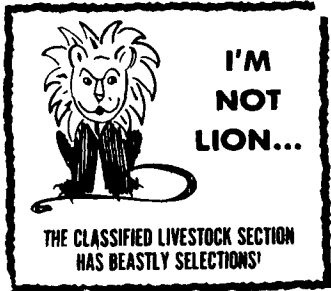


**Pennsylvania Livestock Auction**

Waynesburg, Pa.  
 Thursday, Sept. 9, 1999  
 Report Supplied By Auction  
**CATTLE:** SL. COWS: UTILITY & COMMERCIAL 33.00-40.00; CANNER & BONING UTILITY 30.00-36.50; CANNER & LOW CUTTER 28.00-33.75; SHELLS 28.00 & DOWN. **BULLS:** YIELD GRADE 1 1500#-2000# 38.00-51.50; YIELD GRADE 2 1000#-1400# FAT 37.00-41.00.  
**FEEDER STEERS:** M&L-1 300-500# 55.00-98.00; 250-280# 54.00-104.00, M 600-900 LBS. 40.00-73.00. **HEIFERS** M 1&L-1 300-500# 42.00-94.00; L-1 400-650# 42.00-87.00. **BULLS** M&L-1 300-620# 45.00-97.00.  
**CALVES:** VEAL: PRIME 68.00-78.00; CHOICE 38.00-70.00; GOOD 35.00-60.00.  
**FARM CALVES:** #1 HOLSTEIN BULLS 90-120# FEW 35.00-86.00; #2 HOLSTEIN BULLS 80-100# FEW 20.00-40.00; BEEF X BULL&HFRS./HD. 20.00-115.00.  
**HOGS:** BARROWS & GILTS #1-2 210-255# 26.00-37.00, #2-3 255-280# 29.00-35.50; SOWS #1-3 300-500# NONE AVAILABLE.  
**FEEDER PIGS:** 1-3 15-20# 5.00-17.00/HD.; 1-3 25-35# 10.00-21.00/HD.  
**LAMBS:** HIGH CHOICE 80-100 LBS. 50.00-74.00; CHOICE 40-75 LBS. 50.00-84.00; FEEDER LAMBS GOOD 60.00-77.22; SHEEP 18.00-29.00; FAT SHEEP 18.00 & DOWN.  
**GOATS:** LARGE 35.00-100.00/HD.; MEDIUM 20.00-41.00/HD.; SMALL 10.00-19.00/HD.  
**HORSES:** 35.00-65.50; PONIES 20.00-50.00.



**Drought Brings Health Danger For Cattle**

**COLLEGE PARK, Md. —** Many dairy and beef cattle producers in the Mid-Atlantic region face a double whammy this year. Not only is there a growing shortage of forages, but feeding drought-stressed crops could be deadly for their cattle.

So said Lester Vough, forage crops specialist for Maryland Cooperative Extension at the Univer-

sity of Maryland.

The problem, Dr. Vough explained, is nitrate poisoning, particularly in severely drought-stunted corn.

Excessively high levels of nitrogen are likely to occur in corn and other forages that have been growing under stress conditions, such as when corn has been fertilized for high grain or silage

yields and becomes stunted by drought.

Vough notes that some soil moisture is necessary for plants to absorb and accumulate nitrates. So fields of late-planted corn may not have received sufficient rain for significant nitrogen uptake to have occurred. Although severely stunted, such plants may not have elevated nitrate levels.

In addition, the resumption of normal plant growth after a heavy rainfall will reduce plant nitrate levels. So forage harvesting should be delayed three to five days after the rainfall.

So how do you know whether or not your corn or other annual crops — such as sorghum-sudan-grass — might have toxic nitrate levels? The only way to know is to have them tested.

The Maryland Department of Agriculture now offers free nitrate testing to farmers in drought-stricken counties of the state. Samples should be taken to Maryland Cooperative Extension county offices. They will be forwarded to the MDA state chemist in Annapolis for testing. Farmers should contact their local extension office for details on submitting the samples.

How can farmers cope with nitrate toxicity? Vough suggests these management practices:

- Cut the forage for silage. The fermentation process will reduce nitrate levels. Delay feeding the silage for about four weeks to make sure the fermentation process is complete.

- When chopping corn for silage, include only the top two-thirds of the plant. The bottom third always has the highest nitrate accumulation.

- Before feeding forage, have it chemically analyzed for nitrate content.

County extension offices in Maryland also have fact sheets available free of charge that pertain to nitrate poisoning of livestock, as well as procedures for feeding drought-stressed corn.

**Successful Grazing Means Measuring Pasture Growth**

**WELLSBORO (Tioga Co.) —** Successful graziers know there is more to grass-based dairy and beef operations than just turning the cows out each morning. Proper pasture management is critical, especially in drought conditions such as much of Pennsylvania has experienced this growing season.

