

# Pork Day

(Continued from Page D2)

Association's Animal Health Advisory Committee, before submitting it to the Department of Agriculture.

Also featured during the morning program was Penn State swine reproduction specialist Dr. Dan Hagen, who discussed the role of genetics in swine selection.

Dr. Hagen emphasized the importance of continually introducing better boars into the herd. He then divided heritable traits into two categories: those that are moderately heritable, and those that have low heritability. The first category includes such traits as meat production, carcass quality, feed efficiency and growth rate. Those traits possessing very low heritability were litter size, conception rate, and pre-natal and post-natal survival.

Commenting on the push for larger litters, Dr. Hagen said that producers should strive for greater uniformity among baby pigs rather than increasing litter size.

"I think you'd all be happy if you could have litters of 12 uniform pigs, with 10 surviving," he said.

On the subject of embryo transfer, he noted that the technique is not easily adapted to the swine industry.

"It's difficult because the economic unit is the litter," he said. Unlike beef embryo transfers, where a single embryo is transplanted at a time, at least four embryos must be transplanted into a sow to allow the pregnancy to continue.

Turning to artificial insemination, Dr. Hagen pointed out that the technique is easily mastered and very useful for pork producers. One obvious advantage to AI, he said, is that fewer boars are needed to service the same number of sows.

But so far, researchers have had little success with freezing boar semen, Hagen pointed out. Both litter size and the rate of con-

ception suffer when frozen semen is used, he said.

Rounding out the morning's presentations was Penn State red meat specialist, Dr. Bill Henning, with a look at the 1985 pork market. Dr. Henning pointed out that agriculture has been the one exception to the overall upward swing of the economy last year.

Turning to last year's weak pork prices, he said that retailers did not feature pork products as much as they could have. He also noted that the health scares precipitated by what he referred to as the vegetarian element of society have also helped to keep the lid on all red meat prices.

Though pork industry expansion in the Midwest is about over, he said, some eastern expansion is likely to occur this year in light of the low cost of feed.

With pork production expected to decline by four to eight percent this year, prices should be higher, he said, adding that profit margins at the packer level should improve as well.

Dr. Henning predicts that prices will average in the low-\$50 range throughout most of the first and second quarters, with a strong beef market boosting pork prices to the mid-\$50 range during the third quarter.

"If we see \$70 cattle, we'll have hogs pushing \$60," he said. Prices averaging about \$47.50 during the fourth quarter will be due to the normal price erosion experienced at that time of the year, he pointed out.

Though some producers expressed fears that the current trend toward larger operations would squeeze the smaller producer out of the industry, Dr. Henning did not agree.

"There will still be a place for the family farmer," he concluded, adding that the mid-size farm with 100 sows will still be able to produce hogs more efficiently than the large operations.

# Red meat production down for Dec.

HARRISBURG - Pennsylvania commercial red meat production, dressed weight basis, during December 1984 totaled 78.1 million pounds, down 26 percent from December 1983, according to the Pennsylvania Crop and Livestock Reporting Service.

Beef slaughter, at 91.7 million pounds liveweight, was down nine percent from December 1983. Total head slaughtered was down seven percent at 79,500, and liveweight averaged 1,153 pounds, a decrease of 33 pounds. Veal slaughter was 3.8 million pounds liveweight, down 16 percent. Calf slaughter at 22,900 head was down 14 percent, and the average liveweight decreased four pounds to 166 pounds.

Hog slaughter, at 38.7 million

During afternoon sessions, Dr. Henning addressed the problem of drug residues, with Dr. Hagen speaking on the subject of environmental effects on reproduction. Also featured was swine veterinarian Dr. Timothy Trayer speaking on bio-security and herd health management.

pounds liveweight, was down 47 percent from a year earlier. Total head slaughtered was down 49 percent at 160,300, but the average liveweight increased 10 pounds to 241 pounds. Lamb and mutton slaughter was 1.4 million pounds liveweight, up 17 percent. The number slaughtered was 13,600, up 16 percent and the average liveweight increased one pound to 104 pounds.

U.S. commercial red meat production in December totaled 3.12 billion pounds, down eight percent from 1983. Beef production, at 1.83 billion pounds, was down seven percent. Total head killed was down seven percent at 2.94 million, while average liveweight increased three pounds to 1,073. Veal production increased five percent from a year ago to 39 million pounds. Calf slaughter was down six percent at 268 thousand head, however, average liveweight increased 16 pounds to 243.

U.S. pork production totaled 1.22 billion pounds, down 10 percent from a year ago. The 6.99 million head killed was down 11 percent, while the average liveweight in-

creased two pounds to 245. Lamb and mutton production was unchanged at 30 million pounds. Slaughter totaled 530,000 head, down four percent, but the average liveweight increased three pounds to 114.

# LMI gets new name

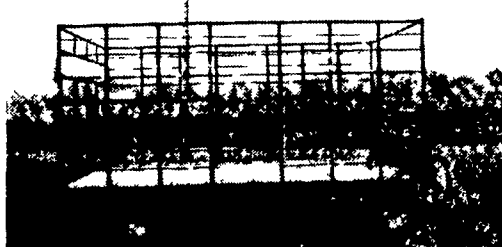
KANSAS CITY, Mo. - After being known for 15 years as Livestock Merchandising Institute, this educational foundation has a new name: Livestock Industry Institute. And, correspondingly, the name of the Institute's annual conference has been changed to Livestock Industry Congress, from Livestock Marketing Congress.

"The change to Livestock Industry Institute gives a more accurate identification of this organization...who's in it and what it does," said James L. Fries, the Institute's executive director.

The Institute's more than 900 members, who are known as Trustees, include representatives from all segments of the livestock and meat industry and related fields of agribusiness.

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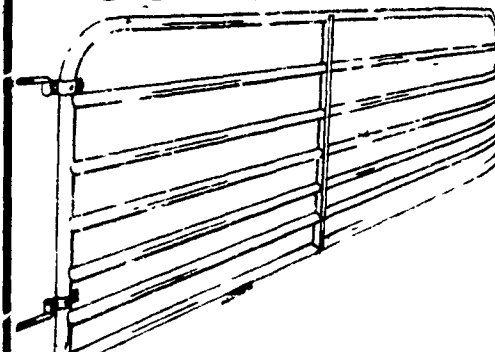
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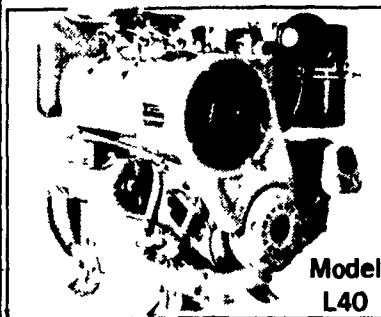


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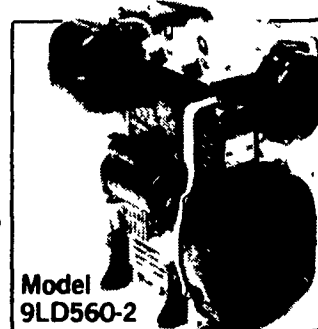
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