

## 30 Nations Attend World Livestock Conference

DENVER, Colo. — Livestock producers from around the world unified their efforts to boost world prices by developing coordinated trade, production and promotion policies during the first World Livestock Producers Conference on Oct. 30.

Policy statements adopted during the closing session of the international livestock conference reflected a strong consensus that multilateral government initiatives to assure orderly marketing will benefit both exporters and importers of beef, pork and sheep meat throughout the world. The statements urged an easing of current global marketing restrictions, but strongly endorsed the limited use of subsidies to equalize trade relations.

Delegates, representing agricultural organizations from 30 nations, engaged in heated debate before adopting a recommendation addressing the use of implanted hormones in beef cattle.

The statements were drafted separately by delegates representing beef, sheep, and pig producers, and were debated and adopted by the roughly 140 producers' representatives attending the full conference. The four-day conference was sponsored by the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), a global forum representing 62 producer organizations in 51 countries.

Trade initiatives endorsed by the delegates are intended to stabilize and increase incomes for

producers while assuring continued supplies of meat at reasonable prices for consumers.

### Higher Meat Prices

The policy statement reads, "Every effort must be made to improve meat producers' incomes. The conference called for urgent and coordinated action by governments world-wide to raise meat prices on international markets."

"Stocks overhanging the markets should be liquidated with minimal damage to world markets and the objective should be to avoid these stocks from building up again."

The statement recognized the differences of opinion regarding the impact of national price sup-

port policies on international trade, saying, "It is essential to ensure that national support policies do not disrupt international markets. Since only a small proportion of world meat production enters international trade, very small surpluses in major producing countries can severely depress international meat markets."

### Use of Growth Promotants

While the statements on pricing and promotion programs gained general acceptance during the debate, delegates divided sharply on the issue of banning hormone implants and other growth stimulants in beef cattle.

The controversy centered around the European Economic Community's ban on the use of implanted hormones in beef production after Jan. 1, 1988. Several delegates from Common Market nations argued that the continued use of hormones by other exporting countries will place European producers at an economic disadvantage in the marketplace. But other delegates stressed that IFAP should not go on record in favor of limiting production technology.

After extensive debate, the statement adopted by the conference read, in part, "Greater efforts should be made to adapt the product to consumer requirements, e.g. meeting preferences for meat with

adequate marbling. In some countries, it may be necessary to produce and market meat without the use of certain implanted or administered growth promotants. It is noted that in other countries, the use of these promotants is acceptable."

Additional policies adopted by the delegates supported expanded meat promotional programs, and reflected a growing concern over the animal welfare movement in the world.

The policy statement reads, "Delegates called for a major all-industry international promotion effort in favor of all meats. Such a program would correct misinformation concerning meat consumption and health, and would promote increased awareness of the value of meat in a balanced diet."

### Animal Welfare

The animal welfare provisions in the policy stress, "It was recommended that livestock producers in the countries concerned establish national industry committees (inter-profession) including veterinarians and representatives of responsible animal rights groups. These committees should discuss the demands of animal welfare lobbyists in a calm way. Further, livestock farmers should undertake a public education program...to show that livestock are in fact raised under good conditions."

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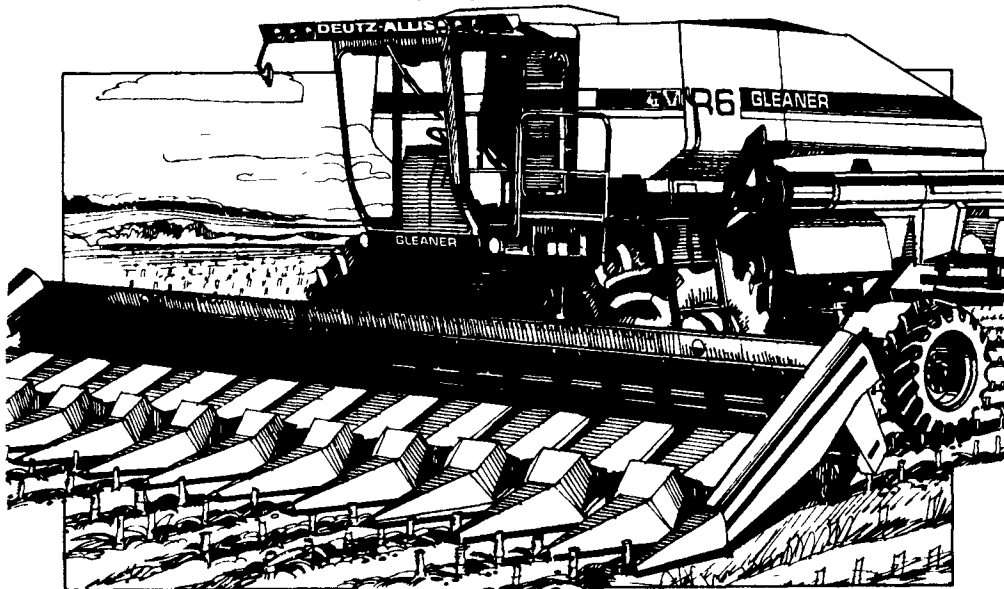
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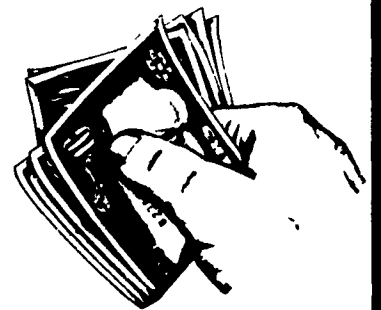
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