

**Brockett's Ag Advice**  
 By John E. Brockett  
 Farm Management Agent  
 Lewistown Extension Office

**Keeping Livestock Cool**

Weather is a very useful thing. Without it what would we have as openers for casual conversation? It is unpredictable. Just as the experts think they have everything figured out, the weather patterns change and it rains when all predictions are for sunshine or vice versa. A philosopher would intone "You may as well learn to live with it because we will always have weather with us." Right now, it is hot and sticky. But what else would we expect for the month of July?

We do have to learn to live with whatever weather pattern we get. As much as I would like to change it sometimes, I do not believe I would like to have 365 days of the same kind of weather. However, that does not mean that I would not do something to modify it at times.

Just as we try to block the wind in the winter because moving air makes it seem colder (some call it wind chill factor), we try to increase air movement in the hot days of the summer. It is interesting that many people who do their best to plug up all air holes in the winter so their stock won't get cold, never think about increasing air movement in the summer to keep their animals cooler. Most people do not think about the fact that animals usually do not have as many sweat glands as people do. The evaporation of perspiration is one of the ways our body uses to cool itself. Air moving over the body helps evaporate the moisture called perspiration. Animals such as cattle and hogs need this air movement even more than people

to stay as cool as possible.

Farmers with any type of livestock should consider these animals as a bunch of furnaces producing a lot of heat. These furnaces can not be put out or reduced in efficiency without losing production and ultimately profits. Therefore, we must do the next best thing, which is to dissipate the heat by way of air movement. One of the cheapest ways to cause air movement in most farm buildings is to open as many openings as possible, block off as much direct sun as possible, and set up interior fans blowing across the animals. The number of fans to do the job will depend on a number of factors, such as amount of livestock, ceiling height, natural air movement, ceiling insulation, location of the barn in relation to the sun and natural air movement, and location and size of exhaust openings.

Good air movement will have some extra benefits in addition to its cooling effect. Flies will be less of a problem if there is good air movement. Workers will feel more comfortable with good air

movement. There will be less "sweating of metal pipes" and thus less moisture collecting on equipment. There will be less moisture collecting on and in feed. The end result is more animal comfort, better feed efficiency, less loss of production from heat and humidity, more comfortable employees, and more profits.

**Feed More Often**

Despite our best efforts during hot muggy weather, you will not be able to eliminate spoiled feed unless you feed more frequently.

Many farmers get into the habit of feeding once or twice per day during the winter. If they continue to do this during the summer, feed consumption will drop. When feed consumption drops, meat or milk production will also drop. A solution is to feed smaller amounts, clean out unused feed, and feed more often. Palatability is the key to good feed utilization. Sour or stale feed reduces the palatability of all feed, even good clean feed, if they come into contact with each other.

**Maryland To Host Northeast Soybean Farmers**

SALISBURY, Md. — Soybean farmers in Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are invited to participate in the annual summer meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Soybean Association. The meeting will be held at Poplar Hill Research Farm in Salisbury, Maryland on Wednesday, August 13.

The four-hour program gets

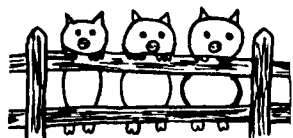
underway at 1 p.m. with a tour of soybean research plots on the farm. Dr. Kenneth L. Bader, chief executive officer of the American Soybean Association, will address farmers at a short business meeting.

The day's activities will close with a crab social. The registration fee including the crab social is \$8. For information or to register call 301/742-9500.

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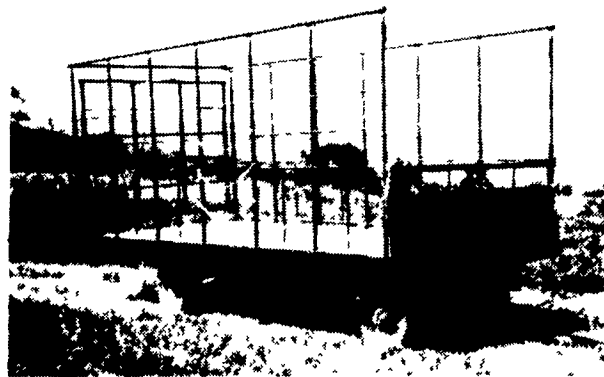
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