

## Father-son team consistent winners in National Western carcass contest



### Livestock Ledger

By  
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#### Water and Cattle

Water intake in feeds plus that consumed free choice is approximately equivalent to the water requirements of cattle. The water requirement is influenced by several factors, including rate and composition of grain, pregnancy, lactation, activity, type of diet, feed intake, and environmental temperature.

Restriction of water intake reduces feed intake, which results in lower production. However, water restriction tends to increase apparent digestibility and nitrogen retention.

The minimum requirement of cattle for water is a reflection of that needed for body growth; for fetal growth or lactation; and of that lost by excretion in the urine, feces, or sweat or by evaporation from the lungs or skin. Anything influencing these needs or losses will influence the minimum requirement.

The amount of urine produced daily varies with the activity of the animal, air temperature, and water consumption as well as with certain other factors. Under conditions of restricted water intake, an animal may concentrate its urine to some extent by resorbing a greater amount of water than usual. When an animal consumes a diet high in protein or

salt or one that contains substances having a diuretic effect, the excretion of urine is increased and so is the water requirement.

Since feeds themselves contain some water and the oxidation of certain nutrients in feeds produces water, not all must be provided by drinking. Feeds such as silages, green chop, or growing pasture forage are usually very high in moisture content, while grains, hays, and dormant pasture forage are low. High-energy feeds produce much metabolic water, while low energy feeds produce very little. These are obvious complications in the matter of assessing water requirements.

The results of water requirement studies conducted under varied conditions imply that thirst is a result of need and that animals drink to fill this need. The need results from an increase in the electrolyte concentration in the body fluids, which activates the thirst mechanism.

Water requirements are affected by many factors, and it is impossible to list specific requirements with accuracy. However, the major influences on water intake in cattle on typical rations are dry matter intake, environmental temperature, and stage and type of production.

BOZEMAN, Mont — The man who bred and fed this year's grand champion pen of carcass steers at the National Western says only the tail end of his 1984 crop of Simmentals were left when it was time to go to Denver.

"Our cattle were ready in November, prices were strong, so we sold", Ron Gramm said. "Eighty percent of them graded Choice, yielding 1.5 to 2.0. So when Diane, my wife, and I had to pick six head for Denver, we had only seven left".

Hanging on the rail at Monfort Pack's Greeley, Colorado plant, Gramm's top five won the prestigious show's steer division with these averages: back fat — .27-inch; rib eye — 15.06 square inches; yield grade — 1.81; kidney fat — 2.10%; cutability — 52.52%; index — 52.94. All graded Choice and met carcass weight specifications.

Placing third was a pen of 3/4 Simmental steers owned by Loyd Gramm, Ron's semi-retired father. Just two years ago, the placings were reversed as the elder Gramm won grand champion pen overall and son placed third in the steer division. In 1985, the Gramms won reserve champion in the heavy steer division and champion in the lightweight heifer section.

Dams of this year's steers were sisters of the cows that produced the grand champion pen in 1984, but different sires were used.

"People don't give enough emphasis to the cow side," said Ron. "They forget that the cow is



Ron Gramm (left) took top honors in National Western carcass contest. His father Loyd (right) placed third.

responsible for 50% of the steer. We produce our own replacements and we select medium-frame heifers.

Located just 30 miles west of the Kansas-Colorado border, the Gramms have 80 commercial and

80 registered Simmental cows. Mostly a dryland operation, they also produce 60 acres of irrigated corn silage.

"We feed our own cattle with our own feed. Dad's been doing that all his life", Ron summarizes.

#### Seedling sale

YORK — The York County Conservation District has begun planning for next spring's tree seedling sale. Every year the conservation district holds a seedling sale to promote the planting of seedlings throughout the county. This year's sale is special because 1986 is the year of the tree.

The seedlings consist of several species of evergreens including white pine, Norway spruce, blue spruce, and Douglas fir, and hardwood varieties include white birch, white flowering dogwood and pin oak. The seedlings are sold

in packets of ten evergreens and packets of five hardwoods.

Orders for the seedlings are taken beginning in February and run until the end of March. Watch the papers for order blanks beginning in February or call the district office and have your name placed on our mailing list. The seedlings are then distributed the third Saturday in April.

If you have any questions write or phone the county conservation district, 118 Pleasant Acres Road, York, PA 17402-9043. Phone (717) 771-9430.

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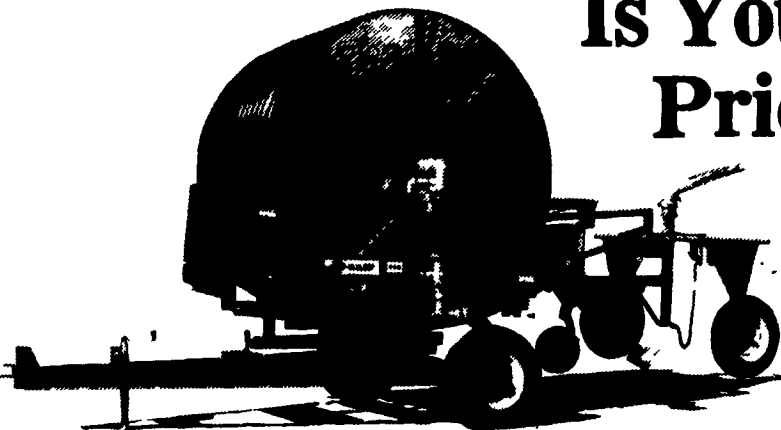
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