

No Substitute For Carcass Quality Consistency

(Continued from Page A20)

largely because of the failure of industry intended exports (because of economic failures of intended trading nations), and the consequent dumping of the surplus on the domestic market.

In other business, Stoltzfus discussed some of the more common environmental and nutrient management concerns among feeder cattle operations.

He reminded the audience of the state Nutrient Management Act and the threshold of livestock density for being required to file with the state for approval a nitrogen-balanced nutrient management plan.

Stoltzfus also reminded the audience of some of the other laws that can apply with regard to the uncontrolled flow or direct flow of nutrient-laden runoff into a waterway.

In brief, he said that those with earthen or concreted, uncovered feed lots, especially those adjacent to a stream, or with a direct discharge into a stream, grass waterway or ditch, that are affected by stormwater mixing and washing away manure, are at risk of being discovered and penalized.

Those practices are illegal, regardless of whether the specific farm stocking rate mandates the creation and maintenance of a state-approved nutrient management plan.

Cattle Feeder Survey Results

Dr. Comerford took time during the morning to discuss the early results of a survey of cattle feeders in southeast Pennsylvania with regard to the use of veterinarians and formal feeder cattle health programs.

The survey was done to better

understand the existing relationships between cattle feeders and veterinarians.

He said the survey was done with a two-fold objective: to be able to describe the cattle feeding industry in southeastern Pennsylvania; and determine the attitudes of those who feed cattle for market.

According to Comerford, the survey resulted in at least one surprise — the number of people feeding calves. Comerford said it was much more than expected. The rest of the survey results seemed to better quantify some of the assumed practices.

Comerford reviewed the results of the survey, question by question, noting some statistical outliers, such as one survey result that indicated an operation has been feeding 23,000 cattle per year, when the average is about 2,500 per operation.

One question asked what percent of the feeder cattle being fattened receive vaccinations and/or treatment for parasites.

According to the information, only 8.6 percent of those surveyed indicated a full program. "About 20 percent of the cattle fed in Pennsylvania have no health management," Comerford said.

The mortality (death losses) rate is reportedly low, according to the survey results, with an average of 1.17 percent per year. Survey results also indicated an average expense of \$1,132.66 per year for medications.

The survey results also showed that most cattle feeders choose to treat their animals without over-

sight of a veterinarian. According to Comerford, respondents indicated that 90.7 percent of the health treatments were performed by themselves, while 9.3 percent of the time a veterinarian was used.

Comerford said the 9.3 percent use of a veterinarian is assumed to mostly reflect the practice of calling for a veterinarian when it becomes obvious the animal is going to die otherwise.

Respondents indicated that most are very pleased with the quality of veterinary service available to them.

On a scale of 1 to 10, from worst to best, respondent scores averaged 7.76.

Further, 87.8 percent indicated they felt their veterinarian had sufficient interest in beef cattle, and 85.5 percent indicated they felt their veterinarian had the expertise needed for feeder cattle.

Feeder Cattle Health Programs

With regard to developing a working relationship between a feeder cattle manager and a veterinarian to develop and maintain a health program, Dr. Thomson discussed some of the practices being adopted in Iowa.

An informal survey of the audience, however, revealed that few follow a regular health program in consultation with a veterinarian as part of their regular business.

While Thomson discussed the types of programs and alliances that are becoming industry standards in Iowa, which he said has about five cows per person, they didn't necessarily seem to apply to

local practices.

However, Thomson reported that a form of integration has been occurring in the Iowa feeder cattle industry, with proper identification emphasized; the use of a team approach to help produce a profitable product that meets consumer and industry needs; and the use of "strategic alliances" and retained ownership of the animals becoming more normal.

He said that he has watched some farmers walk away from using veterinarians, but public health issues and other evolving issues mandate that producers involve more consultants or work more directly with market forces in

order to produce what the market demands.

According to Thomson, all that integration and team work will not only require working more with veterinarians, but will also require a lot of information, information sharing, and information management.

The feeder cattle industry is an "adversarial industry," according to Thomson. "We rob Peter to pay Paul. Some of the conflicts are my breed versus your breed; producer versus retailer; industry needs versus consumer wants."

He said the beef industry, while not totally vertically integrated, is going to have to consolidate information.

(Continued next week.)

BARANBRUG Forages For Profit



BARALFA 32 IQ (Increased Quality)

- Palatable
- Digestible
- Profitable
- Proven



Baralfa 32 IQ is very persistent and outperforms other varieties as years go by. In Rock Springs (PA) the variety moved from a 10th ranking in the first year to a 5th ranking in the third year! In each case Baralfa 32 IQ was not significantly different from the highest yielding variety.

