

# PDA Approves Cash Incentives for Swine Herds with Pseudorabies

**HARRISBURG** - The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has implemented a plan designed to rid the state's swine breeding herds of pseudorabies, a herpes virus that can kill pigs and other livestock but does not harm humans.

Under the plan, hog producers may receive incentives of up to \$100 for each infected breeding stock animal voluntarily taken to slaughter. "This will alleviate some of the economic consequences of depopulation," according to Agriculture Secretary Richard E. Grubb.

"Control measures employed by the Department in the past have kept the number of infected swine herds to a level that it may be possible through this cooperative effort to eradicate the disease in Pennsylvania," Grubb said.

There now are 16 breeding herds under quarantine for pseudorabies, 12 of them in the Ephrata area of Lancaster County. The Department estimates the number of breeding stock likely to be depopulated at 1,200. Guidelines for receiving incentives have been provided producers with herds now quarantined.

Infected swine breeding herds are targeted in the incentive payment program because swine are the only known natural reservoir for the virus. Swine that do not die from the disease can become carriers. There is no known cure for the disease, spread by exposure to infected animals or to contaminated equipment, water, feed or air. Vaccines available reduce losses but do not prevent infection.

Incentives will be paid for the

slaughter of non-vaccinated breeding swine over six months of age, with depopulation to be carried out under terms of a plan approved by the Department, according to guidelines established for payments.

Depopulation must be completed within 90 days from the imposition of a quarantine order or - for herds now quarantined - by Aug.

15, which is 90 days from the May 17 publication of the guidelines in the Pennsylvania Bulletin.

Incentives will be based upon 90 percent of the animal's current market value, determined by the Department, up to a maximum of \$100. The amount paid will depend on the slaughter price received by the farmer, the guidelines state.

Funding for incentives was in-

cluded in a supplemental appropriation requested by the Department and Thornburgh administration, and approved by the General Assembly on April 22 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1986.

The Department can enter into incentive payment agreements until June 30 under terms of the appropriation.

This difference in income was determined by calculating the value of the calf at weaning rather than at the time of slaughter. Most of the advantages of crossbreeding in beef cattle are to the benefit of the cowherd owner rather than the feedlot operator. The smaller death losses of both calves and cows and the greater fertility of the crossbred cows results in less cost to produce a weaned calf. In this respect it does help the feedlot owner.

This study, as with one in Virginia, used only the traditional English breeds of cattle. We would expect equal or greater benefits if less related Continental breeds were used to replace one or two of the English breeds. The greatest benefits in crossbreeding occur when crossbred cows are bred to a third breed of bull and not from the first cross that occurs when a straightbred cow is bred to a different breed of bull.

The typical cow herd in Pennsylvania is under 25 cows and this makes it difficult to utilize a planned crossbreeding program since usually only one bull is used. If four or even five different breeds rather than three are used in sequence, nearly maximum heterosis will be obtained. Letting tradition stand in the way of increased, less costly production is one reason beef cattle have a hard time showing a profit.

## Douglassville Animal Dealer Cited

**WASHINGTON** - The owner of a Douglassville animal auction has been assessed a \$600 civil penalty for violation of animal care regulations, according to a USDA report.

Marlin U. Zartman, the operator of Gilbertsville Sales Stables, has been ordered to cease and desist from accepting animals that show signs of illness, disease or injury.

In a decision signed March 21, an

administrative law judge ruled that on two occasions, March 17 and March 31, 1984, Zartman violated federal regulations by failing to maintain an adequate program of disease control and veterinary care. Evidence showed that sick or injured dogs, cats, guinea pigs and rabbits were accepted for sale at his auction market.

## Md. Shorthorn Assoc. Elects Officers


**FREDERICK, Md.** - A new slate of officers was recently named by the Maryland Shorthorn Association for 1986: president, George W. Bowman, West Friendship; vice president, Bruce Bennett, Woodbine; secretary-treasurer, Wayne C. Neely, Frederick.

New directors chosen for a three-year term include Harry J. Duffey III, Centreville; and Duane Harper, Woodbine.

Officers chosen to direct the junior association were: president, Robin Radford, Hallwood, Va.; David Bowman, West Friendship; secretary-treasurer, Kobi John-

son, Brookville; reporter, Susan Dodrer, New Windsor. Directors include Charles Bowman and George Bowman, West Friendship; and Catherine Duffey, Centreville.






## Beef Briefs

by  
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## A Better Bottom Line with Cows

Most farmers grow hybrid corn, most eggs are produced by hybrid or crossbred hens and over 90 percent of the hogs marketed are now crossbred.

Cattle producers have been slow to adopt the proven advantages of crossbreeding. A long-term USDA study started at the Fort Robinson Beef Research Unit and completed at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Nebraska shows just how much we give up by not following a planned crossbreeding system. The results are shown in the chart below.

All cows in the study were Angus, Hereford, Shorthorn or crosses of these breeds. Heifers not bred the first year were culled, and after that they were culled if they were open for two consecutive years or for severe unsoundness. It is evident from the table that the

straightbred cows were open a greater percentage of the time than the crossbred cows.

