

Pork Checkoff To Begin Nov. 1

DES MOINES, Iowa. — A federal order formally initiating the new National Pork Producers checkoff was published in the Federal Register on Friday, September 5. The publication officially sets in motion the events that will lead up to implementation of the new pork checkoff November 1, 1986.

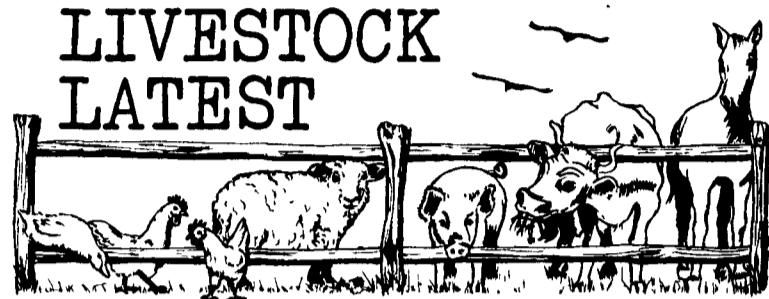
Effective on that date, all United States pork producers will be required to check off all classes of swine at the first point of sale, at a rate of no more than one fourth of one percent of value. Importers of hogs and pork producers will also participate in the uniform national checkoff.

The nation's pork producers have had a checkoff program for a number of years, but in most states, it has been voluntary. The new checkoff is expected to initially generate approximately \$16 to \$18 million annually, compared to the present \$10 million. A referendum of all pork producers will be held 24 to 30 months after the new checkoff goes into effect. Until that referendum, pork producers will be entitled to a refund upon request. If the referendum is approved, no refund would be offered from that point on.

Publication of the Pork Order in the Federal Register paves the

way for Secretary of Agriculture Richard Lyng to officially notify producers of their appointment to the 160-member Pork Producers Delegate Body, elected in July at producer elections in each state. Pennsylvania's two delegates to the Delegate Body are Phil Frieling, Hegins, and David Reinecker of York Springs.

The delegates will hold their first meeting September 17-18 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Kansas City, Mo. The delegates will have three main items on their agenda at that meeting: 1) Establish the new national checkoff rate, which by law may not initially exceed one-fourth of one percent of value; 2) Establish a level of state funding (by law, the return to states can be no less than 16.5 percent of the funds collected in a state); and, 3) Nominate a minimum of 23 individuals for consideration to the National Pork Board. That 15-member board, to be appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture later this year, will have the responsibility of collecting the new producer checkoff and disbursing the funds.



ASPC Reports Sheep Referendum Results

DENVER, Colo. — Tim Indart, president of the American Sheep Producers Council, Inc., said he is "delighted" with the support given to ASPC by producers in the Aug. 18-29 National Sheep Referendum. "This great support from the vast majority of voting producers again proves that we have a forward-looking industry that is willing to stand behind its products."

A preliminary tally released Sept. 10 by USDA shows that 62.2 percent of the voting producers owning 68.7 percent of the sheep supported continuing ASPC's promotion, advertising and other

market development programs for lamb and wool. Referendum passage required a two-thirds positive vote from either the voting producers or of the total sheep represented by those voting.

"It speaks well for American sheep producers to throw such support behind promotion at a time when general agriculture is so troubled, perhaps more than even before the great depression," Indart said. "The income for many sheep producers also depends on other commodities which haven't been doing very well. But the sheep industry is a good example of how

