

"THE PACKERS STAKE IN CARCASS EVALUATION"

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These two slides which I borrowed from John Phillips show the fattest hog and the smallest loin eye of all hogs slaughtered at the 1978 National Barrow Show. These two hogs came from some breeder's farm, hopefully outside of the Hormel buying territory, and quickly caught the packers attention. We have seen much improvement in hogs over time. We, at Hormel's have always remained very interested in the improvement in hogs. We worry when we see indications like these two slides or when we hear some of the reasons given in justifying the placing of one hog over another.

So far, our records show that hogs are still improving but, naturally, at a slower rate. We packers know that there is much room for improvement for our purposes and the only real reason for raising a hog would be for the red meat that it produces. With lard at 23¢ a pound, a pound of fat of a hog is worth something like 14.5¢. Fat yields approximately 80% lard, but the energy bill to convert it is costly. As long as there is fat from hogs going to the lard tank at 23¢ a pound when we are paying 50¢ a pound for live hogs, the packer wants and needs yet leaner hogs.

We packers don't know all there is to know about raising hogs, but we feel we know enough about it to question those who try to destroy muscularity in order to save more pigs per litter or for better livability. Our question to them would be: Do we have to attack all muscular hogs or do we have to carefully separate out strains of hogs that are too difficult to raise?

As a packer interested in his raw material supply, we follow many shows. We test cut many show hogs; in fact, we test every hog we slaughter to the degree at least that we tattoo, weigh, and grade each individual. I have five slides that Bob Wells uses in visiting with salesmen and customers in trying to get our fresh pork story across to them.

The first slide shows four live hogs which demonstrate differences in the following grade. The following slide shows their respective carcasses, loins, untrimmed butts and changes in grade. We use these hogs in our Grade & Yield books.

Since we cut the loins to evaluate loin eye area, we do have difficulty selling these split loins. However, we recognize this but feel this problem is overshadowed by the importance of this testing and we, as packers, need to help improve hogs.

Pork raised is pork consumed. The image of pork needs all our attention. Work of the National Pork Producers Council, The National Livestock and Meat Board, and the American Meat Institute surely has proven to all of us that pork promotion is effective and we have come a long way with our new pork image. Much work is left to be done on image. Franchise restaurants use beef, poultry, and fish almost exclusively.

Every hog producer, every pork packer, and every Porkette should take a lesson from the Pork Queen and go about our business of promoting pork.

Last slide: 9 sq. in. loin eye.

Questions.