

Elk Ground As pre In Pennsylvania

Elk Farming

Seth Richards' desire is to build one of the best genetic herds around so that demand takes care of itself. For optimal health, he changes the protein rations throughout the year — 14 percent in the fall for energy, 16 percent in November, and 20 percent for antler growth and milk for calves the rest of the time.

"I want to supply as good quality genetics as I can. The antlers are just a bonus. This May, I hope to calve 11 or 12 animals. The average heifer sells for \$4,000, bulls for \$1,500 to \$3,000. Korea is the biggest buyer of velvet antler. The antler market consists of caribou, reindeer, red deer, and elk. The Koreans prize the North American large antler elk. The Orientals try to maintain a healthy body, unlike the western way of consulting a doctor after you are already sick."

According to Richards, most of the trace minerals, minerals, amino acids, Omega 6 and Omega 3, hormones, and protein needed for

good health can be found in elk antler. Ground antler has been mixed with other herbs and used for over 2,000 years. Richards sells to three different companies that develop capsule and liquid herbal formulas.

Marketing of elk meat is still an untapped market. In fact, the United States imports 150 tons of venison annually. Richards says there are approximately 110,000 elk on farms in North America. To support a steady meat market, 400,000 to 450,000 animals are needed.

Even though elk can be registered and ear-tagged, tested for TB and brucellosis, vaccinated, wormed, and artificially inseminated, it's best not to forget that they are still wild animals. Pennsylvania law requires that elk farmers erect a 10-foot high perimeter fence mainly to protect them from the white-tail deer's meningeal worm (brainworm). In addition Richards' interior fences stand 6½ feet high. His confinement and handling facilities have



Nicole attracts the elk's attention while Seth, Dalton, and Quinten look on.

aisleways with 90-degree turns (to make the elk think they're getting away from you); hydraulic

squeezes that lift and cradle; and doors within doors for easy access to whatever part of the body you're working on.



Order No. 4 Price \$14.38 For March

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Middle Atlantic Order Market Administrator Rex F. Lothrop today announced a March 1998 weighted average milk price of \$14.38 per hundredweight. The weighted average differential price was \$1.60 per hundredweight and the producer nonfat milk solids (NFMS) price was 88 cents per pound. The weighted average price was down 26 cents from February but was 77 cents higher than a year earlier. The producer NFMS price was down seven cents from last March. The nonfat milk solids price, applicable to handler payments, was \$8893 per pound for the month, down 6.31 cents from last year. The gross value of March producer milk, adjusted to 3.5 percent butterfat was \$81.0 million, compared to \$82.0 million a year ago.

Mr. Lothrop said that producer receipts totaled 566.4 million pounds during March, a decrease of 39.3 million pounds from last March and the average daily delivery of 4,113 pounds per producer increased 398 pounds or 10.7 percent from a year earlier. A total of 4,443 producers supplied Order 4 handlers during the month, a decrease of 817 from a year ago. Class I producer milk totaled 230.7 million pounds and was down 21.8 million pounds, or 8.6 percent from last March. Class I milk accounted for 40.73 percent of total producer milk receipts during the month, compared with 41.68 percent in March 1997.

The average NFMS test of producer milk was 8.74 percent, up from 8.72 percent the previous year. The average butterfat test of producer milk was 3.75 percent, up from 3.68 percent in March 1997.

Middle Atlantic Order pool handlers reported Class I in-area milk sales of 193.1 million pounds during March, a decrease of 7.9 percent from a year earlier, after adjustment to eliminate variation due to calendar composition.

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