

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

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In most cases, catalog prices are wholesale and Jim collects only a nominal delivery charge, according to Cornell, which is 10 percent of purchase with a \$3 minimum. This keeps products affordable and allows the small farmer a decent return. And with the added convenience of home delivery, customers are finding direct buying not only easier but hard to resist!

The money that is exchanged stays local. That in itself is empowering for everyone concerned. But what is even more empowering is that Small Street Co-op customers know they are supporting local farms directly, while participating farmers and suppliers continue to watch their sales volume grow.

For Jim, there's great satisfaction not only in watching Small Street Co-op grow, but in knowing that others are looking to his business as a model for other communities. It's a win-win situation for everyone concerned.

By the way, this information first appeared in an article in Madison Manager, CCE-Madison's monthly Ag Newsletter on April 16, 2003. For more information on a variety of small farm topics, visit [www.smallfarms.cornell.edu](http://www.smallfarms.cornell.edu).



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are not brought into a feed lot and fed with grain in order to put on weight and fat before being sold. Fed cattle are sold at weights between 1,100 to 1,200 pounds and have more meat and fat, or what is called marbling. The marbling in the meat is generally what gives meat most of its flavor when cooked and its designation as a USDA choice cut.

Consequently, choice cuts of meat are likely to be in less supply and more expensive for the next several months since most meat will be leaner because of more lighter steers being sold to meat markets. Boxed cuts of meat have gone up from \$1.60 per pound to \$2 per pound during the end of October, just over a 30 percent increase over last year.

Beef is price sensitive and consumers are likely to back off of buying higher priced beef, thus putting downward pressure on beef prices. Less people are expected to buy beef and shift to other types of meat such as pork, lamb, or poultry. This means less demand for beef during a tight supply period. However, during the next three months, consumers can expect as much as a 40 percent increase in the retail price on many cuts of beef, especially choice cuts.

Since beef is competitive at the retail level, many retailers will attempt or be forced into absorbing some of these in-

creased production costs and are likely to be less profitable in order to keep their customers.

Because steers have been sold at lighter weights, we also expect an overall reduction in beef production both in terms of weight as well as the number of cattle to be sold over the next three to six months. Locally, many cattlemen are reported to be either selling off their herds in order to retire or to cash in now in hopes of buying back in at lower prices in the next few years.

During the end of October, beef production fell 17 percent below the comparable level a year ago. Beef production is expected to remain substantially down through the end of 2003, and prices are forecasted to range from 85 cents to 95 cents a pound for live weight.

— Bob King, Ph.D.  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Monroe County  
Rochester, N.Y.

## USDA Awards Grants For Initiatives

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The USDA recently awarded more than \$14 million in grants to 26 colleges and universities in the U.S. and its territories under the National Integrated Food Safety Initiative (NIFSI) for the Fiscal year 2003.

"These projects address a broad spectrum of food safety concerns — from on-farm production, post-harvest processing and distribution, to food selection, preparation, and consumption," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman.

Each year NIFSI awards these funds to faculty at land-grant and non-land colleges and universities to ensure that valuable research, education and extension knowledge is transferred to teachers, scientists, health professionals, researchers, farmers, food processors, foodservice workers, consumers, and all others making crucial decisions about the safety of the U.S. food supply.

An average of \$400,000 was awarded to each university to support 3-year food safety projects that used an integrated approach to solving problems in applied research, education, and extension.

Grants to Northeast/Mid-Atlantic area universities follow:

**MASSACHUSETTS:** Food Safety Training and Certification for Under-Educated, Limited English Proficient School Food Service Personnel — \$500,000 to the University of Massachusetts.

**NEW JERSEY:** Food Handling and Consumption Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Young Adults and the Impact of a Food Safety Social Marketing Campaign — \$500,000 to Rutgers University.

**NEW YORK:** Global Good Agricultural Practices Conference to Explore the Impact of Current Research and Extension Programs — \$50,000 to Cornell University. L. Monocytogenes in Food Processing Plants: Development and Implementation of Science-Based Environmental Testing and Control Strategies \$500,000 to Cornell University.

**NORTH CAROLINA:** Fresh Produce Food Safety Training Program and Curriculum Development for the Southeast — \$500,000 to North Carolina State University. Tracking the Source of Enteric Pathogens in Surface Waters — \$450,000 to North Carolina State University.

**OHIO:** Safety of Foods Processed by Four Alternatives Processing Technologies — \$405,000 to Ohio State University.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** Multiple Strategies for Control of Patulin in Apples and Apple Products - An Integrated Regional Research and Extension Project — \$500,000 to Pennsylvania State University.

**RHODE ISLAND:** Garden to Table: Food Safety Practices of Home Gardeners — \$384,000 to the University of Rhode Island.

**TENNESSEE:** Assessing Risk and Communicating Food Irradiation Benefits to High Risk Consumers — \$89,958 to Tennessee State University. A Multi-Faceted Approach to Improve Food Safety for Child Care Providers — \$430,000 to the University of Tennessee.

**VERMONT:** An Interactive Online Food Safety Education Program for Middle School Children — \$500,000 to the University of Vermont.

## USDA Issues Proposal To Allow Animal Imports From Canada

WASHINGTON, D.C. — USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service issued a proposed rule Oct. 31 to amend its bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) regulations to establish a new category of regions that recognizes those that present a minimal risk of introducing BSE into the United States via the importation of certain low-risk live ruminants and ruminant products.

This proposed rule would place Canada on a list of countries considered a minimal risk for BSE, thus it would be eligible to export certain live ruminant and ruminant products.

The proposed minimal risk region would include regions in which an animal has been diagnosed with BSE but in which specific preventive measures have been in place for an appropriate period of time that reduce the risk of BSE being introduced to the United States.

Based on a comprehensive risk analysis and re-

view, USDA offers that the surveillance, prevention and control measures implemented by Canada are sufficient to be included in the minimal risk category.

The proposed rule was scheduled for publication in the Nov. 4 Federal Register. After a 60-day comment period, USDA will consider the comments as it makes any final decisions on the importation of certain live ruminants and ruminant products from Canada and other minimal risk regions for BSE.

Consideration will be given to comments received on or before Jan. 5, 2004. Comments may be submitted by postal mail, com-

mercial delivery or by e-mail. Send an original and three copies of postal or commercial delivery comments to Docket No. 03-080-1, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, Station 3C71, 4700 River Road Unit 118, Riverdale, Md. 20737-1238.

APHIS documents published in the Federal Register and related information, including the names of organizations and individuals who have commented on APHIS dockets, are available on the Internet at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/>.

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