

WEST TEXAS Country Trader

The West Texas Country Trader is a Supplement of:

Thursday, September 2, 1993

ABERNATHY WEEKLY REVIEW
Abernathy, Tx - Hale County
CANYON NEWS
Canyon, Tx - Randall County

CLARENDON NEWS
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LORENZO EXAMINER
Lorenzo, Tx - Crosby County

PLAINVIEW DAILY HERALD
Plainview, Tx - Hale County
FALLS REPORTER-NEWS
Falls, Tx - Crosby County

SLATON SLATONITE
Slaton, Tx - Lubbock County
TULIA HERALD
Tulia, Tx - Swisher County

Solid demand develops for Texas-quality corn

By **NELSON ANTOSH**
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HOUSTON — A growing demand for corn from consumers gets much of the credit for boosting this year's Texas corn crop to the largest in history. The growers call it food grade corn, which basically means Mexican food.

Growers are expected to harvest 229.4 million bushels of livestock and food grade corn, up 14 percent from last year, which

was also a record. The yield per acre isn't as high as last year because the weather was better then, but farmers planted 17 percent more acres.

The big increase in planting has occurred in that portion of the Texas Panhandle north of Lubbock, where the nights are cool and the days are hot. This combination produces grains that mill better for human consumption, explains Lois Wales of the

Texas Corn Producers Association in Dimmitt.

Several buyers of food grade corn have set up plants in that area. These include Frito Lay, Archer Daniels Midland and various makers of Mexican food. And the Japanese are nibbling at Mexican food. This opens the possibility that they will import food grade corn from the Texas Panhandle. A little has been shipped to Japan on a test basis, said Wales.

Still, the overwhelming

amount of corn is used to feed livestock, which in Texas means cattle in feedlots. The Texas Panhandle and a small adjoining area of New Mexico form the nation's largest cattle feeding area, accounting for at least 25 percent of the nation's total output of fed beef. The herd makes Texas a corn-deficit state even with the increased produc-

tion, said Wales. Because of the great local demand, Panhandle corn growers consistently get a premium price over what is quoted in the Midwest, another incentive for planting the grain.

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price over what is quoted in the Midwest, another incentive for planting the grain.

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AgReview



Calendar Ag News

Sept. 10-12

COTTON BOARD
annual meeting in
Lubbock.

Sept. 15-19

TEXAS PRODUCE
growers will hold the
2nd Annual Texas
Produce Convention
and Trade Show will be
Sept. 15-19 in the
South Padre Island
Convention Centre.

Information is
available from the
Texas Vegetable
Association,
210-687-7250.

Sept. 16-17

SOUTHWEST BEEF
Efficiency Enhancement
Forum will take place in
Lubbock. The new
program coincides with
the Golden Spur
weekend. Topics
include enhancing beef
quality, communicating
value to the consumer
and genetic
management for quality.
Contact is Dr. Ronnie
Green at 806-742-2805.

Sept. 29

WASTE PESTICIDE
COLLECTION in
Hereford.

Water district wins prestigious award

■ For its education,
public service efforts

LUBBOCK — The High Plains Under-
ground Water Conservation District No. 1 is
the 1993 recipient of the Universities Council
on Water Resources (UCOWR) Educa-
tion and Public Service award.

The UCOWR is an international organiza-
tion devoted to facilitating water-related
education at all levels; promoting mean-
ingful research and technology transfer on water
resources issues; compiling and disseminat-
ing information on water problems and solu-
tions; and informing the public about water
issues.

The award recognizes the High Plains
Water District's efforts to increase public
understanding of water resources through
education, research, public service, interna-
tional activities, and information support.

