Buckeye Beef Tops Somerset Jackpot Steer Show

BY MARGIE FUSCO
Cambria Co. Correspondent

MEYERSDALE — Two Ohio steers strolled off with top honors at the Somerset County Open Jackpot Steer Show. The show, sponsored by the Somerset County Beef Producers, was held at the county fairgrounds in Meyersdale on July 20.

Bill Ayars of Mechanicsburg, Ohio, took grand champion honors with his 1260-pound Chi-Angus cross steer, sired by I1 Deno. The reserve grand champion steer, a 1240-pound Chi-Angus cross, is owned by Brandon Horn of Catawba, Ohio. His steer was sired by Power Play.

The Jackpot Show attracted 93 entries from as far away as Ohio and West Virginia. With $500 going to the grand champion and $150 for the reserve grand champion, the Somerset County show is the highest stakes jackpot in Pennsylvania. Prize money was awarded in each category down to the fourth place, and a special cash award was made for steers purchased at the Somerset County Club Calf Sale held this past October.

The steers were classified by hip height. Judge Scott McIntyre, a beef and calf producer from West Virginia and a member of the Virginia Polytechnical Institute judging team, judged the animals for conformation.

Mary Shick, Lawrence County's 1986 Cattlemen's Princess and first runnerup in the state competition, was on hand to present the awards.

Class 1
(hip height 46-¾" 49-½ ')
1 Natalie Welch Berlin PA 2 Joe Humphrey Patton PA 3 Missy Steinman Sidman PA

Class 2
(50-1/8' 50-¾)
1 Wade Mayfield Kingwood WV 2 Allen Teter Jr Kingwood WV 3 Joe Humphrey

Class 3
(51"-51 ½")
1 Raquelle Fava Scenery Hill PA 2 Chris Donaldson Millcroft PA 3 Joey Sypolt Albright WV

Class 4
(51 5/8 52 ¼)
1 Raquelle Fava 2 Greg Wilson McClellan PA 3 Dennis Hillegas Schellsburg PA

Class 5
(52 1/8 52 3/8)
1 Dottie Clark Mann s Choice PA 2 Dottie Clark 3 Heath Lilley Donegal PA

Class 6
(52 5/8' 53 ¼ ')
1 Jay Kirscher Monongehela PA 2 Ronnie Kelly Bruceton Mills WV 3 Todd Lilley Donegal PA

Class 7
(53 ½ 53 7/8)
1 Jimmy Shaffer New Salem PA 2 Lloyd Stuchoff Rockwood PA 3 Steve Christopher Albright WV

Class 8
(54" 55-1/8)
1 Kenny Bell Terra Alta WV 2 Lance Arm strong Somerset PA 3 Matt Welch Berlin PA

Class 9
(55-¼" 58')
1 Bill Ayar Mechanicsburg OH 2 Brandon Horn Catawba OH 3 Kelly Rohrer Manheim PA

Cub Calf
1 Lloyd Stuchoff 2 Natalie Welch 3 Jason Ickes Rockwood PA

Grand Champion
Bill Ayar
Reserve Grand Champion
Brandon Horn

Cattlemen's Princess Mary Shick congratulates Bill Ayers (left) on his grand champion victory, and Brandon Hunt on his reserve win.

Dennis Hillegas sets his steer up for evaluation by judge Scott McIntyre at the Somerset Jackpot Show.

Townsend Excels At Summer Classic

Nancy Townsend of Brodbecks was among the top individual performers at the American Simmental Association's Annual Summer Classic, held recently in Louisville, Kentucky.

In competition with 215 contestants from 23 states, Miss Townsend placed first in Public Speaking. She also ranked fourth in the Sire Selector Quiz, (she is pictured above with other winners) 15th in Herdsman Quiz and seventh overall. She was also a member of the fourth-place Maryland team.