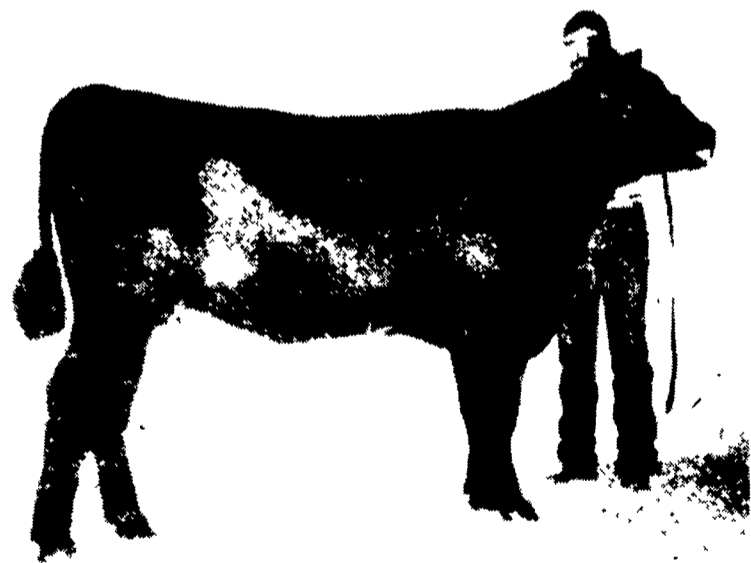
money spent on promotion can pay excellent dividends. In fact, if more of agriculture fared as well as the sheep industry, we wouldn't be having nearly as much trouble. The referendum vote shows that the great majority of sheep producers see this bigger picture."

The vote authorizes USDA to deduct from producer incentive payments up to 6 cents a pound on shorn wool and 30 cents a hundredweight for unshorn lamb. The current referendum will be in effect for the five-year life of the 1985 Farm Bill.

Pa. Angus Breeders Win In Indiana

ST. JOSEPH, MO — A top quality set of Angus breeding cattle were on hand for the Roll of Victory Angus Show held at the

recent Indiana State Fair in Indianapolis. The 25 bulls and 56 heifers were placed by judge Jake White, Laurel, Mississippi.



Junior champion female at the Indiana Fair Angus Show was Kruegers Blackbird Madonna owned by William Warren, LaVern Krueger and family and Greg Krueger and family.

The purple rosette in the bull show went to Premier Valedictorian, the junior champion. This February 1985, Ken Caryl Overdrive 304H son is owned by Premier Angus Inc., Cloverdale, Indiana; Northcote Farm, Forest, Virginia; New Horizon Farm, Stuyvesant, New York; and Shady Brook Angus Farm, Leoma, Tennessee.

The championship spotlight in the female line-up was on Premier Blackcap 6276A, a May 1985 daughter of Brusco. Also named the intermediate winner, she is owned by Premier Angus Inc. and Twin Valley Farms, Prattville, Alabama.

Reserve junior champion bull honors went to Genetics Madison Avenue. He was exhibited by Genetics Unlimited Inc., West Grove, Pennsylvania, and William Warren, Furlong, Pennsylvania.

The junior champion female ribbon was presented to Kruegers Blackbird Madonna. She is owned by Greg Krueger and Family, Coatesville, Pennsylvania; LaVern Krueger and Family, LaCrosse, Indiana; and William Warren.

Berks Extension Schedules Sheep Tour

LEESPORT — The Berks County Sheep and Wool Growers are invited to participate in a four-farm sheep tour in the Oley Valley. The tour is being conducted by the Berks County Cooperative Extension Service and will be held Saturday, Oct. 11.

The tour participants will see the Mac-High Sheep Farm, Oley Acres Sheep Farm, Hollowbush-Corriedale Farm, and Ewesful Spinning. In addition to seeing the sheep, farms, and talking about management, participants will see demonstrations on wool processing, determining the age of

sheep, worming techniques, injections and paint brandings.

Cost is \$5 per person which includes handouts and lunch. The

Beef Checkoff Meeting Scheduled

LANCASTER — A meeting to outline the provisions of the new Beef Checkoff Program will be held at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center on Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 23 and 24, at 7 p.m.

Authorized by the Beef Promotion and Research Act of 1985, the checkoff will collect \$1 per head for every beef animal sold.

deadline for registration is Oct. 1. For more information, contact the Berks County Cooperative Extension Service, (215) 378-1327.



Since the buyer is responsible for collecting the assessment, packers, processors, auctions, dealers and all others engaged in the buying of cattle are encouraged to attend the meeting.

The producer-funded checkoff program will finance major nationwide beef promotion and education efforts.