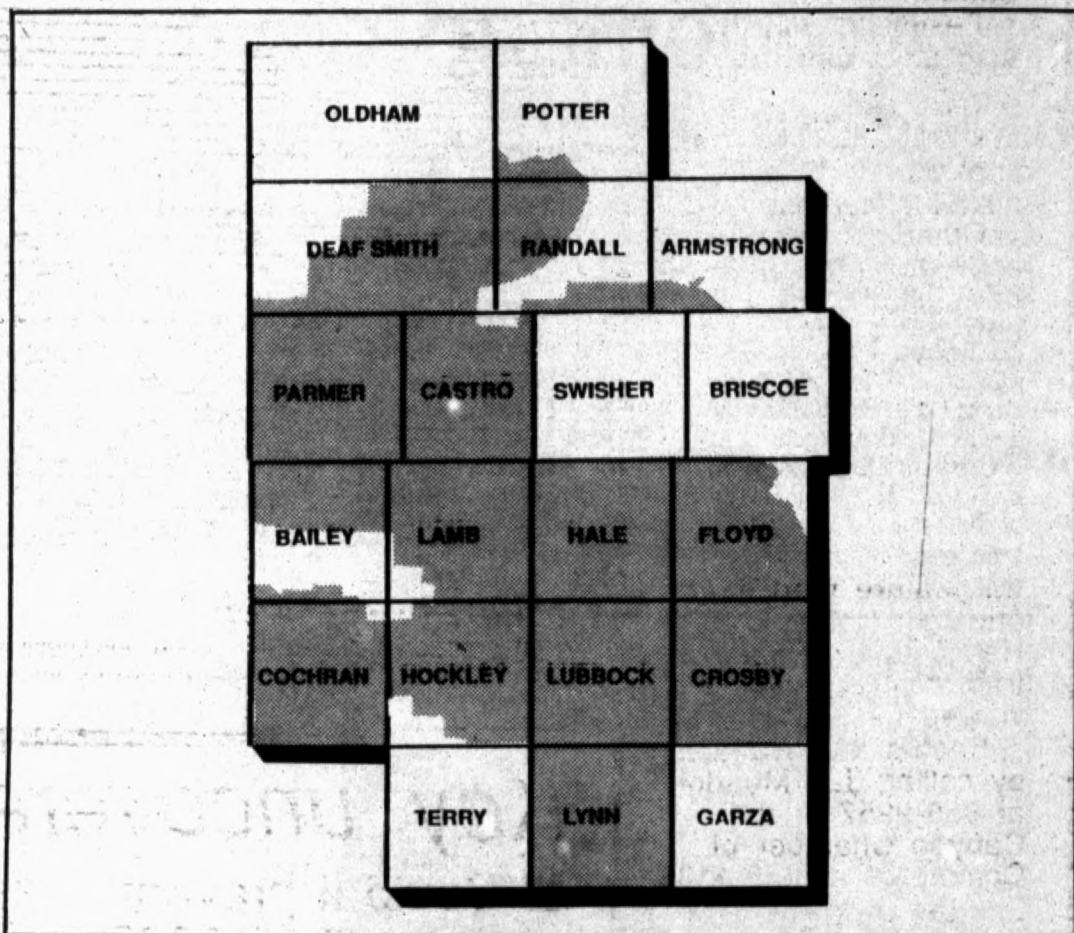
The award nomination was made by Dr.
Lloyd Urban of the Texas Tech University
Water Resources Center and Dr. Wayne Jordan
of the Texas A&M University Water
Resources Institute at College Station.

"As evidenced by the ambitious program
of research, education, and public service
summarized in the District's anniversary
publications, one can see that the district has
had a profound impact on our region and the
state since its creation in 1951," Urban said.

Some of the educational programs devel-
oped and implemented by the Water District
in recent years include:

- Hydrologic atlases depicting the satur-
ated thickness of the Ogallala Formation
within each county in the District's 15-coun-
ty service area are updated and printed every
five years. These maps give landowners
information on the amount of ground water
in storage under their tract of land.

- The District has educated irrigators
about the use of soil moisture monitoring
devices such as gypsum blocks and resis-



tance meters and tensiometers. Using these
devices, irrigators are less likely to over-
irrigate or under-irrigate their crops during
the growing season.

- A series of on-farm irrigation applica-
tion efficiency tests conducted by the Dis-
trict revealed that most sprinkler systems
were operating inefficiently. Since then, the
District has promoted the installation of Low
Energy Precision Application (LEPA) center
pivot sprinkler systems which can apply
water at about 95 percent efficiency.

- Throughout the years, the Water District

has developed public school educational
materials, audio-visual materials, suppl-
emental textbooks, and school textbook cov-
ers with water conservation messages to edu-
cate students, teachers and parents about the
importance of conserving area water
resources.

High Plains Water District Board Presi-
dent James P. Mitchell of Wolfforth and
Water District Manager A. Wayne Wyatt of
Lubbock accepted the award Aug. 5 during
the UCOWR annual meeting in San
Francisco.

Texas A&M field day at Halfway set Sept. 14

HALFWAY — The 84th annual field
day of the Texas Agricultural Experiment
Station is set for Tuesday, Sept. 14,
according to Joe Bryant, Extension com-
munication specialist.

The field day alternates between the
Texas A&M Extension & Research Center
in Lubbock and the facility at Halfway.
Motorized tours of research plots will be

held from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The center is
located 10 miles west of Plainview on U.S.
70.

Field day participants will view corn,
grain sorghum and cotton research plots.
The latest irrigation techniques will also be
shown.

Dr. Rose Mary Seymour, an Extension
ag engineer, and Dr. Robert Lascano, a

research scientist in soil and water, will
present a special segment on the potential
evapotranspiration project.

A mornign tour will permit area elemen-
tary students to gain some insight into
agriculture.

