

LIVESTOCK LATEST



Berks Co. to offer beef evaluation program

LEESPORT — With grading standards, consumer demands, and today's economics encouraging beef producers to grow a leaner carcass, it is essential they evaluate their animal's carcass qualities. This analysis will help sharpen the judging eye to select the right kind of animal. Feeding programs and breeding genetics can also be analyzed when carcass evaluation is made.

For these reasons, the Berks County Cattlemen's Association and the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service in the southeast

invite you to participate in an "On-Foot On-Farm Beef Evaluation Program on Jan. 21, and Jan. 23, at Peters Brothers Meats in Lenhartsville. Lenhartsville is located just off Route 78 (22) between Hamburg and Allentown.

The live evaluation will take place on Jan. 21 at 7:30 p.m. Animals must arrive at 6:30 p.m. Mr. Larry Marshall, buyer for Moyer's Packing, will help evaluate each animal.

The carcass evaluation will be conducted by Dr. William Henning, Penn State Extension meat specialist, on Jan. 23 at 7:30 p.m.

The carcass will be analyzed for loin eye, backfat, quality grade, maturity and yield grade.

Any beef producer in the southeast counties of Pennsylvania is invited to bring one animal. Cost is \$10, which will pay your dues for the Berks County and Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association plus a subscription to the Livestock Breeders Journal.

For an application form, call the livestock Extension agent in your county or contact Clyde Myers at the Berks County Agricultural Center, Leesport, 19533. Phone 215-378-1327.

Chicken keeps pace with changing lifestyles

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As America adjusts its eating and cooking habits to reflect changing lifestyles, chicken is keeping pace with today's demands for good nutrition and preparation with ease.

Not too many years ago, most chicken was sold whole, the National Broiler Council notes. Then came an era of cut-up chicken, packaged in select parts. Now, in addition to individual parts, consumers may choose from a whole new range of fresh, as well as frozen, chicken products.

Time-consuming cutting and boning have been virtually eliminated by the varied selection of boneless chicken breasts, thighs, nuggets, strips and fillets found in the fresh meat counter. There are also ready-to-cook items like Chicken Kiev and boneless breasts marinated in an Italian sauce or fresh breaded drumsticks and thighs.

The variety of frozen chicken entrees is extensive. Packages of frozen diced chicken meat, chicken breast strips, patties and nuggets

are also available. And of course, frozen fried chicken parts.

Chicken franks and chicken bologna are capturing larger shares of that market than ever. Also available are chicken lovers, chicken salami and pastrami and chicken ham. Some companies are marketing chicken sausage patties and researchers predict that new technology will soon make available ground chicken.

Convenience, economy, variety and low fat content are the reasons for the growing importance of chicken in the nation's diet.

Beef cattle booklet available from AAA

ST. JOSEPH, MO — TIME OUT-It's Time to Rethink the Cow Business is the title of a new beef cattle planning booklet, available Jan. 1, from the American Angus Association.

Designed to help commercial cow-calf producers to stop and take a second look at their operations, the 12-page publication

features original illustrations by cowboy cartoonist Jerry Palen.

Using Elmo, Palen's famous cartoon rancher, the booklet explores some of the misconceptions that have governed many aspects of the beef cattle industry in recent years.

In the booklet Elmo concludes for example, that single trait

selection has actually worked to decrease his overall beef producing ability and cut his income, rather than the opposite.

The booklet, which sells for \$1 to cover shipping and handling, will be available from the American Angus Association after January 1, 1986.

Hog/pig numbers drop two percent

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania hog and pig inventories totaled 780,000 on December 1, according to the Pennsylvania Crop and Livestock Reporting Service. This inventory was down two percent from a year earlier, and 18 percent less than the inventory of 950,000 on December 1, 1983.

Breeding stock, at 85,000 was down six percent from last year. The inventory of hogs for market declined two percent from December 1, 1984 to 695,000. The pig crop for the year, December 1984 through December 1985, totaled 1,071,000, a drop of eight percent. Sow farrowing for the spring pig crop were down 12 percent to 68,000 with an average of 7.8 pigs per litter. For the fall pig crop sow farrowings were down three percent to 66,000 with an average litter rate of 8.2 pigs per litter.

U.S. inventories of all hogs and pigs was estimated at 52.3 million head on December 1. This is three percent below a year ago, and eight percent less than December 1, 1983.

Breeding hog inventory at 6.78 million was two percent below last year and down eight percent from two years ago. The market hog inventory at 45.5 million was three percent below a year earlier and down eight percent from two years ago.

The 41.1 million head on December 1 in the 10 quarterly reported states were down three percent from a year earlier and seven percent less than December 1, 1983. These 10 states account for approximately 79 percent of total U.S. hog and pig inventory.

