

Beef Market Still Strong After Boom Week

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bring the kind of prices they've been the last few weeks.

"It puts everything out of perspective," Brown said of the record price spike.

A lot of unfinished cattle are going to auction as producers sell their lighter stock in order to take advantage of the market, according to Brown, who buys cattle for several packers.

Brown said he is worried about cattle numbers dropping across the country because of the selling spree. Another factor that could contribute to a cattle deficit is the feed shortage earlier this year, which prompted producers to sell earlier.

Even so, Brown doesn't expect prices to remain over \$100 per CWT indefinitely.

More likely, he said, the market will settle down into the \$90 range in coming months.

Because of the record live market prices, packers have had to buy cattle at costs above their contracted sale price with retail buyers. In turn, packers have raised prices. The result will be higher-priced beef in the grocery store.

Homer Eberly of Stevens has been in the beef business since 1981 and finishes about 450 head of beef a year.

"I've never seen anything like

it before," Eberly said of the recent prices.

One of the reasons for the high market is that beef producers have been selling unfinished cattle, which means less beef on the market, Eberly said.

"Everybody's been selling too fast. The carcass weights are too light."

Eberly noted the earlier feed shortage as part of the problem.

"The feed wasn't there and the price was good, so they sold," he said.

Eberly, who buys feeder cattle locally, is not too concerned about being able to find feeders to fill the barn.

"I think they will be available," he said, noting "we'll have to pay for them."

Eberly expects finished cattle prices to hold in the \$90 range until February 2004, when "new crop" cattle will increase supplies again.

The price of beef in the store will eventually have an effect on the market, Eberly predicted.

"(Beef prices) in the store haven't changed a lot yet, but they will," he said.

John Welsh, meat manager at Stauffer's of Kissel Hill, Lititz, said this week he received a list of retail price changes from the company's meat buyer, noting increases for beef products.

"I'm hoping it's just short term," Welsh said.

PDA, PDE Launch Ag Website Tool For Classrooms

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — On Monday, the Pennsylvania departments of agriculture (PDA) and education (PDE) unveiled marketplaceforthe-mind.com, a key educational tool for Pennsylvania students.

Agriculture Secretary Dennis C. Wolff, Education Secretary Vicki Phillips, and Manheim Township sixth grader Alexandra Wenger were present during the ceremonies in Harrisburg.

Gov. Ed Rendell, who was not able to attend because of a scheduling conflict, commented on the site.

"If Pennsylvania is to continue to be an agricultural leader, we must begin to be an educational leader as well. The departments of education and agriculture worked together to make this project a reality to meet a demonstrated need for high quality information about agriculture, particularly Pennsylvania agriculture," Rendell said. "This innovative project will help our teachers as they highlight the importance of agriculture both as a driving economic force in the commonwealth and as a rich part of our heritage."

The site will provide teachers in Pennsylvania with convenient access to agricultural educational materials aligned to Pennsylvania teaching standards for use in their classrooms. The site will also provide students, the general public, agricultural community, and government officials with



Amber Frank and Laura Grove, state FFA officers, try out the new PDA/PDE Website Monday in Harrisburg.

up-to-date agricultural educational resources, event listings, and useful information to enhance their understanding and appreciation of Pennsylvania agriculture.

The PDA noted Pennsylvania is the only state in the national with a Website of this type.

The Website will provide the agricultural community access to details on low-interest loans, technical information, and industry programming. The general public will benefit from up-to-date agricultural information, event listings, and agricultural issues.

Md. Governor Honors Century Farm Families

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. recently honored Maryland's farm families for their commitment to farming and leadership in preserving agricultural land by presenting Century Farm designations to eight families who have farmed the same land for more than 100 years.

Since the program began in 1994, 120 farms — less than one percent of the state's 12,200 farms — have received the Century Farm designation.

"Maryland's farmers are the backbone of our economy," said Ehrlich. "The Century Farm families we honor today have played a significant role in making agriculture the leading industry in Maryland. I am committed to working with the entire farm community to maintain viable food and fiber industries for Maryland's future."

The oldest farm honored today was the 280-acre farm established in 1834 in Washington County by ancestors of Berman Lee Hixon, the current owner. The 158-year-old farm produces corn, grain and a variety of livestock.

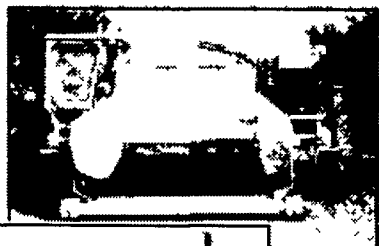
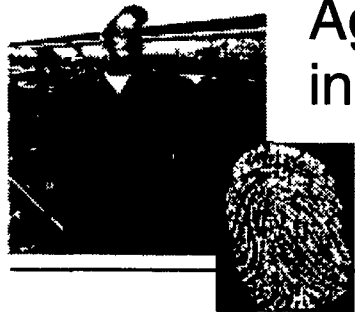
Other farms honored today with the "Century Farm" designation are:

- Fowling Creek Farm, Caroline County — 52-acre multiple crop, grain and poultry farm, established in 1902 and owned by Ronnie, Herman, Kathleen, and Ruth Steenken.

- Woodland Hall Farm, Kent County — 220-acre multiple crop, poultry, and livestock farm established in 1860 and owned by Mary Woodland Gould Tan, Margaret Ann Gould Cummings, and Edmon Sindal Hurtt Gould. The farm has established waterways and a pond for

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