Visitors registering for the field day will
be given a free Rocky Mountain Juniper
seedling.

Cattle on feed at 14 year high

Spurred by 12 consecutive months of profits in the cattle
feeding industry (July 1992 through June 1993), cattle
feeders have been rather bullish about feeding cattle during
1993. Winter fed cattle marketings were slowed by abnor-
mally wet, cold weather.

This not only affected the availability of fed cattle com-
ing to market, it also reduced the average slaughter weight
of fed cattle. Both factors have contributed to keeping beef
production 2 percent below year ago levels during the first
half of 1993.

This had been a period where beef production expecta-
tions were 4 to 5 percent above year ago levels. The lower
beef production contributed to higher than expected fed
cattle prices during the first half of 1993, contributing
greatly to the profits enjoyed by cattle feeders.

During the first six months of 1993, Texas Panhandle
Choice fed cattle prices averaged \$80.59 cwt., 6 percent
above the \$76.11 cwt. average for 1992.

Steer dressed weights during June 1993 averaged 730
pounds or 21 pounds below June 1992. During the first
half of 1993, steer dressed weights averaged 725 pounds,
down 28 pounds per head from a year ago. All slaughter
cattle dressed weights averaged 680 pounds during the first
half of 1993, down 21 pounds from a year ago. When total
cattle slaughter for the January-June period was
16,378,000 head, that is a lot of pounds of beef lost from
the market.

Dressed weights have been increasing this summer and



LIVESTOCK MARKET UPDATE

Dr. Ernie Davis

should average within 10 to 15 pounds of year ago weights
during the last half of 1993. But, beef production will still
be somewhat restricted by lower dressed live weights and
should provide some strength to fed cattle prices this fall.

Prospects of ample supplies of fed cattle for the remain-
der of the summer and this fall look excellent. July 1,
13-State quarterly cattle on feed inventories were esti-
mated at 9.49 million head, up 7 percent from a year ago
and fractionally larger than 1991. This inventory of cattle
on feed July 1 was also 5 percent above the 5 year on feed
average.

Feedlot placements during the second quarter (April-
June), however were the same as a year ago and equal to
the 5 year replacement average. Placement in the 7-States
feedlots however, were larger in May and June than the

previous year and also above the 5 year average. Conse-
quently, it is still believed the demand for feeding cattle
this fall and winter is still strong.

Fed cattle prices are already climbing from summer or
seasonal lows. There were days in July that fed cattle
prices dropped as low as \$72 cwt. Currently, fed cattle are
trading at \$75.50 to \$76 cwt. Fed cattle prices during the
third quarter (July-September) will likely average \$73.50
to \$75.50 cwt.

During the fourth quarter fed cattle prices could gain
some as beef supplies slightly decline seasonally. Prices
are expected to average \$75 to \$77 cwt. for the period and
could reach the \$78 to \$79 cwt. levels by the end of the
year.

On Feed: Cattle and calves on feed July 1 in the 13
Quarterly States totaled 9.49 million head, up 7 percent
from July 1, 1992 and up fractionally from 1991. The 7
Monthly States reporting cattle feeding activities had 7.92
million head on feed July 1. This was 8 percent above last
year, and 1 percent above 1991. Texas had 2.34 million
head of cattle and calves on feed, up 17 percent from a year
ago.

Placements: Cattle and calves placed on feed in the 13
States during the second quarter (April through June) to-
taled 5.28 million head up fractionally from a year ago and
6 percent above 1991. June feedlot placements in the 7

See CATTLE, Page XX

South Plains
Ag News

Oct. 2

CANYON'S FAIR ON SQUARE — Plans are underway to entertain the more than 3,000 persons expected to attend Fair On The Square.

Festivities will begin at 8 a.m. with a 5-K/1-mile run and end at 3:30 p.m. with the final buffalo chip throwing contest.

Other planned activities throughout the day include live entertainment, basketball throw, cakewalk and the West Texas A&M University homecoming parade at 2 p.m.

An exhibit area will open at 10 a.m. and will feature food, crafts and fun. Nolon Henson's Christmas train display may be viewed for \$1.

Booths are available by calling Jan Meador at 655-9257 or the Canyon Chamber of Commerce at 655-1183.

Oct. 3

EXCEL MEAT JUDGING — The 13th Annual Excel High Plains Intercollegiate Meat Judging Contest will be held all day in state-of-the-art facilities in the Excel Plainview Division plant north of Plainview.

The event will feature 25 of the nation's top collegiate judging teams vying for numerous awards.

Excel, the longtime sponsor of the event, will hold an awards banquet at 7:30 p.m. following the judging event.