Flock Forum

by
Clair Engle

Penn State Extension Sheep Specialist

That Forgotten Hero

Most sheep producers will admit the ram is an important part of their operation. In spite of this, however, the ram can often be the most neglected animal in the flock. How many of you, right now have your ram out back somewhere and have not given him any particular attention for the last several months? Yet, you have him scheduled to be with the ewes next week. When was the last time you really looked at his general health and body condition? What do his feet look like? When did you last treat him for internal parasites? Have you contained him over the months where he was able to get daily exercise? Are his ribs showing or have you gotten him overly fat? Do you have him in short fleece for breeding?

It is often said that the value of your ram is equal to half the worth of your flock. Certainly your ram contributes half of the genetics plus 80 per cent of the genetic change that is accomplished in a planned selection program. If this is true, then isn't he deserving of some tender loving care sometime during his tenure as your stud ram?

Unfortunately, we too often get concerned about the old boy's well-being just before, or, in some instances, after he is placed with the ewes. "Oh, my gosh," you say. "Look at that ram's feet! Guess I'd better trim them," or "I didn't know he was lame. That looks like foot rot! A good shot of antibiotics and some iodine will fix that," or "Well, I'll be darned, I just noticed he has an extra good doze of sheath rot. I wonder if that will interfere with his breeding performance? Well, for the cause, I will clean off the area and apply some undiluted iodine before I let him up."

Did you get a semen check this year? "You've got to be kidding," you say. "He was perfectly good last year! Why, we had a 280 percent lamb crop."

Of course, nobody ever gets caught short of ram power just before the beginning of the breeding season from any of the mentioned misfortunes.

Is an annual semen evaluation worth the cost and effort? Check the table below to find out what it really costs to carry a ram over a season which he will be unable to pay back if you find him to be infertile or even sub-fertile.

Furthermore, if your ram problems interfered with the defined breeding season and the

subsequent lambing interval was extended, your market lambs targeted for that prime market could be too light and end up costing you as much as \$10 a lamb.

Now that we have established some economic reasons for taking care of your ram throughout his reproductive career, lets talk about a specific ram maintenance and service program. This is to preclude however, any chances of your purchasing a ram from the local weekly sheep auction or just deciding to swap rams with some friendly livestock trader. Regardless of which occasion, beware! You just might be investing in somebody else's past headache.

Next time you are tempted to negotiate such a transaction, just ask the seller to guarantee the ram's breeding soundness. No guarantee, no deal.

An annual breeding soundness examination, done by a qualified veterinarian, should include examination of the mouth (jaw set), teeth, feet and legs, testicles, penis, absence of external parasites, and a semen evaluation.

Recent studies have verified testicular size has a positive correlation to fertility. As a guide, lambs used for breeding should measure 28 to 30 centimeter, and yearlings 30 to 35 centimeters taking measurement at the greatest circumference.

The semen should be checked for viable sperm and also the presence of white blood cells which is indicative of a reproductive tract infection. Often it is a precursor to epididymitis and almost always affects the viability of the sperm. Rams infected with epididymitis generally require 30 to 45 days of antibiotic treatment and rest before using them for breeding.

Think of an annual semen check as insurance. It needs to be done 30 to 45 days prior to breeding so any problem can be adequately cared for before the big day occurs. That includes making arrangements for replacing the ram if necessary.

Thus, a special effort should be made to take that extra minute to look at the "old boy" when you give him that extra grain or quality hay daily, or just checking on his minerals or source of fresh water. Appreciate what he did for you that past year, especially if it was something short of being spectacular. Don't forget your ram and take care of him like the important guy that he is.

Estimated Annual Ram Costs:	
Initial cost	Estimated Costs
Annual depreciation (3.5 yrs. longevity)	\$200.00
Interest on investment (13% annum)	57.00
Maintenance	26.00
Feed pasture & mineral	50.00
Labor	10.00
Overhead	5.00
	Total annual cost minus purchase price
	\$148.00

Coming Events:
 October 2-6 Keystone International Livestock Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, Pa.
 December 19-20 1st Annual Pennsylvania Shepherd's Symposium, Ramada Inn, Somerset, Pa. Ask for a brochure at KILE.