



Junior public speaking award winners were, from left, Nathan Zack, 8-11 year group; Lisa Zack, 12-15 year group; and Beth Elkin, senior group.

## Pork Congress

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percent from the record-setting year of 1992 (at 9.48 billion bushels).

Pennsylvania, suffering through a drought last year, managed only 91 million bushels for an average of 94 bushels per acre (the state's best crop came in 1985, at 151.8 million bushels and 110 bushels/acre).

This could translate into higher feed prices throughout the year. Corn could stand at \$3 or more a bushel in the December futures (as of Feb. 14, futures price for December was \$2.72 a bushel). He said producers should be watching the corn futures market "like a hawk," because, depending on planting and weather conditions, the corn price could soar.

After a "really strong" first quarter, said Moore, the current hog report indicates that pork supplies should drop almost 2 percent in 1994. The January-June production should be down 3 percent. In the June-August period, production should be the same as in 1993, while output in the final quarter of 1994 will be down 2 percent from the same period in 1993.

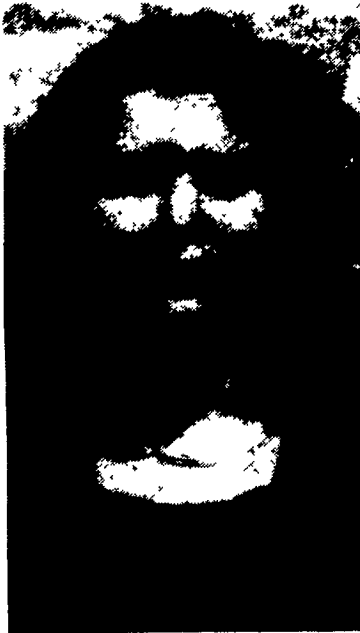
Pork as a percentage of the total U.S. meat production in 1993 stood at 25 percent. The biggest chunk went to poultry, at 40 percent. Moore said this trend will continue. Also, more hog contract operations will make Pennsylvania more and more like North Carolina. Of all the farms dropping out of business in the past years, most of them are hog operations. Although the rate of people dropping out of farming has slowed down, said Moore, the dropouts in agriculture are showing mostly in the hog industry.

During the first quarter of 1994, according to Moore, hog prices should average about \$46. In the April-August period, prices should average about \$50. The final three months of the year should have prices about \$47-\$48. (As of Feb. 11, hog futures in July this year were at \$53.75).

Because of the economy, producers will see a better year than last year. With the inflation and food prices low, the economy should continue on a slow growth pattern in 1995, according to the **Producer Panels**

Pork producers can weather the ups and downs of market prices if their operation is under contract and producers strive to be more productive, according to pork producers on a special production contract panel at the Keystone Pork Congress.

Panelists Jerry Hostetter, Swatara Swine, Denver and Alvin Shaffer, Dalmatia, both agreed, however, that a contract helps the producer get "on his feet," while offering protection, economically



Krista Byers, 18, daughter of Edgar and Linda Byers, Millerstown, was honored as Outstanding FFA member at the Keystone Pork Congress.

at least, from a fickle market. But both said they depend on people — the heart of any business.

"People are the reason that these units work," said Hostetter. "People are everything. If you don't have quality, smart people, you can't even begin to work on production costs."

But the key to profitability, according to Hostetter, is controlling costs. He said feed is about 60 percent of total production costs. Producers should lock in on corn and soybean meal market price as far in advance as possible to maintain profitability.

Shaffer, who operates a 700-sow farrow-to-feeder operation in Northumberland County, said the farm wanted to expand, but they didn't want to worry "what would happen if individual pig prices went to 36 cents, and whether we would make enough money even to pay the interest," he said, on what was borrowed. They decided to contract. "With our contract, we no longer need to worry about feed, purchasing supplies, or transporting hogs to market — all are included in the contract." This helps remove the worry about market fluctuations.

More and more contracting is taking place, according to the producers, because of the risks involved in getting started or expanding.