Oct. 12-14

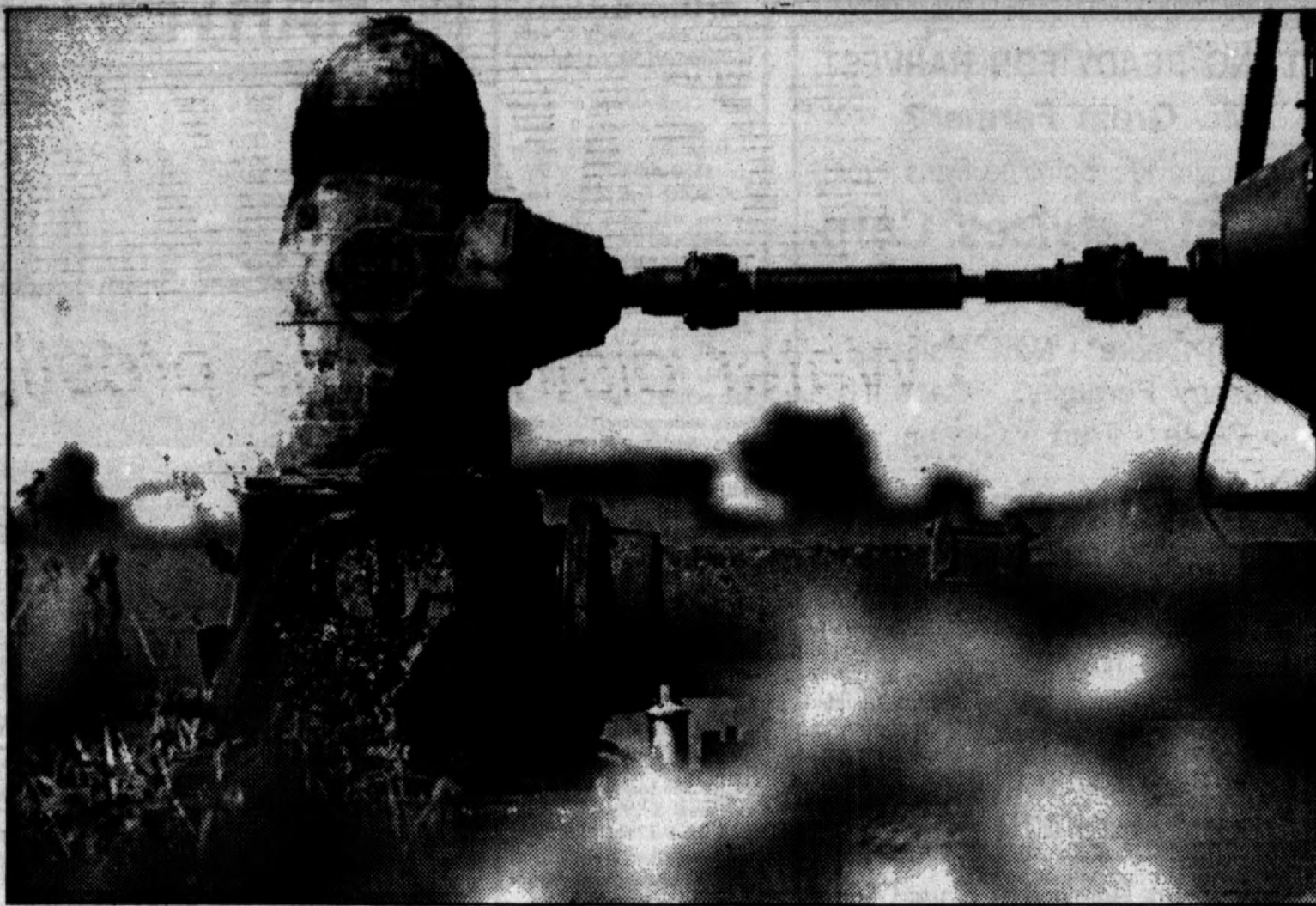
FARMER-STOCKMAN SHOW IN LUBBOCK — A 40-acre field demonstration area will be the focus of the first annual Texas Farmer-Stockman Show, billed as the first working farm show ever held in Texas.

The show will be based at the City of Lubbock farm, just east of Loop 289 on Farm Road 835 (East 40th Street).

Contact is Charles Taylor, 214-881-2677.

Oct. 13

PLAINS COTTON Growers Board of Directors Meeting, Lubbock.



Workhorse well

An irrigation pump north of Plainview spews some residual water at the gearhead while the rest flows through pipes to irrigate a nearby field during recent hot, dry weather.

Key uncovered to fight cotton blight

■ Could it prevent disaster like 1992?

By **DANNA RYAN**

A&M Extension Journalist

LUBBOCK — A research associate at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Lubbock may have discovered the missing link to one of the most prevalent diseases in cotton on the High Plains.

