

Hatfield at the plant.

At five months the hogs begin going to slaughter and the rooms are emptied a few weeks after that. The Beams perform a complete cleanout of the facility. The Beams haul about 85 hogs at a time, on average.

The Beams were able to weather the price fallout in December 1998, when the price plummeted to 15 cents a pound. In early 2000 the Beams averaged 41-41.5 cents per pound for hogs delivered.

Beam credits his consulting veterinarian for introducing them to a lot of the concepts of proper swine care. The veterinarian keeps the farm in line with slaughter checks and health recommendations.

Beam also has a beef finishing operation. He finishes

about 400 Angus-based crossbreds per year. The cattle are sold to Moyer Packing.

The system is corn silage and grain, feedlot-based. The calves are obtained at Virginia tele-auctions and trucked to Elverson.

Beam points to the dry, hot summer that kept fly problems and other issues at bay.

Beam already has hosted some public events at the farm. One was a picnic in 1997 to show neighbors some of the innovations at the farm.

He said in the future he would like to switch over to more food by-product feed and combine that with a total mixed ration diet for the cattle.

Dental Care and Feeding of Old Horses

David L. Foster, V.M.D.

I've seen this scenario hundreds of times before. I arrive at a new clients farm, remove and arrange my equipment, and am introduced to my patient. The owner says: "Old Pokey has lost a lot of weight the past few years. He used to be such an easy keeper, but now, you can see for yourself, he looks so thin." I am a veterinarian who practices horse dentistry and I get a lot of these calls.

The life expectancy of horses is getting longer. There are many things that contribute to this. Improvements in diet, shelter, parasite control and veterinary care all have contributed to the increased lifespan of horses. The effects have

been amazing. Just twenty years ago, when I began my veterinary career, a horse over twenty-five years old was a rarity. Now it is quite common to see horses and ponies that are pushing thirty and beyond! But with this new 'lease on life,' comes a few challenges. There are subtle but important changes that take place as a horse ages. We must keep these changes in mind to keep 'Old Pokey' happy and healthy.

Some of the most important changes that take place in the aged horse are in his mouth. We feed horses hay and usually some form of concentrated ration like grain. They also eat forage or grass. Horse's teeth are wonderfully

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