

National Farmers Organization Develops Cull Cow Forward Contract

AMES, Iowa — National Farmers recently blazed a new marketing trail for cull cows with a first in the beef industry — a cull cow forward contract.

"In October, National Farmers put together the first fed-cow forward contract ever," said Pat Lewis, program manager for Cash Cow Plus, National Farmers' cull

cow program. "The contract is for several thousand colored (non-dairy) cull cows from Nebraska herds.

"The program has two objectives. First, producers can make more money from their cull cows by putting the cows into a feedlot, rather than selling them directly after they wean their fall calves,"

Lewis said. "Second, the forward contract will level out the flood of beef cows that hit the market when calves are weaned in the fall.

"That oversupply of cows in the fall drives the market down. By feeding the cows for 100-plus days, producers can take advantage of a historically stronger mar-

ket, and meter the cows into the market on a less disruptive basis," Lewis said.

Andy Neutzling, director of operations for National Farmers' livestock department said that although the cows will go to market in the spring, they are not a part of the spring market.

"The cows are coming off feed in the spring, but producers won't have marketing worries," he said. "The cows were marketed five months before with the forward contract. The double result is that the cows will be pulled out of the spring market as well as the fall market."

A fed cow is a cull cow who is put in a feedlot for 100 or more days. During this time, the cow transforms yellow fat into white fat by eating a high energy corn ration.

Contracted delivery dates on all cows involved in this pilot effort is between mid-February to late April. The contract specifies the carcasses must weigh between 550 and 850 pounds, and 85 percent of the cows must have white tallow.

"The cows were sold at

\$1.02-1/2 in the meat," said Lewis. "This price is \$3/cwt. above the average fed cow price one year ago, and \$5 to \$6/cwt. in the meat above what hamburger cows are currently bringing.

"National Farmers recognizes that it is very strong in the dairy cull cow market," he said. "It also recognizes a need to gain a larger share of the colored cull cow market."

Neutzling said this new forward contract could support the total cattle market if National Farmers had enough cows under contract. Still, regardless of the number of cows contracted, it tends to support the cull cow market since the price is already determined.

"These cows are actually in competition with fed cattle," Neutzling said. "Packers will take primal cuts off these cows and market the cuts themselves — not just boneless cuts like they normally do with cull cows." That added meat puts added pressure on young beef cattle.

"As long as there is a market for that type of beef product, National Farmers will continue forward contracting cull cows," said Neutzling.

N.Y. Farm Show Win-Win Event For Farmers

LIVERPOOL, N.Y.—Farmers can drive around the countryside to check out what's new in equipment and inputs. Or time-conscious, smart farmers can one-stop look at the 9th annual New York Farm Show.

Held last Feb. 24-26 at the New York State Fairgrounds in Syracuse, the large indoor farm show brings the nation's and region's major agricultural dealers to one location for a three-day information extravaganza. Show hours are 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

"New York Farm Show is a great opportunity to see different manufacturers and compare what they have to offer," said Scott Grigor, farm show manager. "Farmers can find out what's coming up for the next season — what's the latest technology, what's happening in chemicals, equipment and services. It's one-stop shopping at its best."

What are some hot items on agribusinesses' shelves this year? Farmers will see some interesting changes in chemical and seed

packaging and innovations in disease and pest resistance in corn hybrids, Grigor said.

Equipment manufacturers are eager to explain their new tillage and planting equipment to help farmers meet their conservation compliance plans. Along with them, the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) will provide a special display on residue management. Farmers can measure residue and learn what practices leave the required amount on their highly erodible land.

Farms are more than production, and the New York Farm Show is more than equipment. To address the diversity of farm life, special programs will occur throughout the three-day show. Learn ways to make farm and family life safer and more healthy by taking in demonstrations offered by the New York State Rural Health and Safety Council and the New York Center for Agriculture Health and Medicine. New York Farm Show isn't all

work. For the second year, a special display of antique tractors will draw the attention of show goers, as will the 5th annual Toy Show Auction. Held Friday, Feb. 25, at 6 p.m. in the Arts and Home Center building, this year's auction will feature some 400 pieces for sale. Proceeds benefit the FFA Alumni Scholarship Fund and the Hamilton FFA chapter.

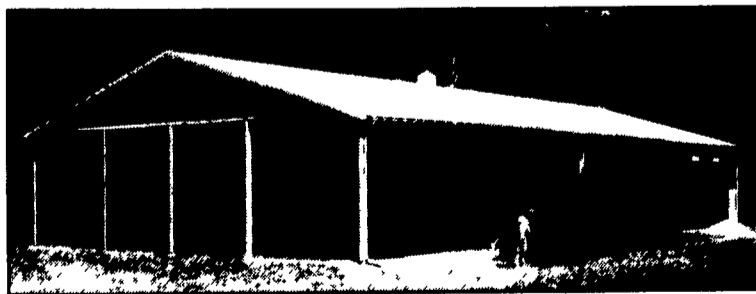
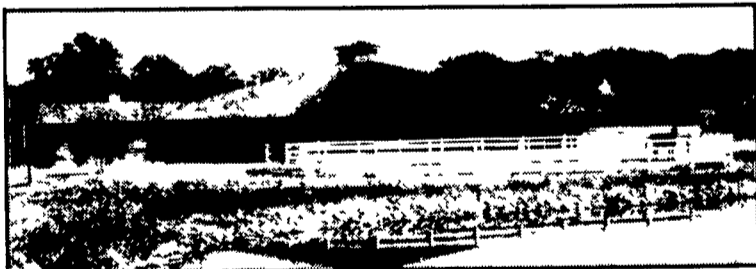
New York Farm Show tickets are available free from your New York state farm equipment dealer. To order free tickets by mail, write the New York Farm Show, P.O. Box 3470, Syracuse, NY 13220. Include a self-addressed, stamped legal envelope.

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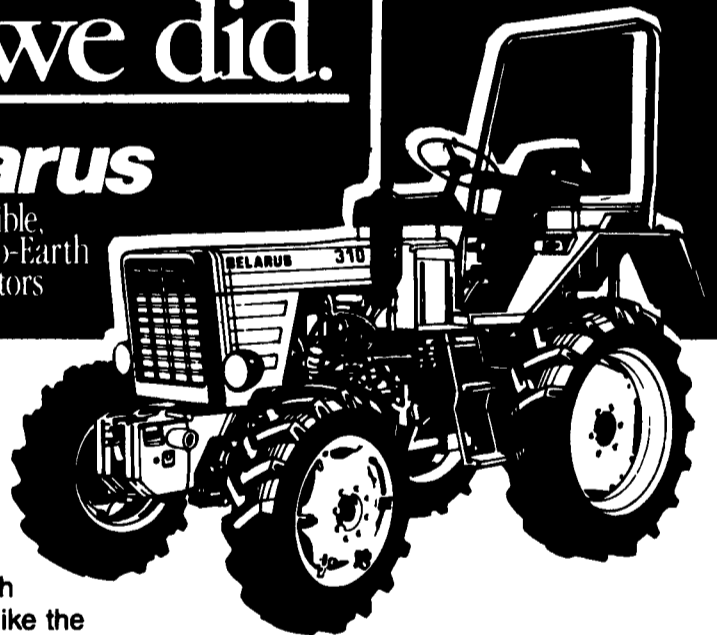
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