Looks can often be deceiving and prior to Dr. James Merteley's breakthrough, wet weather blight was considered to be synonymous with a fungus called aschytum which causes the disease in other parts of the world.

THE RESEARCH plant pathologist believes, however, he has now isolated the problem as bacterium, rather than a fungus.

Wet weather blight is a condition in cotton that occurs when weather is cool and damp and cotton plants are relatively young. Merteley said there wasn't much wet weather blight this season but enough to find a few specimens for isolation purposes.

"The problem with wet weather blight is that it doesn't occur every year," says Dr. John Gannaway, cotton breeder at the A&M experiment station. "It responds to the environment and is almost totally dependent on environmental conditions."

MERTELEY BEGAN his work on the wet weather blight problem two months ago when he started making isolations from plants that had wet weather blight symptoms. These symptoms include small, purplish spots on the lower leaves of the cotton plant, that often times turn black and ultimately cause the plant to die.

From these spots, Merteley isolated a bacterium which came from most of the spots he looked at and appeared to be the same time after time.

"This practically implicates the bacterium to be associated with the spots," he said.

HE SENT THE isolates to the Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab in College Station where a positive bacterium identification was made.

Merteley continued to study the bacterium by increasing it in the laboratory and

contaminating seedling plants from the TAES greenhouse. He learned from this experimentation that he could replicate the same wet weather blight symptoms seen in the field.

"The bacterium I infected the plants with produced the same kind of purplish spots we were seeing in the field," the researcher said.

WET WEATHER blight is a real problem in this part of the country for cotton growers and often is responsible for the loss of an entire cotton crop. In 1992, the High Plains lost some two million acres of cotton, much of it to wet weather blight, said Dr. Kater Hake, cotton specialist at A&M.

"Historically, we have replanted as

many, if not more acres due to wet weather blight than we have hail storms," said Gannaway. "It's probably cost us hundreds of thousands of dollars in terms of replanting."

Although Merteley's discovery will require further verification from other researchers, it is possible he has solved a significant problem in cotton that has eluded researchers and cotton growers for years.

He has made it possible now to focus on control measures for the blight, Hake added.

"In fact, as soon as weather cools this fall, late-planted (August) cotton will be used to test several control strategies," Hake said.

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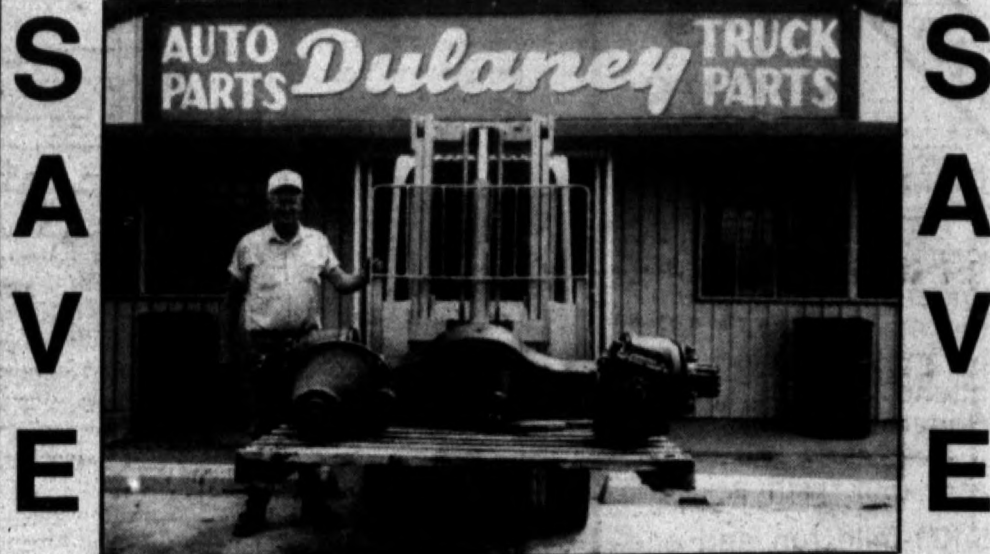
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Wild mare is key to saving Indian pony breed

By JULIE BONNIN
Austin American Statesman

LOCKHART, Texas (AP) — At Rancho San Francisco in Lockhart, a 20-year-old white Huasteca mare called Feather kicks up her heels in

a green pasture lit brilliantly by the midmorning sun. Raised in the vast woodlands of the Kiamichi mountains in southeast Oklahoma, she has little use for human contact and one time kicked out the trailer tailgate, as if to

make her feelings perfectly clear. But if Feather is indifferent to the human race, her value to us is incalculable. The last of a breed originally descended from northern Mexico, Feather's progeny will help keep a broader breed category, the American Indian Horse, from succumbing to a similar fate.

