

Vantage Has Advantage

(Continued from Page A36)

"We've been between 95 and 105 milking cows most of the time we've been here. That pretty much fits our facilities.

"We're in the process now of

investigating how we can gradually — without a large investment — how we can grow a little bit, to the extent of five to 10 cows a year," Koontz said.

Also, with his wife's help, he is

looking at modernizing a little more and using information a little more effectively.

"Her (Angie's) latest project is to become computer friendly, which she's having a bit of success with. Then she'll teach me."

NIH Says BST Safe

BETHESDA, Md.— Milk derived from cows treated with a synthetic

growth hormone to increase their milk production is safe for consumption, according to a panel of medical and veterinary experts convened by the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST) is a synthetic version of a growth hormone naturally occurring in cows and their milk. When administered to dairy cows, rBST increases their average milk production by at least 10 percent and perhaps more. The use of rBST has generated considerable controversy regarding its possible health implications not only for the humans who consume milk and meat from rBST-treated cows but also for the animals themselves.

The panel said that rBST does not affect the quality of milk and meat derived from cows given rBST. "The evidence clearly indicates that the overall composition and nutritional quality of milk and meat from rBST-treated cows is equal to that from untreated cows," said panel chairman Dr. Melvin Grumbach, chairman emeritus of pediatrics at the University of California at San Francisco.

The experts agreed that rBST "does not appear to affect appreciably the general health of dairy cows." However, the panel could draw no conclusions based on the available data regarding the effect of rBST on the incidence of mastitis (udder infection). "The panel is aware that the Food and Drug Administration is currently evaluating a large body of data. We presume that an evaluation and analysis of this data will be forthcoming," said Grumbach. The biosynthetic hormone has not been approved by the FDA for commercial use.

Most milk consumed in the United States is pasteurized (heat treated), which inactivates most of the BST found in milk. Any trace amounts of BST ingested in milk or meat is broken down in digestion and rendered harmless.

The panel concluded by saying, "The use of rBST can be a very important management tool for American dairy farmers."

This 3-day technology assessment conference was sponsored by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the NIH Office of Medical Applications of Research.

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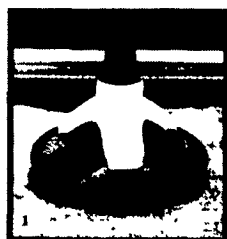


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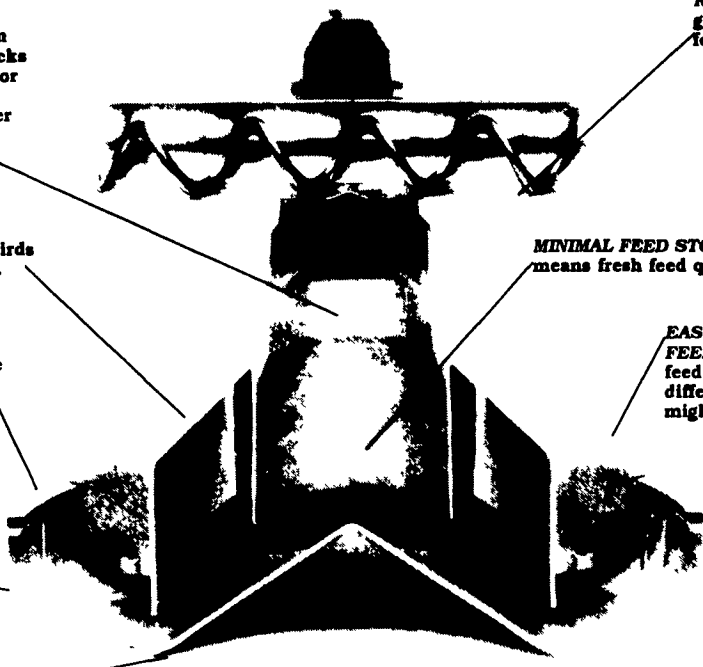
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