Sunday. There will be the Natural Colored and White Wool Sheep Shows, Market Lamb Show and Sale, Fleece Show and Sale, Sheep Judging Contest for 4-H and FFA members, Sheep to Shawl Contest, Lamb Carcass Contest, Fashion Show, sheep shearing, spinning, weaving, wool dyeing, Fine Art and Photo Contests, Skein and Garment Competition, the Sheep Breeds Display, etc. A festival highlight is the choosing of the 1984 Maryland Lamb and Wool Queen.

Beautiful white and natural colored wool sheep and more than 30 breeds represented in the Sheep Breeds Display Barn will provide

the viewer a rare opportunity. The finest "black sheep" east of the Mississippi will be shown Sunday in the Natural Colored Wool Sheep Show. The National Natural Colored Sheep Association will hold their Eastern Regional Meeting in conjunction with the festival and members will show their prize animals alongside sheep shown by breeders from Maryland and nearby states. On Saturday morning the White Wool Sheep will be shown and Saturday afternoon the Romney Sheep Breeders Association will host the Romney Sheep Show. Following these shows, many of these fine animals will be offered for sale through our Breed Sheep Auction. Prospective buyers will have the opportunity to bid on high quality

and fancy animals never before made available at auction.

More than a hundred craftspeople will be on hand to demonstrate and sell their wares.

Delicious dishes made with lamb will be available at the various food booths. And Rick Harbaugh from the American Sheep Producers Council will demonstrate how to cut and cook a leg of lamb to serve seven meals.

Country and blue grass music, folk dancing and other entertainment will be presented throughout the festival.

There is no admission charge. For information, entry forms, or festival catalog, contact Mary E. F. Streaker, Chairman, Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, P. O. Box 135, West Friendship, Maryland 21794 (301)823-4037 or 442-2409.

Wayne sheep group to meet

HONESDALE — The annual dinner meeting of the Wayne County Sheep and Wool Growers will be held on Thursday, Feb 23 at 7:45 p.m. in the Pleasant Valley Grange, Rt 191, Honesdale. A roast lamb dinner, featuring locally produced lamb, will be served.

Speakers for the annual affair will be Mr and Mrs Bruce Bresee, from Bradford County. Bruce and Jane Bresee have made several trips to Scotland, and with the use of slides, they will discuss sheep

production in Scotland. They have a sheep flock of their own in Bradford County.

Other items on the program will include recognition of 4-H members, and reports of the local wool pool as well as district and state activities.

Reservations can be made by calling the Wayne County Extension Office, Courthouse, Honesdale at 717-253-5970 ext 114. All interested persons are welcome to attend.



Dennis Manbeck, left, director of the Berks County Cattlemans Association; are Mike Firestine, secretary, encourage participation in their organization.

