## lvania's Beef Industry

leshoot, problem-solve, and generally help answer producer question on everything from packing plant issues, to animal health issues, to feed management issues, even zoning and environmental issues.

During the meeting, Lancaster County livestock agent Chet Hughes said "there is a lot of expertise sitting in this room, and a network of people across the state. You may be the person Wendall will call for assistance, or you may be the person who will call Wendall for assistance.'

Comerford and Slayton both stressed the importance of baseline information gathering for benchmarking purposes. The idea of goal-setting using benchmark comparisons is not a new one. The dairy industry has been compiling information for years through DHIA and other recording services which many producers use to compare them-

selves to a state or national average to reveal areas for improvement and goal-setting in their own enterprises. Information provided will be confidential and anonymous, and used only to calculate state averages so that individuals can compare their own progress, and so that the state's overall progress in areas of beef quality and profitability can be charted.

Slayton stressed the issues of quality assurance. "We're looking through the eyes of the consumer," he said. "We're aiming for a beef product that essentially exceeds what consumers expect in taste, price, color, safety, leanness, ease of preparation, and anything else important to them.'

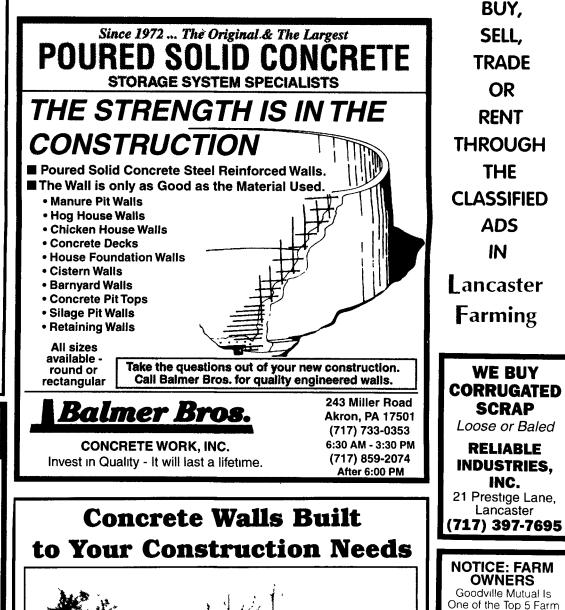
Slayton predicts that the results of the third beef quality audit being conducted by National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) this year will show continued movement of the in-



Wendall M. Landis, director of beef quality assurance certification, will be the point person for "The Blueprint for Success for Cattle Feeding in Pennsylvania" - a joint initiative sponsored by Penn State Unvierity College of Agriculture Science and the Pennsylvania Beef Council

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