

First Bison Auction Huge Success

MIDDLEBURG (Snyder Co.) — The first Pennsylvania Bison (Buffalo) Association Auction last Saturday was a huge success, according to the association.

"A good showing of interested buyers was expected, as well as some curious bystanders, but wall-to-wall people?" said Margery Kutney, association secretary.

Bidders from Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio Rhode Island,

Virginia, Connecticut, Delaware and all over the East gathered for the gala event. The 22 animals were sold from \$1,000 for calves to \$2,400 for a 2-year-old bull.

According to Kutney, Don Keister, owner of Keister's Middleburg Auction Barn, said it was the largest attendance he has ever had at an auction.

People arriving early had time to look around at the Bison by going

out the catwalk and looking down on the quiet pens of waiting Bison to be sold.

Some hungry people also had an opportunity to taste Bison barbecue on a roll-or-go into the restaurant and buy a Bison burger. Either way, both were sold out before the auction started at 1 p.m.

Some ceramic banks in the design of the old buffalo nickel were hand-painted and for sale.

Also, there were packages of gingerbread cookies cut from a buffalo mold.

"They had eyes and horns of slivered almonds!" said Kutney. "You had to see it to believe it. Delicious too! Bison cookbooks were sold. You could buy frozen Bison patties, salami, and Bison jerky, too."

There was even a booth with information on embryo transplanting.

Brought into the ring two at a time for auction, the Bison were a little bewildered about being the center of attention, but well-behaved and the auction went off without a hitch, according to Kutney.

All parties, sellers and buyers alike, seemed pleased with the sale. Although more Bison were expected to be sold, some ranches still are not equipped with a chute and squeeze, equipment necessary for testing and resale of the big animals still new to the eastern population. Bison were taken off the extinction list some 25 years ago.

Pennsylvania Bison Association applications were available at the auction, and 1992 applications are being accepted now. Out-of-state people are invited to join. Those interested can contact the Pennsylvania Bison Association, R1, Box 46, Meshoppen, PA 18630, (717) 965-2237.

Livestock Team

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ing for a lot leaner type of carcass," he said.

He also told the livestock team that they need to remember that, for every beef animal, there is a market, and the animal has a place in that market.

Four 1,300-pound heifers were brought out as a judging class. Beforehand, the team examined the performance data taken on the heifers, including birth, weaning weight, yearling weight, and maternal milk expected progeny differences (EPDs). Also, navel and sheath characteristics were taken into account. Spring heifer calves were also brought into the ring for judging. It was this material that the team used to prepare for the test of their reasoning that night.

Work on judging

Mark Tracy, a sophomore at Elizabethtown and a 4-H member for about eight years, said he needs to work on actual judging and is confident about his reasonings. Peter Hoffines, 16, an Elizabethtown

sophomore and a 4-H member for seven years, believes he has to develop more length and description in the reasoning, but feels confident about his placings.

Wendall Landis, 15, a sophomore at Lancaster Mennonite High School, is a six-year 4-H member. He said he needs to develop more understanding of EPDs and use them more thoroughly in his reasonings.

Dwain Livengood, 18, a graduate of Faith Mennonite High School, has been involved in 4-H for nine years. He said he is trying to improve his accuracy after his placings and make sure the reasonings are more precise.

For Tracy, the practice session was more than just correctly placing animals and talking the talk.

"I'm hoping I can do good," he said. "You always try to talk and say you're going to do better. But it doesn't seem to help. It's more like you have to really want to do it. You just have to make sure you're doing what you're supposed to do."

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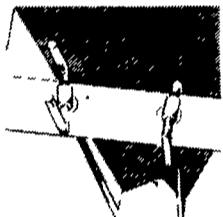


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