Cattle Feeder's Day

(Continued from Page A35)

sterile, but can be contaminated from the outside by fecal material or contact with intestines. Bacteria adhere to the tissue and must be trimmed, not washed by conventional means, to remove it. Hair, dirt, manure, or dirty employee hands are also agents of bacterial spread.

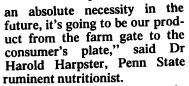
At least 90 percent of the contamination comes from the hide. which makes the bacteria difficult to control. The best plan, said Henning, is to keep the animal clean.

Cattle

Management Dr. John Comerford, Penn State extension beef specialist, taught the "proper cattle management" segment of the quality assurance program.

Adhering to bottle label instructions is imperative, stressed Comerford. Besides making sure the vaccine or medicine is labeled for cattle, he said, be sure to give the correct dosage using the proper route of administration. Withdrawal time should be carefully noted and followed.

Feed Quality Management "Source-verified cattle will be



Feed quality, said Harpster, is a phrase of beef quality assurance entirely in the producer's hands, and requires daily dili-

gence. According to Harpster, for homegrown feeds, we need records from planting to consumption, especially records for pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer use to prevent possible

A daily inspection of feedstuffs is important, said Harpster. A producer should note the odor, color, moisture, temperature, and any foreign material in the fed. A small sample of purchased feedstuff should be set aside, along with the source, date, amounts, and description data for record pur-

Producers should hold "suspect feeds," urged Harpster, until they are analyzed to decide if they are free of high levels of mold and micotoxins.

poses.

Targeted Breeding/ Buying

Consumer satisfaction, said Dr. Bill Henning, determined by quality grades, should drive production.

Henning, extension meats specialist, said, "They want taste fat, they don't want waste fat. Know your customer, whether they want modest, moderate, or highly-abundant marbling. Fill your customer's needs. Produce something that satisfies the consumer."

Bruising, said Henning, costs \$20 million annually, as much as \$175 per head. Ideal finish depends on genetic propensity to marble, but depends on the breed of animal.

"One steer with a tough steak will affect over 100 people, so we really have to be careful," said Henning.

'Understand the type of cattle you are feeding. Don't feed past the optimal end point. Feed to what the customer wants."

Cattle **Handling Systems**

Proper handling facilities are integral to a cattle management plan, explained Dan McFarland, ag engineering agent based out of York County.

Added safety, meeting quality assurance guidelines, easier treatment opportunities, stress reduction on both the animal and the handler, and fewer bruising incidence are all good reasons to have a system, he said.

A complete handling system should gather, direct, hold, allow the animals to be sorted, and position the animals for the handler to work on.

Cattle Feeders Future

Agriculture economics professor H. Louis Moore, Penn State, gave his forecast for the livestock economy in 2001. The national economy, he said, will understandably have an impact on agriculture.

America has experienced 10 years of economic growth without a slowdown, the longest in the history of the nation. Inflation is under control, the country has a low unemployment rate, the interest rate is declining, and tax cut prospects are on the horizon.

In addition, however, according to Moore's analysis, con-

sumers are wary about the future, unemployment will begin to increase, interest rates will decline, and inflation will slow. California's energy problem and the actions of the new administration remain questions yet to be filled in for economic forecasters.

Since 1996, farmers have seen a larger gap between what the farmers pay (fuel, machinery, labor, and materials) and what they receive is broadening.

'This is putting a squeeze on farmers in the country," said Moore. The U.S. corn production varied greatly over the early 1990s, "We had five good corn crops in a row, and we haven't used it at that rate," he said.

Additionally, in soybean production, the last four crops have been very excellent crops. Farmers have produced a billion more bushels than a decade ago on the same acreage.

New technology has drastically increased production. In 1932, for example, farmers produced 25 bushels of corn per acre. By 2000 farmers were producing 137.7 bushels of corn per acre. "It hasn't plateaued," he said.

If grain prices stay reasonable, "those of you who are in the livestock feeding business can plan on the same prices," said Moore, unless media attention on "mad cow disease" drastically changes demand.

In the U.S., meat supply shows chicken on the increase of market share for meats because

(Turn to Page A44)



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3 - 16.9x26	10 \$310	1 - 18.4x34		\$240	2-16.9R30		
3 - 18.4x26		1 - 18.4x38	6	\$260	1-11.2x34		\$180
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1 - 12.4x28		4 -18.4x16.1 B	lem 6	\$280	2-11.2x38 2-16.9R38		\$159 \$ 550
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2 - 18.4x30		2 - 14.9R30 Kle	eber★★	★\$460	2-13.6x24	4	\$242
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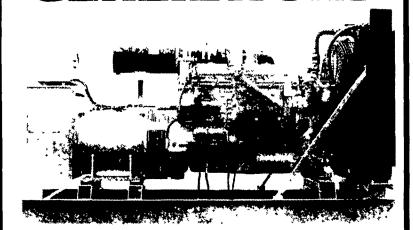
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