"The key is keeping forage primed so it's ready to respond to moisture," said Tioga County Cooperative Extension Agent Craig Williams. "If you make it go dormant (through over grazing), it won't respond to rain."

Pasture growth and the resulting fertility and nutrient availability are the focus of an ongoing study Williams and several other extension agents are conducting throughout the state. The idea was to take weekly grass growth measurements, plot the data on graphs, then use the information to study the complex relationships between feed and milk production, pasture rotation schedules

and regrowth rates, and the amazing variability, even on adjacent paddocks, of those regrowth rates.

Using the Alistair Pasture Gauge, an instrument that calculates grass density, height, and pounds-per-dry matter, agents have the benefit of uniformity as they obtain measurements. Everyone agreed the "eyeball" is the best measure, Williams continues, but with seven different agents there was a need for a "common denominator."

In Tioga County, Williams used Russ and Karen Tomlinson's Kick-a-Moo Farm, an intensive, rotational grazing operation, as a study area. During a Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture-sponsored field day at the farm, Williams discussed the study process and, on the pasture walk, explained some of the differences in pasture fertility.

Grazing in a drought year is challenging, he noted. A field that "gets hammered" all the time will simply shut down. The data gathered so far shows how fast grass will respond to even a little bit of water, if it is in the right stage (of growth). Graziers must therefore be ready to adapt to changing conditions. At Kick-a-Moo Farm that means moving the cows about every 12 hours and keeping a close watch on the pasture growth. Those practices, in conjunction with the sporadic, small amounts of rain which have fallen on Tioga County, have been enough to keep the Tomlinson pastures relatively green.

"Some areas of the state have received no rain, and the plants have just gone dormant," Williams said. "That's the struggle with grazing. Keeping track of how the grass is growing is the only way to keep on top of it. It really does make it a week-to-week management issue."

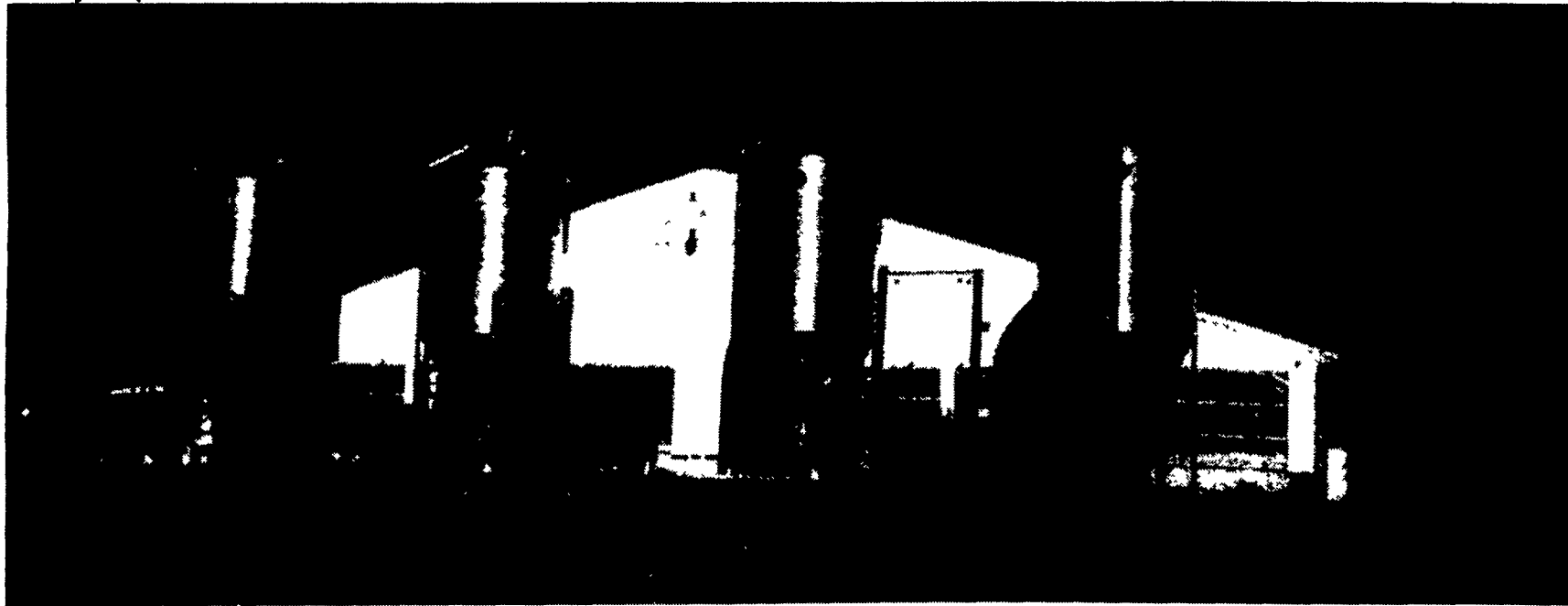
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