The data show that there was a 1.1 percent higher death loss in the straightbreds and 10.6 percent more replacement heifers were required per year to keep the straightbred cow herd numbers equal to the crossbred herd. Taking all factors into account, the gross income per cow per year from the crossbred cows was \$30.56 greater than that from the straightbred cows.

Production to 12 years of age of straightbred and crossbred cows

Trait	Crossbreds	Straightbreds
Breeding seasons per cow, no.	8.2	7.1
Pregnancies per cow, no.	7.2	6.0
Calves born per cow, no.	6.6	5.6
Calves weaned per cow, no.	6.2	5.2
Total calf wt. weaned per cow, lb.	2,798	2,156

## Free Health Products Available

# Feeder Calf Program Aims To Snuff Shipping Fever

Sponsors of the Keystone Feeder Calf Health Certification Program aimed at eliminating "shipping fever" are offering free health products for the first 500 calves signed up.

The program, developed over the past two years, is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Veterinary Medicine Association and the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association.

The Cooperative Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University is providing eartags and drugs for the calves, as well as promoting the program.

Shipping fever frequently develops in cattle shipping long distances, transported to shows and fairs or assembled in sales or feedlots. Its symptoms include fever, coughing, nasal discharge, increased respiratory rate, depression and decreased appetite. In severely affected animals it can result in chronic pneumonia, poor growth or death.

Dr. Thomas R. Drake, extension veterinarian for beef and sheep at Penn State, says many circumstances increase the risk of shipping fever in calves that are weaned and then sold to be raised for slaughter.

Under the certification program, producers and their veterinarians sign an agreement and work together to fulfill health care requirements for the certified calves. About 15 to 20 states already have similar programs.

Drake says a producer who takes

preventive measures against shipping fever incurs extra cost which buyers have not been willing to pay for. "That's why we're trying to promote the program and keep it going until the buyers realize its benefits."

Participation in 1985, the program's first year, was low because the program started late and was poorly publicized.

To minimize the economic risk involved with participating in the program, this year all animal health products will be provided free of charge for the first 500 animals committed to the program and sold at certain graded feeder calf sales.

The specific products are: Anchor/Bioceutic - combined polyvalent Clostridium, Haemophilus, killed BVD vaccine which exceeds the mandatory requirement; Anchor/Bioceutic - Keystone identification ear tag and steroid ear implant (not required); American Cyanamid - tramisol and Warbex parasite treatment products; and Beacham - combined intranasal IBR-P13 vaccine.

Cooperation with several graded feeder calf sales will provide a specific outlet for a significant number of the certified calves. To date, these sales include:

- Keister's Middleburg Livestock Auction, Middleburg;
- Penns Valley Auction, Centre Hall;
- Pennsylvania Livestock Auction, Waynesburg;
- and possible sales in York and

Mercer counties.

"What remains to be done in order that the program succeeds requires the encouragement, support and energy of the food animal veterinarians, cattlemen and county extension personnel," Dr. Drake says. "Unless these

groups get behind the program and actively work toward its implementation, it will be just another good idea that never made it."

For more information on the program, contact your local

county extension office, or call Clair Engle at 814-863-3669 or Dr. Drake at 814-863-0837.

Plans for delivery of drugs and assignment of animals to specific sales will proceed as quickly as possible.

## NPPC Poll Reveals Pork Producers' Funding Priorities

**DES MOINES, Iowa** - The results of a producer poll recently conducted by the National Pork Producers Council (NPPC) generally confirms the direction of projects and programs already being pursued by NPPC and its state affiliate associations on behalf of the nation's pork producers.

The poll, conducted in Pork Report and National Hog Farmer magazines as well as various state pork producer publications, was designed to give producers, whether members or non-members of NPPC, an opportunity to outline their funding priorities when the new 100 percent national producer checkoff goes into effect later this year.

Of the 2,500 pork producers who responded, 72 percent said they were NPPC members, while 25 percent indicated they were not. Producers generally cited con-

sumer issues as the main priority for the years ahead, including a need to develop more convenient, case-ready pork products. NPPC's field merchandisers have been working during the past year with packer-processors and food retailers in helping introduce new case-ready pork products to the consuming public.

The obvious number one priority among the producers polled, whether NPPC members or not, was to get more pork moving through the food chain in order to combat low hog prices.

Approximately 72 percent of the producers who took part in the poll felt that the role of the new national pork board, to be established late this year, should be confined to collecting the new checkoff funds and setting basic program priorities. The same percentage of producers felt the pork board should contract out

projects and programs to producer-funded organizations already in existence, such as the National Pork Producers Council and the National Live Stock and Meat Board, because those organizations already have staff and resources in place.

About 82 percent of those who responded to the poll believed the National Pork Producers Council should continue as the one organization that is exclusively devoted to representing pork producer interests through its already-established national resources as well as the resources of its affiliated state associations.

Complete results of the producer poll will be turned over to the new national pork board when it is established. NPPC president, Ron Kahle, said the poll results should give some initial direction to the board members concerning producer desires.