Another panel, composed of herd representatives, examined some pointers used in running a more efficient operation in order to meet packer needs. That panel was comprised of Robert Mikesell, White Oak Mills, Elizabethtown, and Dave Heckel, Farm Crest Feeds, Lititz.

Also at the Congress, Dr. David J. Meisinger, chief operating officer, Fetterman Farms Limited, Par-

is, Ill., spoke about lessons learned from a Midwest packer about bringing the best carcass to slaughter.

### Youth Contests

For the first time in its eight-year history, the Keystone Pork Bowl was won by an FFA chapter.

Mifflinburg FFA members Matt Christ, Lucas Criswell, Daryl Ebersole, and Derrick Moyer clinched first place after beating the second-place Berks County team 125-110. Coach of the team, which placed third in last year's competition, is Dave Woodling.

The competition was neck-and-neck until the last question. The Berks County team is composed of Richard W. Kerper, Jr., Leon Hunter, Pat Hunter (coach), Tim Eschbach, and Jason Manbeck.

Third place went to Lebanon County, with members Jason Shirk, Jon Harnish, Wendy Atkins, and Katie Lefever.

In the youth public speaking contest, 13 participated. All the winners were from Indiana County.

## Mifflin Holstein Club Holds Annual Meeting

ALLENSVILLE (Mifflin Co.) — BST. Bovine somatotropin. It's something every dairy farmer needs to make up their own mind about.

That was the beginning statement and ending conclusion veterinarians Dr. Anthony Potorti and Dr. Bob Guttross made to members of the Mifflin County Holstein Club at their annual dinner meeting held Thursday, January 25 at the Country Village Restaurant in Allensville.

Slick roads prevented Dairy Farm Nutritional and Management Consultant and featured speaker Tim Kissling from attending the meeting. Dr. Potorti and Guttross, from the Big Valley Animal Hospital near Reedsville, stepped in with timely, simple, in-a-nutshell facts on BST — how it works, how and when to use it, the benefits of BST usage and its possible side effects.

"It is an effective drug," comments Dr. Guttross who helped with research trials on a similar drug at the University of Vermont. But both agreed on the same benefits and drawbacks from BST usage.

"We (as veterinarians) don't gain anything from this," Potorti commented, adding that farmers order the product directly from Monsanto. It is not a prescription. "In fact, it will increase problems for us because of the increase incidence of twins."

### How BST works

— The level of this hormone occurring naturally is higher in a higher producing cow, thus the basis for research and desire to use the drug form.

— It increases the blood flow to the udder. With more blood flow, there's more milk.

— It may increase the number of actual glands that produce milk.

— It increases glucose produced by the liver.

— It conserves nitrogen, a building block of protein.

### How to use BST

— BST costs \$6.60 per dose, direct from Monsanto. Potorti said you can call Federal Express and they show up the next day with your delivery.

— BST comes in a 16-gauge needle and is to be injected under the skin (at base of tail) every six weeks starting from nine weeks after fresh until dryoff. Potorti says there are no benefits from starting sooner. Feed will increase after three to four weeks and the maximum benefits will not be

In the 8-11 age group, first place went to Nathan Zack. Nathan, 11, is the son of Laurie and John Zack, Blairsville. According to Nathan, he bested the championship because of his experience in speaking to 150 members of the 6th grade at United Elementary School. Nathan, a member of the Gordon 4-H Livestock Club, spoke about humor in the pigpen.

Nathan's sister, Lisa, 14, won the 12-15 year old category. Lisa attends United Junior/Senior High School. She placed the year before in the competition. She spoke about animal welfare/animal rights, she said, presenting the humorous side. Lisa said she feels confident before a crowd. She is also a member of the Gordon 4-H Livestock Club.

Beth Elkin, 18, won in the senior category. Beth is the daughter of Sam and Paula Elkin, Marion Center, and is in her first year in ag engineering at Penn State. She served as senior class president and believes she capped the award, with her speech about animal welfare/animal rights, from the

experience in high school and in speaking to 4-H groups.

