

Sheep Industry Addresses Change

DENVER, CO — "Our appetites are large and our resources are few. The sheep industry needs to pick its fights carefully and target resources in these areas," says Rodger Wasson, ASPC executive director, in his recent report to the ASPC Board of Directors. To keep up with constantly changing needs, the sheep industry is currently shifting into a stage of "Strategic Engagement," according to Wasson.

"It is rare to see an association keep up with changing needs," said Wasson. Growth curves of industries back to the mid 1800's show recurring stages of crisis and growth. Responsible change requires leadership commitment to critically analyze the current situation, anticipate the emerging crisis, openly consider totally new approaches, agree to new direc-

tion, then sell the vision. Timing is critical.

When ASPC was created, a promotional strategy dominated. Consumers were influenced with excellent lamb and wool advertising. The results of rising prices put pressure on producers to raise more sheep. "Blueprint for Expansion," a second stage, responded to this need. This stage not only called for expansion but also development of industry strategic plans at the state level. "Higher prices made the U.S. a target for increased imports," says Wasson.

As prices broke, the third stage of stronger marketing efforts went into action. Innovative marketing efforts in both lamb and wool increased demand and provided consumers with uniform quality products. Right on schedule with

higher prices came an increased attack from imports and the need to increase production. As a result ASPC expanded its producer services department working with all regions of the country.

Today ASPC has only one director of producer services. Increasing efforts are channeled through state organizations and the National Wool Growers Association.

"This brings us to the current stage, strategic engagement," says Wasson. Whether or not industry organizations ultimately become one, our industry will be pulled into new levels of cooperation, collaboration and consolidation of services. ASPC programs such as contests, cooperative programs and sales incentives get others involved, increasing our industry

voice.

Each department at ASPC is knowledgeable of what has worked in the past and what will be most effective in the future.

The vision we develop for our future will drive our strategies. If we are successful at our next change stage of strategic engagement, the industry will prosper and grow. History speaks for itself.

The complete text of Wasson's report is available on request by

contacting ASPC Communications Department, 200 Clayton St., Denver, CO 80206, (303) 399-8130.

The American Sheep Producers Council is a producer funded market development organization headquartered in Denver, Colo. The Council conducts advertising, promotional, educational and marketing programs on behalf of the nation's 114,000 sheep producers.

National Milk Federation

(Continued from Page A1)

resulted in the January 1 cut and its depressing effect on farm milk prices nationwide.

To head off this possibility, National Milk officials would like to see Lyng implement either another whole herd buyout or diversion program on a temporary basis, something he could do without new legislation from Congress. In the case of a buyout, federation economists figure a program about half the size of the 1986-87 one, which contracted for the removal of 12 billion pounds of productive capacity, would work.

Steve Kerr, the executive director of the Council of Northeast Farmer Cooperatives, agrees with the buyout or diversion approach, but he would like to see such a program implemented with regional concerns in mind. Despite a surplus nationally, milk supplies in the Northeast are tight, he said.

"It is vital," Kerr added, "that any supply control be targeted to the regions which overproduce."

The federation is taking a different tack this year, according to Barr, than it did in 1987, when it unsuccessfully sought congressional action to avert the price cut.

"We just don't think in a short election year, given the, quote, 'controversial' thing we've proposed, that we have a lot of opportunity in the Congress to get legislation in 1988," he said.

Trying to convince Lyng to do something he has consistently said he wouldn't may seem like a long shot, but, publicly at least, NMPF officials are optimistic the Secretary will eventually implement a

buyout or diversion.

"Officials in this town have said no before but, through one means or another, have changed their minds," Barr said. "We're hoping that happens now."

The fact that 1988 is shaping up as a presidential election year with a potentially close race does not hurt the federation's chances, Barr added.

In terms of milk production, the trend is already evident. The current USDA forecast for government purchases of surplus butter, powder and cheese in calendar 1988 is 8.6 billion pounds, up substantially from its estimate in December. USDA has not released a long-range forecast, but both the Congressional Budget Office and National Milk are predicting the government will buy 8.0 billion pounds in 1989.

That's 3 billion pounds above the 5-billion-pound trigger level. Without new policy, "there's no doubt . . . that the Secretary's going to make a price cut in 1989," said National Milk economist Mike Brown.

Should it take effect, the reduction would put the government's milk support price at \$10.10 a hundredweight, its lowest level since 1979. That's too low, particularly with costs rising, say federation officials, for many producers to continue in business.

"Policy makers can choose to drive dairy farmers out of business through another 50-cent price cut in 1989 or they can choose a positive approach to reducing milk production through a buyout program," Camerlo said.