Pork Prose

by
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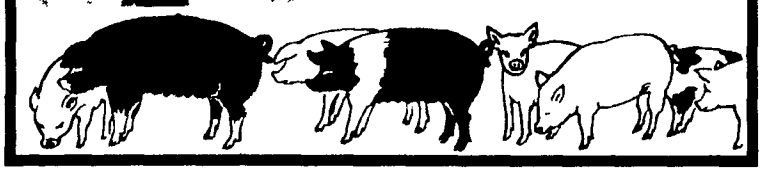

What's a Boar Worth?

What can you afford to pay for a boar? With the Pennsylvania Performance Tested Boar Sale coming up August 20, that's a question you ought to be asking. But before you put a price tag on *any* boar, decide what you want from a herd sire. For most producers there are probably three criteria: 1) structural soundness; 2) ability to service and settle sows; 3) ability to improve herd performance.

Structural Soundness. Although it's far from an exact science, soundness evaluation is critical. Before you do anything else, decide whether the new boar will hold up under your conditions. If your herd's on dirt, maybe you can live with some soundness problems. But if you're on concrete you don't need a structurally unsound boar at any price.

Ability to Settle Sows. That means having enough talent to mount and service a sow. And it means having enough fertility to produce large litters. Unfortunately settling sows falls under the wait-and-see category since you never know how a boar will do until you get him home and try him. Use common sense with a new boar. Seven services per week should be a maximum. And avoid putting a young boar into a group of old sows.

Improving Herd Performance

Every new boar should improve herd performance. For example if the feed efficiency on your finishing floor is 3.7:1, find a boar that will make it better. Or if the 21-day weights of your baby pigs average 9 pounds, get a boar that will improve the sow herd's milk production. And remember– if the genetic potential of the new boar is poorer than what you've got at home, the new boar could cost you money every time he sires a pig.

So how do you put dollars and cents to all of this? It depends on four things: 1) what trait you're selecting for; 2) how easily the trait is passed to the offspring; 3) the economic value of the trait; 4) how much better the new boar is, compared to the ones already in your herd.

- Feet and legs: Sound enough for your conditions.
- Lbs feed/lb gain (60-220 lbs): 2.75 or less.
- Average daily gain: 2.00 lb/day or more.
- Days to 230: 155 or less.
- Backfat: 0.8 inches or less.
- Litter size: 10 or more farrowed, 8 or more weaned.
- Underline: 12 or more functional teats.

New boars are one of the most important investments you make, so give them the attention they deserve. Don't let a $250 bargain turn into a $1,000 liability. If you need more calculation details, you can find them in the Pork Industry Handbook, fact sheet PIH-9.

Most test stations measure and calculate indexes for average daily gain, feed efficiency and backfat. Let's say your boars at home averaged 1.8 lbs/day for growth rate, 2.80 for feed efficiency, and .7 for backfat. You want to buy a boar that averaged 2.2 lbs. per day for growth rate, 2.40 for feed efficiency, and .6 for backfat. What's the new boar worth?

For every pig the new boar sires, you will save about $1/head on feed alone compared to the rest of the market hogs. If you're finishing pigs out in average facilities (still not depreciated), each pig out of the new boar will save you about $.25/head because of his faster growth rate. And if you're selling grade and yield, you could save up to $.18 for each pig out the new boar, because of his reduced backfat.

That's a potential $1.43/head for each pig sired by the new boar. A boar can easily sire 1,000 pigs a year. But even if he only sires 500, you could save up to $715 per year with the new boar. And remember, if the new boar is worse than those already in your herd, the dollars add up just as fast in the negative direction.

So it's important – vitally important—that you know the genetic background of every new boar. Use the following guidelines.

Penn State Offers Swine Feed Evaluation Program

UNIVERSITY PARK — With the support of the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council, Penn State swine specialist Ken Kephart and county livestock agents are in the process of taking feed samples from swine producers around the state.

Survey forms are completed during sampling to record feed formulas and the feed is submitted to Penn State for analysis. Results are compared to nutrient levels calculated from the feed formulas.

Ken Kephart also reviews the formulas and writes a follow-up letter to each participating producer. Cost of the program to the producer is $11 per sample, which is one-half the normal cost. Interested producers should contact their local extension offices.