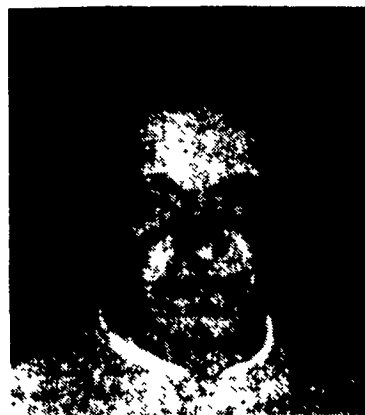
Judges for the public speaking contest were Fred Dillner, retired ag teacher from Shippensburg and Millicent Rinchart, Rinchart's Orchards, Lewisberry.

At the banquet, three were honored for contributions to the state's pork industry.

Virgil E. Gutshall, Jr., Beaver Ridge Farm, Blain, was honored as Pork All-American. He is herd manager for a 300-sow farrow-to-finish operation on 225 acres.

Outstanding 4-H member went to Charles Wolfe III, 15, son of Charles Jr. and Lucille Wolfe, Grindstone. The Brownsville Senior High School 11th grader has been a 4-H member for nine years. He plans to attend college and major in veterinary medicine.

Krista Byers, Greenwood FFA, was named Outstanding FFA member. Krista, 18, is the daughter of Edgar and Linda Byers, Millerstown. The Greenwood FFA member, who served as chapter president, is in her first year in ag education at Penn State.



Lowell Peachey

seen until a month after.

— BST is not to be injected into the muscle.

— Genetics is not a big factor. It works the same for registered cows, grade, high producers, or low producers.

— It is not recommended for cows who will calve bulls for breeding. Not enough is known about the resulting effects on the bull's fertility.

### Side effects — good and bad

— Using BST causes about a 15% feed consumption increase.

— BST usage is said to increase milk production from 5-15 pounds of milk per cow.

— It does affect breeding. "About the time you're ready to breed her back, you start BST," Potorti said. Starting BST causes a decrease in energy until the cow gets that extra food needed caused by BST usage. Guttross added, "Nine weeks is about the point where a cow needs to put body weight back on. If you start to use this, their body weight drops back. There is a definite lag there with good energy. You're going to have to try to get your cows to eat."

— BST increases the number of days a cow is open, but doesn't seem to affect the number of services per cow.

— Guttross noted few injection site reactions during the research, little increase in diarrhea, and little incidences of cows going off feed or bloating. Potorti said to read the warning label on the product but also said that it isn't as bad as it sounds.

— There is an increase incidence of twins.

— There is an increase incidence of mastitis due to the increased level of production. Generally, mastitis is greater in high producers as compared to low producers.

— This product was banned in



Paul Neer

Vermont. Wisconsin banned it from their research years ago.

— Monsanto figures farmers can make \$67 per cow per year before taxes.

— In-a-nutshell, both Potorti and Guttross felt each dairy farmer should weigh both the good and the bad. One suggestion mentioned was using BST on a partial herd basis, turning borderline producers into high producers.

In other banquet news, Paul Neer, Lowell Peachey, and Lee D. Yoder were elected as board of directors for three-year terms.

Distinguished Service Award went to Kore J. Peachey from Milroy. He received a silver engraved tray for his contributions to the club.

Darren Peachey received the club's high pounds of protein award - 825 lbs. Russell Kline earned the breed age average (BAA) award - 106.9.

Darv Yoder gave the Junior member report. He said several kids attended the Junior Convention this year, attended judging school at Penn State, and many participated in the youth fair. Mifflin County also hosted the District 4-H Dairy Show. Yoder also thanked those who purchased cheese during their sale saying it is their major source of funding for junior member activities.

Dave Spicher thanked the show committee for their help at the Youth and Open shows during the Mifflin County Youth Fair.

Extension Director Dave Filson announced several MAP (Management and Productivity) dairy meetings scheduled for Mifflin, Juniata, and Perry counties. They will be held two consecutive Tuesdays from 9-3 at the Mifflin County Courthouse. They are patterned after Cornell's successful program and management and profitability. The meetings will center on running a dairy operation like a business.