Baralfa 54 Alfalfa, B.G. 34 Ryegrass, Red & Alice White Clover, Chicory, Fescue, Bromes, Timothy, Reeds Canary, Blends for Intensive Grazing.

5% OFF
in February

AARON M. KING SEEDS

Fairview Fruit Farm, 96 Paradise Lane, Ronks, PA
717-687-6224

WATERLESS TOILETS

"SUN-MAR" Composting Toilets

Several models available including non-electric.

- NO Septic System
- NO Chemicals

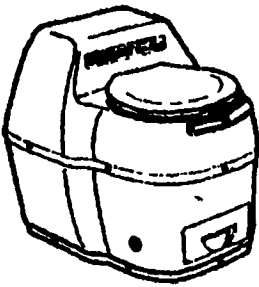
Save the Environment!
Recycle Back to Nature!

FREE:

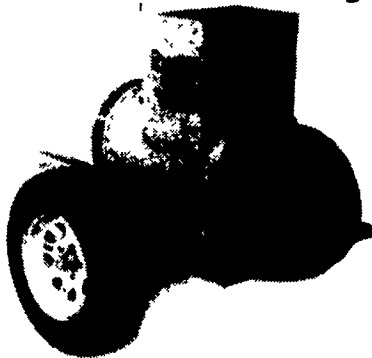
12 Page Color Catalog

We Reclaim Failing Septic Systems
Guaranteed Results!

ECO-TECH Call Today 1-800-879-0973



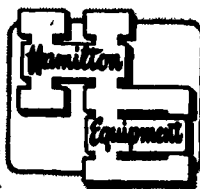
Katolight Generators 5 Year Warranty



25 - 135 KW PTO Units.

Call us for **Lowest** prices on Top of the line Katolight generators. 25 years experience in Generator sales & service.

J. Swantak Inc.
Oneonta, NY
(800) 842-9228



HAMILTON EQUIPMENT INC.

P.O. Box 478,
EPHRATA, PA 17522

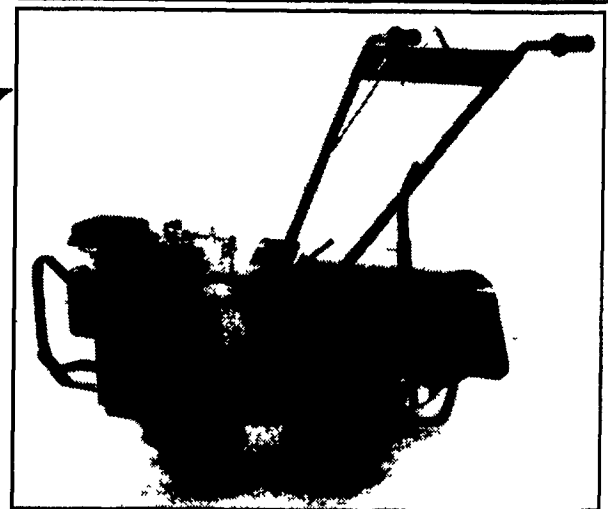
WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTORS

PH 717-779-7221

For Your Needs



5 HP Rear Tine Gear Drive Tiller



Look at all these **Standard Features...**

- ☆ Briggs & Stratton Engine
- ☆ 2 Speeds Forward/1 Speed Reverse
- ☆ Bumper Guard
- ☆ Lock-Out Hubs
- ☆ Drag Stake Control

- ☆ Handlebar Height Adjustment
- ☆ Tractor Type Pneumatic tires
- ☆ All Gear Drive Transmission
- ☆ Self Cleaning Bolo Tines

Garden Star features a belt take-up gear drive system so simple to use that you'll actually look forward to tilling your garden!

GARDEN STAR AUTHORIZED DEALERS

PENNSYLVANIA

Boswell	Yoder Equipment & Service	814-629-6505	Silverdale	Detlan Equipment	215-257-5177
Carlisle	R & W Equipment	717-243-2686	Watsonstown	Rovendale Ag & Barn Eq.	570-538-9564
Ephrata	Shirk's Repair Shop	717-859-2797	MARYLAND		
Halifax	Tobias Equipment	717-362-3132	Hagerstown	Baer's Lawn & Garden	301-733-8229
Honesdale	Marshall Machinery	570-729-7117	Whiteford	Deer Creek Equipment	410-452-5252
Larksville	Pro Fix	570-288-0476	WEST VIRGINIA		
Lititz	Musser Lawn & Garden	717-626-6363	Falling Waters	P&S Equipment Sales	304-274-2719
Mt. Aetna	Brown's Mower Service	717-933-5346			