

Beef Production Outlook Not Good

(Continued from Page A26)

Most importantly, Harpster said to consider the location of the farm, the capability of storage of a byproduct, the percent dry matter and the nutrients available.

Testing feeds, if not being done already, is a must for using byproducts, he said. And he said that those who don't test feeds probably should start on developing a better program before considering offering byproducts.

In the feed bunk, with normal feeds, appearance, odor, temperature, quantity and timing of feed-

ing especially important.

He said that producers should attempt to be "readers of the feed bunk," which he said some people just seem to be better at than others.

Water consumption is also important, with cattle requiring from 8 to 10 gallons per head, per day, in 60 degree weather; 12 to 20 gallons per head in 90 degree weather.

He also said that techniques such as implanting — which provides a 10- to 15-percent increase in average daily gain and reduces

feed intake by the same amount — is currently a practice that is necessary to remain competitive, unless the producers can be paid extra for being not as efficient. In other words, develop or find a market which demands beef produced otherwise.

"Either use the technology, or be compensated," he said, including the use of ionophores and other practices.

Over feeding protein and marketing at the wrong weight will also hurt the margin.

He said that cattle under 600

pounds require feed with about 14 percent protein; those from 700 to 800 pounds require about 13 percent; and those weight 800 or more require about 12 percent.

He said those who feed silage can probably reduce those levels by a percent.

According to Harpster, "Some of the most expensive feed is free." He explained, saying that other industry waste, which can be used to feed cattle, represents a risk to cattle, if not fed properly, or if impurities exist.

Also moisture content may be too significant and actually reduce the amount of nutrients getting into the animal.

Basically, Harpster recommended working with a nutritionist, and pushing a pencil before committing an operation to the use of alternative feeds.

However, he said that those who can find byproduct feeds, and can perhaps use their own ingenuity to better make the byproduct feed low risk and consistent, may have an opportunity for making profits, at least until others increase the demand for the byproduct.

As an example, he cited soybean meal, brewer's grain, distiller's grain, beet pulp, and others, which were formerly waste byproducts and over a relatively short time have become considered a normal feed.

As an example of how the use of byproduct feeds can reduce the cost of feeding, he showed a com-

parison of his cost feeding conventionally at \$1.01 per head, per day, which was reduced to 62 cents per head when using cull potatoes, and which was further reduced to 55 cents per day using a second byproduct from a local cannery.

He said that a producer, before starting to use a byproduct, must know exactly what it is he is considering feeding, and all costs involved, including perhaps additional time and concentration in working with the byproducts.

He also talked about how he and others were able to take a drought-year, 3-foot high, no-grain corn crop, and convert it into silage comparable to normal year nutrition levels and stability. He said that they took potatoe wash slurry, and using an injection system, were able to spray at a calibrated rate to achieve a moisture content conducive to proper ensiling, and which provided energy.

But then he also showed a slide of an operation which had accepted potatoe byproducts because of low cost and attempted to store them in a dirt-bottom trench. The result was disaster.

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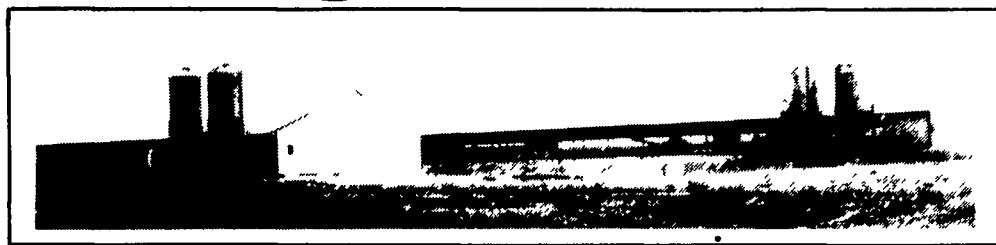
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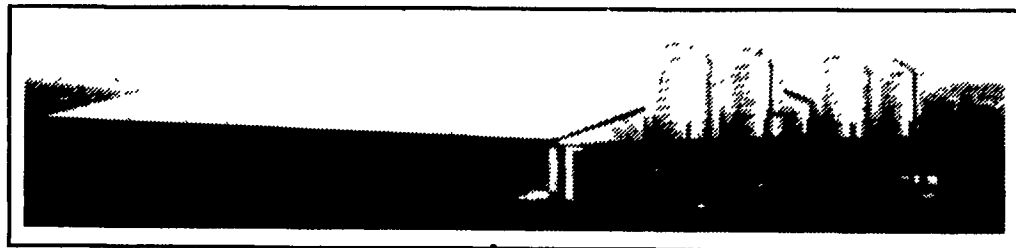
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