

# Espy, Cope Appointed To Beef Promotion Board

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tation from 38 states and three geographical units, along with one additional unit representing importers. The number of board members from a given state is determined by the cattle population within the state.

Earlier this month, USDA

Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng announced the 113 appointees based on nominations received from each state. Pennsylvania's board representation includes J. Paul Espy, a full-time beef producer from Huntingdon County, and John D. Cope, a York County

dairyman.

In interviews earlier this week both men underscored the importance of beef in a balanced diet. "Beef has the highest nutritional value of anything on the market," Espy says, noting that the beef industry will have to work on three basic areas to increase the demand for its products: eliminating external fat, making beef products more convenient to prepare and "keeping the quality up" by producing tender beef with the necessary amount of marbling.

While Espy is convinced that the external fat has to go—"We either have to breed it off, feed it off or cut it off," he says—he feels just as strongly that the marbling has to stay. Contrary to popular belief, there's no difference in calories between well marbled meat and meat with little marbling once the meat is cooked, Espy asserts. What marbling does do, though, is maintain beef's tenderness, moistness and flavor, he says.

But producing nutritious and flavorful products isn't enough, says the cattleman. Those products must be convenient to prepare. "The consumer doesn't want to spend much time cooking

anymore," he says.

At the producer level, Espy called for more professionalism in all segments of the industry. "The cow/calf producer needs to pay more attention to selecting the parents of his calves, and those calves should be preconditioned so the transition from the range to the feedlot will be easier. "The quicker we feed these animals out, the better off we'll be," he says.

Feedlot operators must pay more attention to nutrition and minimize the use of antibiotics, he says. Espy, who serves as president of a five-farm meat producing and marketing corporation called Spruce Creek Meat Company, uses no antibiotic growth promotants in his own cattle.

In addition to heading up Spruce Creek Meat Company, Espy finishes 1,000 head of beef cattle annually and farms 700 acres of corn and alfalfa. He is a past member of the National Cattlemen's Association board of directors, and served as president of the Pennsylvania Beef Council from 1983 to 86, and president of the state Cattlemen's Association from 1980 to 83. He holds bachelor's

and master's degrees in Agricultural Education from Penn State.

A descendant of the founders of Cope's Corn, John Cope has been affiliated with Ashcombe Farm Dairy for 34 years. He currently serves as vice president and general manager of the firm's two operations, located in Dover and Mechanicsburg.

The need for dairy industry representation on the Beef Board is obvious, says Cope, pointing out that a major portion of the beef used by the fast food industry comes from dairy animals.

Cope says that dairy beef is in step with the trend toward leaner beef products. "The dairy animal that goes to market is a machine to put milk in the pail and is using a tremendous amount of energy to do that. It's my thought that the animal is lean by nature," he says.

From his own experience, says Cope, Holstein steers are capable of "remarkable growth. You can get them in a tender condition because they grow so fast," he notes. "I've had our Holstein steers up to 1,350 pounds in 14 months."

While Cope applauds consumer health concerns, he cautions that the pendulum has swung too far. "We need to encourage people to look at their total diet and health needs and not start excluding basic food groups," he says.

Cope currently serves on the National Holstein Board and is a past president of the state Holstein Association. He holds a bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics from Penn State.

The first meeting of the Beef Promotion and Research Board is scheduled for Sept. 4 to 6 in Dallas, Texas.

## Walker Visits Farms

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Washington somewhat sustained by a farm community that is desperate to find solutions. And therefore allow Washington to assume more and more control with the hope that Washington will arrive at a solution."

"My impression is that Washington has no solution. We have gone through 20 years where we have looked to government to solve our problems. But the problems get worse and worse. Now I'm hearing about government quotas. That would be as close to socialized farming as we could get. You can't have a short-term quota system. It gets to be long term. And in Canada the quotas now define the price of the

farm. Selling the quota is about the same as selling the farm itself. That totally disrupts the structure of agriculture. Now the subsidy programs for agriculture take up so much of the ag budget, the congress has a tendency to seek to eliminate lesser cost such as those related to funding the Extension Service and the Soil Conservation Service. Congress has tended to protect these organizations so far. But I don't know how long we can continue to hold out."

A total of five farms in Lancaster and Lebanon County were on Walker's farm tour. The farms he visited included J. Robert Kindig Farm, Conestoga; Kenneth Noll Farm, Lancaster; Ike Geib Farm, Manheim; Lynwood Heagy Farm, Lebanon; and Earl Lehman Farm, Annville



John Cope

J. Paul Espy

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