Feather's owners, Nanci Falley and Scottie Stevenson, have operated the American Indian Horse Registry from their Lockhart ranch since 1979.

The Lockhart women are members of the American Minor Breeds Conservancy, an organization devoted to promoting livestock animals in risk of extinction. When the two took over the registry, it listed just 400 horses, none of them purebreds. Now the worldwide count is about 1,600 and 300 of those are purebreds.

Falley's interest in keeping the breed alive is as simple and clear as her horse's straight-on gaze.

"I think it's really important to see where we've come from," Falley says.

"I don't want them to disappear."

Falley, a South Texas native who says her first word was "caballo," the Spanish word for "horse," was intrigued both by horses and history as a child.

"I kind of have always been intrigued with Texas history and my grandmother was a history teacher. I was always asking her what kind of animals did the Spanish bring with them on the missions? When I got a little older I realized these animals were still around."

Falley, who formerly raised Arabian horses, now has 25 American Indian

horses (also called Spanish horses). A few of the animals travel with her to festivals

and other gatherings to educate people about the horses' long history.



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Retires from Land Bank board
Calvin "Pap" Reed was honored recently for serving as director of Westex Federal Land Bank Association for a total of 30 years. Westex has offices in Dimmitt, Tulia and Hereford. Roy Carlson (right), chairman of the board, presents Reed with a plaque and watch.

Banned imports get go ahead

By MARGARET SCHERF
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — If your mouth has been watering for guava from Bermuda or yam bean root from Costa Rica, your ship may be carrying Carroccio's devotion to rare livestock breeds runs deep.

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Most of the new imports are specialty foods, either not grown in the United States or grown only in small quantities.

"USDA granted the new imports after determining that the fruits and vegetables

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Cran crop said down

WASHINGTON (AP) — The 1993 U.S. cranberry crop is forecast to be 4.16 million barrels, down 5,000 barrels from last year.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service forecast 1.91 million barrels for Massachusetts, 1 percent above last year's production despite extended dry conditions in June and July.

"Recent moisture helped rejuvenate the crop," the report said. "Excellent pollination conditions led to an average to heavy bloom and set, despite hot spells. The dry conditions have helped keep insect and disease pressure light, although scattered cases of fruitworm and rot were reported."

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CATTLE

From Page 3

states totaled 1.41 million head, up 5 percent from 1992 and 28 percent above 1991. June marketings from Texas feedlots totaled 475 thousand head, up 25 percent from last year.

Marketings: Marketings of fed cattle for April through June from feedlots in the 13 states number 5.78 million head, 2 percent above 1992, but 1 percent below 1991 marketings. June marketings in the 7 states totaled 1.72 million head, up 1 percent from 1992. June marketings from Texas feedlots totaled 455 thousand head, up 6 percent from last year.

Expected Marketings: Cattle feeders expected to market 5.95 million head during the third quarter (July through September) of 1993. This is 3 percent more than the third quarter marketings in 1992 and about the same as marketed in 1991. This estimate appears to be about right for cattle available for marketings during the third quarter, given the weight breakouts of this report.

Estimating fed cattle marketings during the third

quarter by taking one-quarter of the steers in the 700 to 899 pound weight group, all of the steers weighing 900 pounds or more, one-half of the heifers in the 700 to 899 pound weight group and all of the heifers weighing 900 pounds or more, it appears there should be approximately 6.08 head available for marketing during the third quarter. Last year this same formula indicated 5.79 million head would be marketed during the third quarter. Actual third quarter marketings for 1992 totaled 5.77, so the formula is usually fairly accurate. From this comparison, third quarter marketings should be up 5 percent instead of the expected 3 percent increase. Therefore, this estimate appears accurate for the cattle being reported on feed by weight groups.

Commercial red meat production in the U.S. during June 1993 totaled 3.48 billion pounds, up 2 percent from last year. Kill days for June 1993 included 22 weekdays and four Saturdays, the same as in 1992. Accumulative red meat production for January-June was 19.7 billion pounds, down 2 percent from 1992. The accumulated production for beef was down 2 percent; veal

was down 14 percent; pork was unchanged; and lamb and mutton were down 4 percent from a year ago.

Beef production: For the month of June, beef production was 2.05 billion pounds, up 1 percent from last year. Head kill totaled 3.01 million head, up 3 percent from last year. The average live weight at slaughter decreased 16 pounds to 1,143 pounds.

Veal Production: For June, veal production totaled 22 million pounds, down 11 percent from a year ago. Calf slaughter totaled 93.8 thousand head, down 13 percent from last year. The average live weight at slaughter was up 16 pounds to 410.

Pork Production: Pork production was 1.38 billion pounds, up 3 percent from June 1992. Hog kill totaled 7.51 million head, up 2 percent from last year. The average live weight increased 1 pound to 255.