The U.S. pig crop for the 1985 totaled 86.0 million head, one

percent below 1984 and eight percent below the 1983 pig crop.

The December 1984-May 1985 pig crop was slightly up from a year earlier. The June-November 1985 pig crop was two percent less than a year ago. A total of 5.67 million sows farrowed during June-November 1985, three percent below a year earlier. The litter size during this period averaged a record 7.67, compared with 7.54 a year earlier.

U.S. hog producers intend to have 5.59 million sows farrow during the December 1985-May 1986 period, up fractionally from a year ago.

Primary data used in setting these hog estimates were obtained from a sample of farmers across the United States using probability surveys. Information was collected by mail, telephone and personal interviews.


Drug residues costly for many reasons

ALEXANDRIA, VA. — When federal meat inspectors detect illegal drug residues in a slaughtered animal, that producer's entire shipment may be held until tests show that no illegal residues remain. As a result, money is lost — and few livestock producers can afford to have their profit margin squeezed any tighter.

But there are more far-reaching problems associated with illegal drug residues, notes the Animal Health Institute. On the whole, meat inspectors find very few slaughter animals with illegal residues. But even a few reports of

illegal residues tend to erode consumer confidence in the safety of our food supply. That's something no one in the industry can afford.

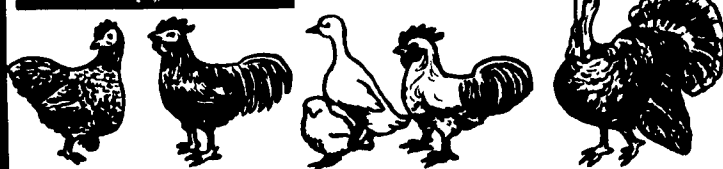
Many times, illegal drug residues are caused by human error — administering the wrong amount, failing to observe the withdrawal time, and so forth. These mistakes can be avoided by taking a few extra minutes to carefully read and observe what it says on the drug label. That's the message of the "eye-clock" symbol you see on drug packages: "Take time, observe label directions."



Forest On Fowl

by
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Keep Feed Samples

One of the current buzz words in the poultry industry is monitoring. Fundamentally this is nothing more than keeping track of things that happen. Most poultry producers make observations or maintain records which can be helpful in assessing production problems. These records include information about the feed being utilized. Unfortunately, in most instances, actual feed samples are not available.

Attempting to determine the cause of production problems usually includes having a sample of birds posted at a diagnostic laboratory and making visual observations of conditions in the poultry house. Should the birds receive a clean bill of health from the diagnostic laboratory and no management factor can be determined to have been involved, the production problem is often attributed to the feed, especially in production problems of short duration.

Observations can be made of bird health and poultry house management; however, the feed has probably been consumed and is no longer available for observation and analysis. This is true unless the producer has a monitoring program which includes collecting and maintaining samples from each feed delivery. If feed samples have been maintained from each delivery of feed, they could be submitted for analyses and data would be available to either support or reject the conclusion that feed contributed to the problem.

To be practical, a feed monitoring program must be simple and require a minimal amount of time, but must result in samples that are representative.

The following eight steps prescribe a procedure to monitor feed quality:

1. Purchase one dozen quart jars with lids.
2. Two times per week, collect a sample (one quart) of feed from the auger delivering feed from the

bulk bin into the poultry house. This sample should be collected while the auger is running. The quart jar should be passed back and forth under the auger until filled. A definite schedule for sampling should be developed with the samplings at least two and not more than four days apart.

3. Record date and time feed sample was collected, feed type, feed delivery date, feed supplier and other pertinent data on a piece of paper and seal in the jar with the sample.

4. Construct a shelf of sufficient size that the twelve jars can be placed on it in single file. The shelf should be located in a cool, dry place.

5. Place the feed sample on the shelf.

6. The 12 jars will allow accumulation of two feed samples per week for six weeks. They should be placed on the shelf in order of collection (from oldest to most recent).

7. After all 12 jars are filled, the sampling procedure is to empty and clean the jar containing the oldest sample and collect a new sample. Move all the samples on the shelf ahead one position and place the new sample on the shelf. This procedure will assure that the samples are in order with the oldest sample at one end of the shelf and the most recently collected sample at the opposite.

8. After each sample is collected it should be compared to previously collected samples with regards to feed color and texture.

Implementation of this simple feed sampling procedure is an important part of a flock monitoring program. Since most feed-related problems are isolated to individual batches of feed, the feed is often consumed before the problem is recognized. The establishment of a sampling procedure will ensure that a feed sample from a previously delivered load of feed will be available for analysis.