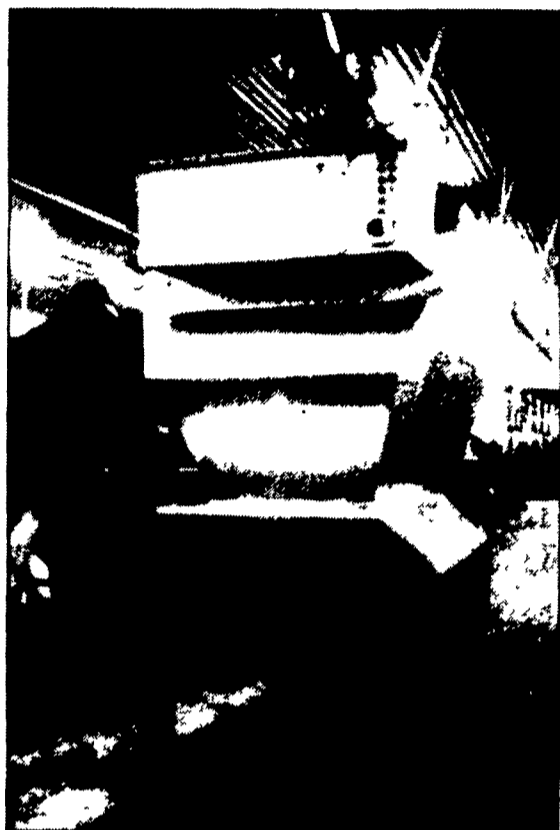


Swine Management News



WITH AUCTION CLOSED, WHAT CAN PORK PRODUCERS DO?
Dr. Richard Barczewski
 Extension County Ag Agent
 University of Delaware
 The only livestock auction in this area has closed its doors. I don't know the reasons. I only

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know that one week, without warning, no auction was held. What does this mean to the local agricultural community?

livestock auctions serve the agricultural community in a special way. livestock farmers, like grain and vegetable producers, need to be able to market their products. For many small operations, the only regularly available market they have to sell their animals is the local stockyard. For this reason, it is important that producers support these markets and help to keep them viable.

As people involved in livestock production, we've often discussed the pros and cons of selling livestock through an auction market. It's true that premium prices can be realized by selling products directly to consumers, but what do we do with the animals we can't sell directly? That's why a local auction is important to the livestock industry.

Local auctions offer producers an easy local way to dispose of cull or surplus animals that they can't market any other way. In addition, local auctions help to set prices for many private sales. Now we have only one livestock auction left in the area.

Auctions for the livestock industry still exist, but these appear to be getting fewer and farther away. This is a disadvantage for producers with only a few head of livestock to market. The impact of fewer markets on the swine industry will be felt at all levels. We are fortunate to have two major market hog buyers in the area, but the third alternative, the stockyard, where smaller buyers purchase their animals, is no

longer available here.

The impact on other classes of animals appears to be even harder. Think about the fact that producers of cull sows and boars have an even smaller marketing avenue. Some hog buyers won't consider buying animals outside of specific weight ranges or confirmation types. In these cases, producers may be limited to only one disposal source and that is never the best way to market.

Feeder pigs are another market class that must be considered. One advantage of the Delaware auction was that it held a graded feeder-pig sale; now not one is left in operation on the peninsula. The graded sale offered buyers a chance to purchase animal that had been sorted by size and grade to help buyers get uniform lots of pigs. Also pigs with physical defects were excluded. This sale offered a good source of both light- and heavierweight feeder pigs to many buyers. The options available to these feeder-pig producers here is now greatly reduced.

Where does this leave us in the swine industry? The productivity and profitability of any industry is directly related to the availability of a market. Remove the market, or make it less competitive, and the result is negative.

Who knows if this turn of events is permanent? I hope not, because we need a viable livestock auction. The swine industry needs it. So do the cattle and sheep industries. It's hard not to be pessimistic when reviewing the situation, but hog producers are going to have to work together to determine how to fill the void left by the auction's closing.

Campground Association Offers Directory

EMLENTON (Venango Co.) — The Pennsylvania Campground Owners Association (PCOA) has made its "1991 Pennsylvania Campground Directory" available.

The directory divides the state into six regions with maps, color coding, and a detailed facility listing for each region.

Officers and directors of PCOA are listed with their campground name. Each of the 170 members of the association are listed, with the name, mailing address and phone

number. Access directions, number of sites, and a listing of all facilities available are also listed.

PCOA is an association of private campground owners dedicated to the advancement of family camping. The association is an affiliate of the National Campground Owners Association, a 3,000-member association in 40 states in the U.S.

For a copy of the Directory, send \$2 for shipping and handling to PCOA, c/o Beverly Snyder, Box 147, Emlenton, PA 16373.

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