Lamb and Mutton Production: During June, lamb and mutton production totaled 31 million pounds, up 14 percent from a year ago. Slaughter totaled 478 thousand head up 10 percent. The average live weight increased 5 pounds to 130 pounds.

Texas Slaughter: June's livestock slaughter

included 548.3 thousand head of cattle, up 5 percent; 2.2 thousand calves, down 51 percent; and 20.6 thousand hogs, down 17 percent from 1992. Sheep and lamb slaughter was not reported to avoid disclosing individual operations. Commercial red meat production in Texas during June was 374.2 million pounds, up 2 percent from a year ago.

Frozen red meat in U.S. warehouses on June 30, 1993 totaled 665.9 million pounds, unchanged from a year ago but 1 percent below last month. Cold storage beef supplies totaled 271.3 million pounds, down 9 percent from a year ago and 4 percent below last month's levels. Frozen pork supplies were measured at 355.3 million pounds, which was 11 percent above last year's levels and 5 percent below last month's supplies.

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Frozen poultry supplies were estimated to be 968.4 million pounds, up 5 percent from a year ago and 12 percent above last month's levels.

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Death of soybean fee hailed

ST. LOUIS (Special) — The American Soybean Association has hailed congressional repeal of the soybean origination fee as a major victory for producers.

Larry Diedrich of Elkton, S.D., newly elected president of the association, said elimination of the fee was the organization's top legislative priority of 1993.

"Producers will now again be able to use the soybean loan as a financing tool for their operations without paying the equivalent of an exorbitant interest rate on short-term borrowing," he said.

Repeal of the fee was included in the agriculture section of the massive Clin-

ton administration budget plan that Congress passed before the lawmakers began their August vacation.

To offset the loss of fee revenues, Congress reduced the loan rates for soybeans and other oilseeds by 2 percent, effective with the 1994 crops. For soybeans, this cuts the loan from \$5.02 to \$4.92 per bushel.

To avoid increasing government costs because of greater participation, the program will require growers to repay loans in the same federal fiscal year (October-September) in which the loans are disbursed.

The fee was initiated in the 1990 farm bill as a

means of raising revenues on loans made on soybeans and other oilseeds by the Commodity Credit Corp., an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Producers have been required to pay 2 percent of the face value of the loans off the top, sharply increasing the effective cost of borrowing. In 1991 and 1992, participation in the soybean loan program fell by 50 percent.

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Lubbock

Pepper co-op in Slaton ready for first harvest

From the Slaton Slatonite

SLATON — It's the hottest idea around for potential profits from alternative crops, believes a newly-formed cooperative bent on making a profit from chili peppers.

As their first harvest approaches, members of the new local pepper cooperative remain optimistic about their first jalapeno crop.

They've already won a contract for 500,000 pounds of peppers to be delivered to the Old El Paso salsa company this year and are predicting the company may want even more of the Slaton crop next year.

A second major company has also promised to buy their product.

"It's called 'TAM mild'," explained Glen Brosch of the Slaton-based, 25-member Texas Chili Pepper Co-op as he poured a pile of the two-inch-long green chilies onto a table.

He says, however, not to be fooled by the name. They're mild all right, but mild only mild so far as

jalapenos go. Biting into a raw one may cure your sniffles but it will also bring sweat beads to your brow and you'll rush to cool your mouth at the nearest source of water.

Brosch, who farms cotton, devoted 12 of his 1,100 Southland area acres to try pepper growing, which co-op members hope will become a top cash crop. Members have planted a total of 210 acres in the area.

While heat units for peppers are similar to those required for cotton, the similarity ends there.

"It's more intensive," Brosch explained. "It takes more irrigation. The cool nights in the fall are good for peppers, where it's not as good for cotton. You manage it closer because it's a higher cash crop."

Higher to the tune of double to triple the profits of cotton — at least — is what the potential is with peppers.

Cotton prices this year are expected to be 50-52 cents per pound, while peppers fetch 17 cents per pound. The difference in the two plants is

the yield. Brosch said that his estimated harvest will be between five and 10 tons per acre; however, pepper experts at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station in Weslaco say yields of 20 tons per acre are possible.

Additionally, as peppers are a brand new crop to the area, the plant's usual predators, including the pepper weevil, haven't learned the peppers are here. That is, except for the boll worm, which becomes the pepper worm; however, the insects this year weren't bad enough to spray, Brosch said.

And because of the danger of viruses and disease, the peppers can't be grown on the same acreage within three years, they make an attractive crop to rotate with cotton.

Pepper co-op members hope that by banding together, they can prevent overproduction and lowering of the price.

Brosch planted his seeds May 11 and hasn't had setbacks, unlike several in the

co-op who replanted as late as mid-June.

