

Changes in beef grades to affect all

Lesser beef soon may qualify for prime and choice grades under changes proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and producers and consumers have the opportunity now to voice their opinion on the matter.

Beef producers generally have not had changes, because they believe allowing more lean beef in the choice grade would lower production costs and adjust the beef supply to meet public demand for leaner meat.

Under the present system, the quality grades that must apply to steers and heifers are USDA prime, choice, good and standard. Most feedlot cattle are fed for choice grade.

Marketing blocks of fat deposited throughout the muscle, is the major determinant of quality grade. The proposed changes would reduce marketing requirements for prime, choice and good grades to cattle up to 30 months of age. This move would place about 18 percent of all graded beef in the prime category, instead of the current five percent. The standard grade would be eliminated, because all young beef not meeting the minimum marketing requirements for the next-higher good grade would be classified as utility.

"Abundant marketing normally is associated with tender, flavorful meat. Marketing is important, but not as important as we once thought," said Dr. John Johns, Extension beef cattle specialist at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture. He cited an Iowa study in which marketing was only a minor factor when steaks were evaluated by a trained taste panel for tenderness, juiciness and a flavor.

"Since the panelists were trained to detect subtle taste variations in the steaks, the effect of marketing on the average consumer," added the specialist.

Many comments on beef production and marketing in the feedlot have been in order to reduce the fat and ribeye content of their diet. The National Restaurant Association, however, is concerned that lean-marbled meat may not be acceptable to its customers. High restaurants still will have access to the same high quality meat, although the grading system may change, according to Johns.

How will these changes affect the beef producer? "The suggested grade requirements should allow cattle to go to market with less fat, permitting a shorter period of time in the feedlot," said Dr. Roy Harris, Extension livestock specialist at the UK College of Agriculture's Research and Education Center in Princeton. Harris said that 90-100 days would be required instead of the usual 120-140 day period.

"They or 40 days would be saved from the end of the feeding period, when efficiency is lowest and cost of gain is highest," said Harris. "Feedlot operators are paying high interest rates on borrowed money, which makes rapid turnover important if they are to produce beef competitively."

The USDA will receive comments and hold public hearings on the proposal before issuing final regulations. Suggestions may be made in writing until March 31 to the Livestock, Meat, Grain and Seed Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, 2M Annex, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



Great Britain native speaks

Sally Ann Kendall (center), a native of Great Britain who now lives here, was the speaker at the Thursday night Nicholas County Homemakers meeting at the Christian Church. She showed slides of her home country and upon being asked about the Falklands crisis, remarked sternly, "let them get the heck off our island."

On her left is Homemakers President Sally Watkins and on the right is Interim National Homemakers Chairman Mary Lois Campbell. — Mercury photo.

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Mockingbird gets speed limit

Following an on-site inspection and a vehicle safety report, the Nicholas County Fiscal Court agreed to lower the speed limit on Mockingbird Lane to 15 mph, and had the first reading of an ordinance to that effect at a monthly daytime meeting held May 7.

The action was taken because of repeated complaints from residents there who worried about the danger to their small children from speeding cars. The new speed limit will be in effect 24 hours a day and is scheduled to become law after the second reading, now set for May 19.

Hubert Drump appeared before the court concerning his hauling of trash from Millersburg to the Nicholas

landfill. He was assessed a monthly fee of \$22 for the dumping of Millersburg garbage. The court also agreed to stop the fee dumping at the landfill on Thursday. It was also reported that the hauler at the landfill is over-weighting and the court agreed to look into it.

Jalier Lynn Bowles came before the court and said a new law will soon go into effect concerning jails in Kentucky. Bowles said Nicholas County could have eight beds that would qualify under the new law, in order to get state aid for feeding prisoners. The fiscal court also decided to lay plans to paint the inside of the East Union visiting books.

The court also held revenue sharing hearings Monday.

School

document being written up by the board.

In other action the board agreed to run the flu/vaccine program for another year, agreed to let the 4th Council use school facilities for their fashion show May 25, accepted the resignation of Kathy Hamann as the cheerleader sponsor for the junior high and agreed to let Mrs. Darham, the Special Education teacher, accompany three Special Ed students who have qualified to compete in the state Special Olympics meet.

The board also voted to purchase two welder stalls with blowers and hoods for the V-A shop at a cost of \$1000 and agreed to buy four color television sets to replace black and white sets in the elementary school on 3600 matching funds basis with RCT. Cost to the school will be \$948.

The board also tended to various other minor chores and heard financial reports from the superintendent.

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Moved to purchase a Xerox desk copier for \$2800 (money had been budgeted in the administrative expense for office equipment to cover cost of a new copier to be paid out of city operations). On roll over will be used and waived "no."

Mayor appointed Cliff Waugh to serve as a member on the Nicholas County Recreation and Park Board.

Approved paying the \$300 annual dues to Lexington Hospital ADU.

Discussed appointing Russell Bell as Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinator at the request of Bob Buttin. Mayor will confer with Bell on a possible assistant to serve Carlisle.

PVA to close

The Property Valuation Administrator's office will be closed Monday, May 10, because of the Memorial Day holiday.

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Burley

Continued from page 1.

division officials from Washington warned of more bad news to come in the export-import statistics affecting all U.S. tobacco growers.

The Burley Tobacco Growers Cooperative Association at Lexington is busy sending up the official work on a large distribution of gains earned for growers on the 1977-78 crop. It is expected that checks will be ready in mailing around the middle of June 1982. The distribution represents a net gain of 42 cents on the dollar for growers who contracted part of their 1977 and 1978 crops, and about eight cents per dollar on the 1979 crop.

The USDA is seeking comments from the industry and the public on packaging methods in burley marketing, and on "weighting" tobacco. Burley burley is largely supplying hand-cut, and some producers are now asking for price supports and official grading on burley marketed to burley shreds.

The USDA said complaints of "weighting" began in 1981. Comments are invited till May 24, and should be sent to J. B. Bunk, Deputy Director, Tobacco Division, AMS-USDA, Room 505 Annex Building, Washington, D.C.

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