

About 125 Turn Out For Cattle Feeder's Day

Producers, Retailers Must Work Together To Provide Consumer With A 'Satisfactory Eating Experience'

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that "beef still wears the crown. "But it's tarnished, it's been damaged," Kober said.

There ought to be a way for the producers and packagers of beef products to come up with a way to counter that "unsatisfactory" eating experience, which gives "no value" to anyone, he noted. "Every cattle not grading choice should be ground up for hamburger," said Kober.

Kober indicated promotion councils are essential to keeping consumers aware of what products are available. Importantly, producers, like any business, need to have a "personal mission statement" which defines what they are going

to do.

Retail stores have their own mission statement. Supermarkets have to decide: are we operating a certain department as a profit center? As a traffic pull?

The merchandising manager noted that the main goal of promotions in circulars is "not to sell food," he said. "The number one goal is to get people to come in the front door."

Kober said some supermarkets operate on the EDLP (what the industry calls "EveryDay Low Price") system, which doesn't advertise specials, but consistently keeps prices low in the store. He said Clemens is a "High-Low" system, which sells its high-priced products for too much money and



At the Cattle Feeder's Day, producers spoke about their efforts to upgrade their feedlots during a panel. Glenn Binkley, at far left, is a cattle feeder based in Columbia, who previously worked as a dairyman. Binkley manages about 200 acres and finishes about 240 head of cattle per year. Darwin Nissley, center, farms with his brother, Bernard, in Mount Joy. They've been in partnership on the farm since 1983. Dan McFarland, Penn State ag engineer and moderator of the producer panel, far right, noted that the Edwin Hoover farm in Ephrata built an addition to a bank barn, measuring 100 foot wide and extending out to about 54 feet. The addition accommodates the 200 head of cattle that Hoover finishes per year.

its low-priced products for too little money. In the end, the sales income generated from the prices balance the budget by which the stores operate.

Producers, in other words, have to determine how they will operate: produce low-grade product for hamburger? Or turn out the finest choice cuts and market the beef accordingly?

Contrary to popular belief, supermarket price of items rarely reflects the price paid for it or the price given to wholesalers or producers. "What I pay has little to do with what I sell it for," said Kober.

The prices, actually, have "everything to do with promotion," and if stores advertise it more, "people eat it more," he said. "It's pretty basic."

The problems with consumers over whether they will purchase beef is not the expense, but their reluctance to try beef because of previous unsatisfactory eating

experiences. That's why Clemens selects Choice grade products and offers huge promotions on beef.

Kober pointed out an "Advo"

package that is mailed out with a store circular every other Friday. The circular advertises "Clemens

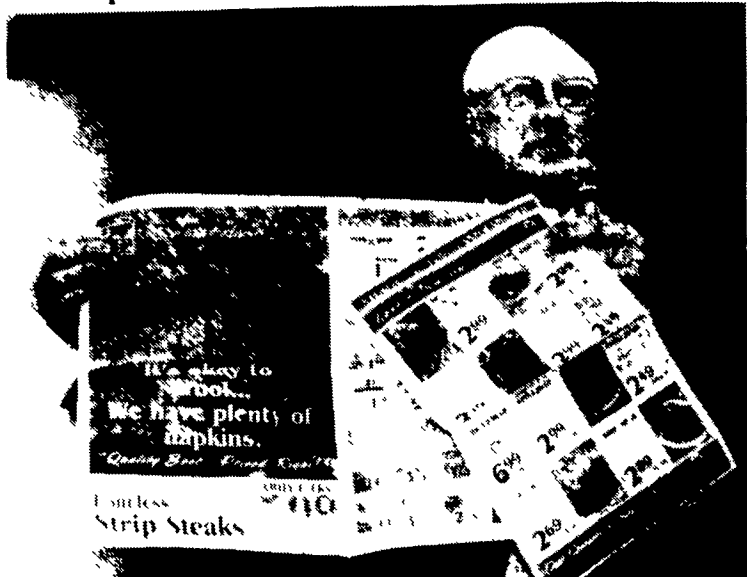
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George Wean, senior sales and marketing representative at Mopac, center, spoke about the company's beef procurement efforts. Mopac, Wean noted, has been in the beef business for 125 years.



Jim Johnson, with the feeder calf marketing program at the Virginia Cattlemen's Association, second from right, spoke about the marketing efforts of the association, which handles 150,000 head per year. Hank Maxey, feeder calf producer from Chatham, Va., second from left, sells calves from his 230-cow Angus herd near the North Carolina line. At far left is Chet Hughes, Lancaster livestock agent and Cattle Feeder's Day coordinator and at far right is Dr. John Comerford, Penn State beef specialist.



Unlike the poultry industry, which delivers a consistent, satisfactory product from store to store, consumers can walk into a supermarket, purchase five different New York strip steaks, and "some will be terrible, some good, and some will be excellent," said Al Kober, merchandising manager for meat and seafood at Clemens Markets. Kober holds up a circular which features a popular store beef promotion.



There ought to be a way for the producers and packagers of beef products to come up with a way to counter that "unsatisfactory" eating experience, which gives "no value" to anyone, noted Al Kober, left. At right is Cheryl Fairbairn, board chairman for the Pennsylvania Beef Council, who spoke about the new tagline for the industry, "Beef Is What You Want," and showed TV ads featuring the new line. Fairbairn spoke about the efforts of the Council in the past year to show how checkoff dollars work.