

## USDA Announces Results Of Validation Of Beef Petitions

WASHINGTON DC — The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service announced Wednesday that not enough valid petitions

A copy of the draft PwC report will be available later today on the AMS Web site at: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/mpb/rp-beef.htm>. Because the

methodology employed seeks to identify invalid petitions, any additional returns can only further reduce the number of valid petitions.

"Although the number of petitions submitted to USDA is not sufficient to trigger a referendum, thousands of beef producers have clearly signaled their concern over the beef checkoff program," Merrigan noted. A USDA task force on research and promotion programs has recommended that all checkoff programs be the subject of continuance referenda every five

years to ensure that the programs have industry support.

"This petition drive should serve as a reminder to all national checkoffs of their responsibility to stay in close touch with the producers who fund these programs, and that the activities they undertake be fully reflective of the marketing needs of all those in the industry," she added.

were received to require a referendum on the beef checkoff.

"Pricewaterhouse Coopers (PwC), the nationally respected accounting firm, has carefully reviewed the petitions and determined that the number of valid petitions submitted to USDA is insufficient to trigger a referendum," said AMS Administrator Kathleen A. Merrigan.

The Beef Promotion and Research Act provides for a referendum if requested by 10 percent of all cattle producers in the United States.

USDA determined this number to be 107,883 producers. PwC conducted a 100 percent hand-count of the actual petitions and determined that the Livestock Marketing Association submitted 127,927 petitions to USDA. PwC estimates that no more than 83,464 petitions were valid (65.2 percent, 2.7 percent). This is significantly less than the 107,883 petitions (84.3 percent) necessary to call for a referendum.

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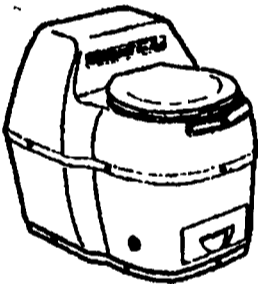
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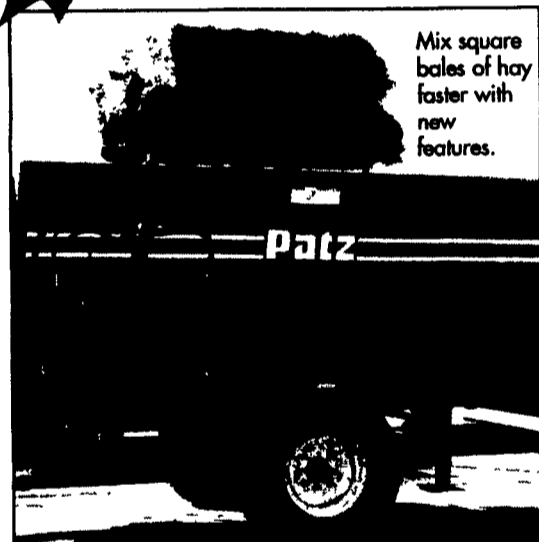
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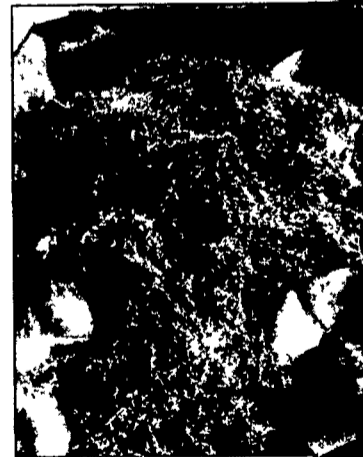
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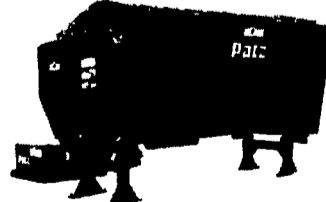


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