Pigs "Pig Out" To Get Leaner

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Getting more lean pork to the marketplace faster might mean getting pigs to "pig out" more at the feed trough, said a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist.

"Ordinarily, pigs know when they're full and don't really 'pig out,'" said Jerome C. Pekas, an animal physiologist with USDA's Agricultural Research Service. Pigs produce a natural hormone, called Cholecystokinin or CCK, that tells them when to lay off the feed. But in an initial study, he said, pigs ate more and put on more lean tissue when injected with a compound that immunized them against this hormone.

"The pigs 'thought' they were hungry, so they ate more," Pekas said today in Los Vegas at the 72nd annual meeting of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology.

On average, carcasses of the 12 pigs injected with the new compound contained six pounds more lean meat than 12 control pigs, said Pekas, who did the study with fellow animal physiologists Bruce D. Schanbacher and William E. Trout at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in Clay Center, Neb. And, Pekas added, the leaner pigs consumed an average of 22.5 pounds more feed and gained 11 pounds

more weight than the control pigs over the 82-day treatment period.

He stressed that the results are preliminary, but is winding up a second study and plans others using larger numbers of pigs.

The new compound, he said, is a harmless decoy that a pig's immune system treats as a foreign invader by developing antibodies to it. And in the study, the antibodies also inactivated the natural CCK hormone, Pekas said.

The scientists injected pigs first at 11 weeks of age, and later gave three booster shots. Pekas said he believes only one booster may eventually be used.

"Pigs that got the special injections continue to use feed efficiently, digest extra feed, and go to the feed trough more often than animals in the control group," he said.

The new compound consists of a

fragment of CCK chemically bonded to a harmless foreign protein, serum globulin, found in human blood. While CCK has 37 amino acids, the fragment has only eight and is called CCK-8. CCK-8 immunization of pigs would require federal approval, he said. USDA scientists are pursuing a patent on using it to control appetite in animals.

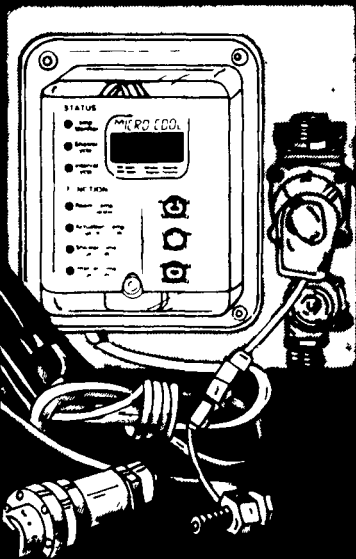
Physiologists first recognized CCK as a hormone that causes the gall bladder in animals and humans to contract. Its effect on appetite regulation became known within the last 10 years, he said.

He envisions the hormone being further studied in human medicine to treat problems caused by low appetite, such as anorexia nervosa, or insatiable appetite, such as obesity.



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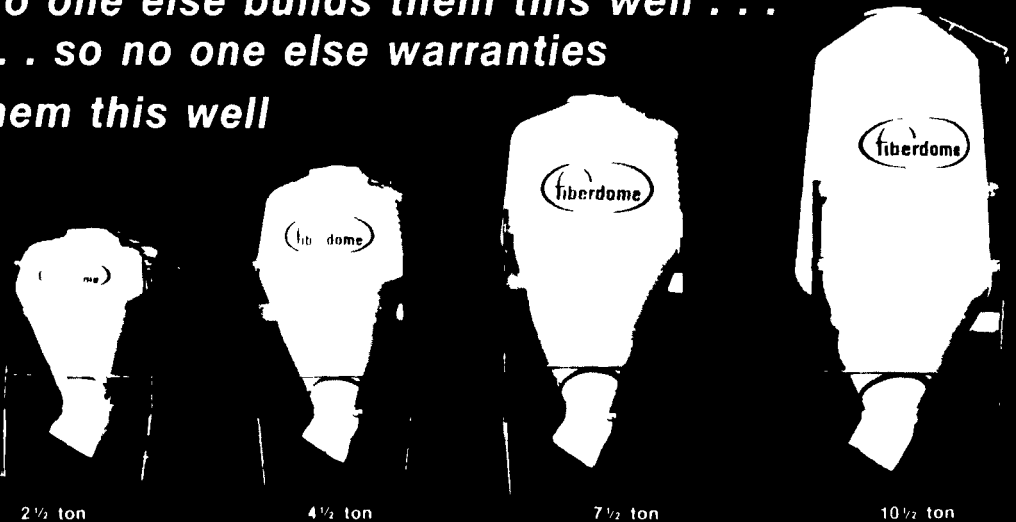
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