

Uses Of Grains, Other Resources For Beef Production

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.)—Livestock, beef cattle particularly, are often accused of using grains and other resources that should be directly consumed by the human population.

Following are some points to consider in determining the efficiency of using these resources through the U. S. beef cattle industry.

- Raising beef is an efficient use of our natural resources. Only through ruminant (four stomach), grazing animals can

we harvest food from most of the more than 800 million acres of range and pasture land in the U. S. At least 85 percent of these lands are too high, too rough, too dry, or too wet to grow cultivated crops. The availability of grazing cattle more than doubles the U. S. land area that can be used to produce plants for food purposes.

- Approximately 85 percent of the nutrients consumed by cattle come from non-grain sources — feedstuffs not edible

by humans. These feedstuffs include grass, roughage, food-processing by-products and crop residue. The grain that cattle do eat is produced specifically to meet this need and would not be grown if the demand did not exist.

- Less than half of the dry matter produced by grain crops is edible by humans. Millions of tons of nutrients would be wasted — to say nothing of waste disposal problems — if it were not for the fact that lives-



CORN TALK NEWS

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tock can make use of food processing by-products and crop residues like corn stalks.

- If grain were not fed to livestock, more grain would not necessarily be available to feed the hungry. The U. S. continues to produce more grain than can readily be sold. For most of the last three decades, U.S. grain surpluses have increased, even with an expanding animal agriculture. That is why acreage reduction has been part of the government grain programs. The increase in grain supplies has not helped alleviate world hunger. Relief programs and/or economic and infrastructure development in poor countries, providing the ability to produce or purchase and distribute more food, are needed to help solve hunger problems.

- Energy use is not an issue when it comes to cattle production. The beef industry con-

sumes less than one half of one percent of total U.S. fossil fuel energy use.

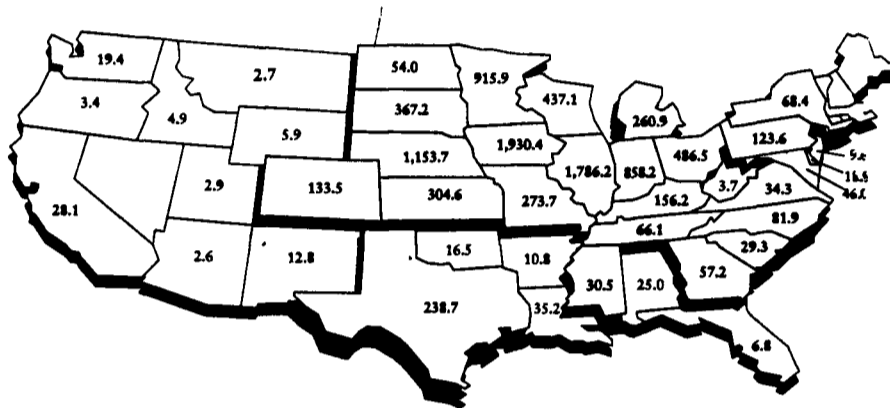
- More than 80 percent of the total energy involved in food production, processing, and preparation is used after food leaves the farm. Because many plant-source foods require large amounts of energy in the processing phase, the overall energy efficiency of beef often is comparable, or even superior, to the energy efficiency of plant-source foods.

How we manage our resources is vitally important for our nation's future. The beef industry nationally and in 30 states (soon to include Pennsylvania) is increasing efficiency of resource use through programs such as Integrated Resource Management (IRM) which also considers improved animal health and well-being and product wholesomeness.

Facts From NCGA's 'The World Of Corn 1995'

State Corn Production 1994

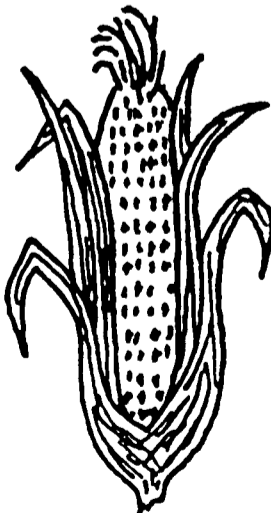
Million Bushels



1,000 BUSHELS

Iowa**	1,930,400	Pennsylvania*	123,600	Delaware	18,750
Illinois*	1,786,200	North Carolina**	81,900	Oklahoma	16,500
Nebraska**	1,153,700	New York*	68,440	New Mexico	12,750
Minnesota**	915,900	Tennessee*	66,120	Arkansas	10,800
Indiana*	858,240	Georgia*	57,240	New Jersey	9,639
Ohio**	486,500	North Dakota**	54,000	Florida	6,800
Wisconsin**	437,100	Maryland**	46,020	Wyoming	5,856
South Dakota**	367,200	Louisiana*	35,190	Idaho	4,900
Kansas**	304,590	Virginia**	34,300	West Virginia	3,675
Missouri**	273,700	Mississippi*	30,500	Oregon	3,400
Michigan**	260,910	South Carolina*	29,325	Utah	2,860
Texas**	238,680	California	28,050	Montana	2,700
Kentucky**	156,160	Alabama*	24,960	Arizona	2,550
Colorado**	133,500	Washington	19,425	TOTAL	10,103,030

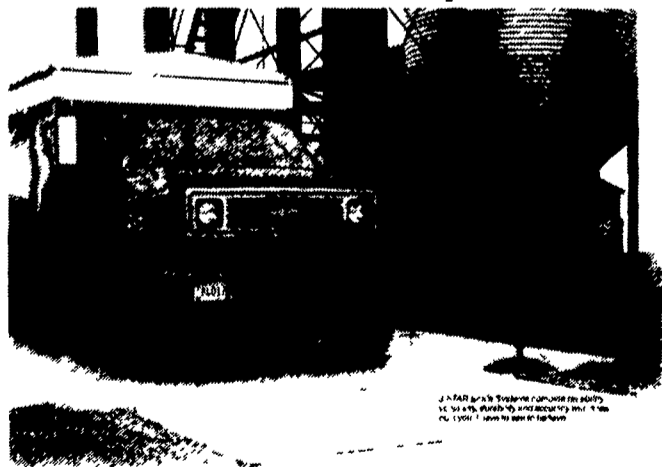
Source: USDA/National Agricultural Statistics Service
* denotes states with corn checkoff
** denotes NCGA member state



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