

## Find Out What's Bugging You

**MONTROSE** (Susquehanna Co.) — Do you have a bug that you were wondering how to get rid of, or just wondering what kind it is?

Penn State Cooperative Extension of Susquehanna County in Montrose can identify insects ranging from household, vegetable, and turf to fruits and others related to public health. You will get a description, of life history, damage and control to help you best deal with the issue or just to satisfy your curiosity.

With the onset of winter, some of you may have noticed the presence of the western conifer seedbug in your homes. The western conifer seedbug was first discovered in the western U.S.

It feeds mainly on the seeds and developing cones of several species of conifers and their respective hybrids. This bug has been expanding its range eastward and was first detected in Pennsylvania in July 1992.

Its range extends across the northern U.S. into Canada. Re-

cent records from Pennsylvania and several other areas of the northeastern U.S. suggest that interstate commerce has been a factor in extending the insect's range.

The western conifer seed bug's consumption of Douglas fir seeds and seeds of various other species of pine results in a substantial loss of seed crop. Thus, its direct economic impact is a reduction in the quality and viability of conifer seed crops.

Even though this insect does not bite or sting, it causes concern among occupants of homes, offices, and laboratories when it comes indoors. Complaints from residents increase as the insect becomes more active and conspicuous on days in the fall and spring when the temperature is above freezing. In several areas in the northeastern U.S., this insect has created great alarm when large numbers of adults suddenly invade houses looking for overwintering sites.

## Gelbvieh Unveils Feedyard Merit EPD

**WESTMINSTER, Colo.** — To assist its membership and commercial cattle producers with sire selection decisions, the American Gelbvieh Association (AGA) has unveiled its Feedyard Merit EPD.

This new EPD consolidates traditional weaning weight and yearling weight EPDs and provides a genetically-derived economic value for feedyard performance.

"In developing the Gelbvieh Feedyard Merit EPD, we followed the real-world path of transforming genotypic differences into phenotypic differences, then took the next step from phenotypic to economic differences," said Don Schiefelbein, AGA Executive Director.

The Feedyard Merit EPD is expressed as a dollar value per head, depicting the ability of a parent to produce progeny that will excel in important feedyard performance traits, such as average daily gain and feed efficiency.

As with other EPDs, the Feedyard Merit EPD may be used to estimate how future progeny of one animal will compare to progeny of another animal within the same breed. In this particular case, the performance measured is the dollar value associated with differences in feedyard performance.

The EPD is not designed to predict actual feedlot performance levels, but can be used to compare sires, based on estimated progeny performance differences when progeny are sent to a feedyard.

For example, a bull with a Feedyard Merit EPD of \$15 is expected to sire calves that will earn \$15 more during a typical feeding phase compared to calves sired by a bull with an Feedyard Merit EPD of \$0.

The Feedyard Merit EPD should be used to predict economic differences in feedyard performance; however it is just one component of a balanced se-

lection program. Astute managers always select sires based on a balance of economically important traits.

"The American Gelbvieh Association is committed to providing commercial customers with real-world selection solutions," states Schiefelbein. "AGA's goal is provide economic indices for all three key areas of cattle production: cow/calf, feeder and carcass."

The new Feedyard Merit EPD completes the second phase of fulfilling this goal. AGA released its innovative Grid Merit EPD in 2001. The AGA plans to work aggressively towards developing a Cow/Calf Merit EPD in the coming year.

The American Gelbvieh Association's Feedyard Merit EPD is currently available. For more information on the AGA's genetic evaluation programs, contact the AGA office at 303-465-2333 or visit the AGA website at [www.gelbvieh.org](http://www.gelbvieh.org).

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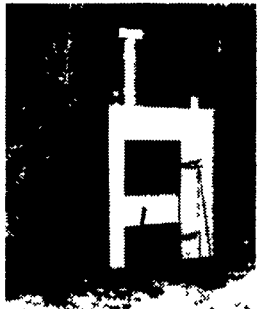
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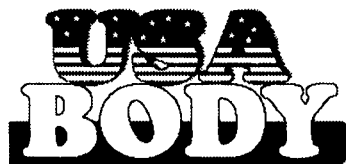
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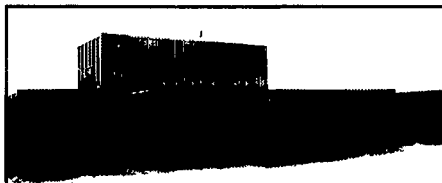
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