For the mid-September harvest, co-op members will be using a one-of-its-kind pepper stripper, a variation of one designed by researchers at the ag experiment station in Weslaco. PBI West of Hereford created the co-op's machine, and pepper producers were pleased with the picker's performance on its maiden run earlier this month.

"This is our proving year," Brosch said. "The processors are seeing if we can grow them. We're proving to them that we can grow the quality."

One development that played to the advantage of the local co-op was that insects and disease have reduced the New Mexico chili pepper production.

Salsa continues to be a hot item, from a marketing standpoint. "Salsa passed ketchup sales in 1991," says Donald Basinger, co-op president. "Salsa sales are growing 15 to 20 percent yearly nationwide."

The TAM mild pepper

gets its name from Texas A&M.

The TAM mild jalapeno is a pepper designed to resist insects and disease. The Weslaco Texas A&M experiment station's Dr. Ben Vilalón, also known as "Dr. Pepper," improved the TAM pepper's resistance and suggested its production to Slaton area farmers.

Assistance on growing techniques has been provided by A&M extension agents Dr. David Bender and Dr. Roland Roberts as well as A&M entomologist, Dr. Pat Morrison.

When the pepper harvest begins, the peppers must be gathered in seven to 10 days.

"They must be harvested green, and the salsa company will dock the price if there are too many red ones," Basinger explained.

As peppers mature, they

turn red. Increased maturity increases the flavor intensity. After the peppers are gathered with a mechanical harvester, they will be shipped to the salsa companies for processing.

Co-op members believe the secret to hot success will be their use of marketing tools.

A gold-lettered logo of the state of Texas with chili peppers designed by Pip Dawson of Slaton was printed on business cards and stationery.

Karen Strube designed a sign outside the co-op headquarters.

Several pepper plants operate in Texas, but the nearest plants are in San Antonio and El Paso. The co-op would eventually like to build a processing plant in cooperation with the Lubbock Food Bank. Many options are being explored.

3.59 million on the farm

WASHINGTON (AP) — There were 3.59 million people working on U.S. farms and ranches during the week of July 11-17, according to the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

The total included 1.6 million self-employed farm operators, 559,000 unpaid workers and 1.07 million workers hired directly by farm operators.

Agricultural service employees work on farms and ranches.

Hired workers were paid an average wage of \$6.09 per hour during the survey week by farm operators, 27 cents more than a year earlier.

Workers paid on an hourly basis earned \$5.84 per hour, compared with \$5.66 last July. Field workers received an average of \$5.78 per hour, up 31 cents from the July 1992 survey week. Livestock workers earned \$5.42 per hour, compared with \$5.48 a year earlier.

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Tips given for accurate pre-harvest corn yield estimating

Dear Dr. Bohling, Can you please outline a method for making pre-harvest yield estimates for corn and, if so, how accurate is it?



THE METHOD I prefer and consider most accurate involves making an estimate of the average number of: ears per acre, kernel rows per ear and kernels per row.

Start by selecting several sites in a field and measure off 1/1000 of an acre. For 30-inch rows, that distance would be 17 feet, 5 inches. Within that 1/1000 of an acre, count the number of ears. Generally, that's equal to the number of plants per acre.

Once you have that num-

ber, select every fifth ear to determine the average number of kernel rows per ear and kernels per row. Then, multiply the number of ears times the average number of kernel rows times the average number of kernels per row. That gives you an estimate of kernels per 1/1000 acre. Divide this number by 90 (this number

represents the average number of kernels per 1/1000 acre to equal 1 bushel).

FOR EXAMPLE, if you find 25 ears with an average of 16 rows and 40 kernels per row, estimated yield equals 178 bushels per acre ($25 \times 16 \times 40 \div 90 = 178$). As for accuracy, it's important to obtain representative ear samples. You'll probably be within plus or minus 20 bushels at harvest. The determining factor is kernel weight, which varies with weather conditions and hybrids.

Using this yield-estimate method, you'll tend to overestimate yields in a poor growing season and

underestimate yields during a good growing season.

Dear Dr. Bohling, How can I estimate my maturity date and yield potential during a year of late planting?

BECAUSE THE NUMBER of days from silking to physiological maturity is fairly constant (60 days plus or minus five), you can estimate maturity date once silking date is known. Record the date when you reach 75 percent silking. You'll need to start looking for silks soon after you see tassels. Under normal conditions, you'll see an additional 20 to 25 percent of the plants silking each day after you see the first silks appear.

Once you have the 75 percent silk date, add 60 days plus or minus five (add fewer days for early maturing hybrids and more days for fuller season hybrids) and that will give you the estimated date of physiological maturity.

If you compare that date with the average frost date for your area, you'll know the risk your crop may encounter this fall.

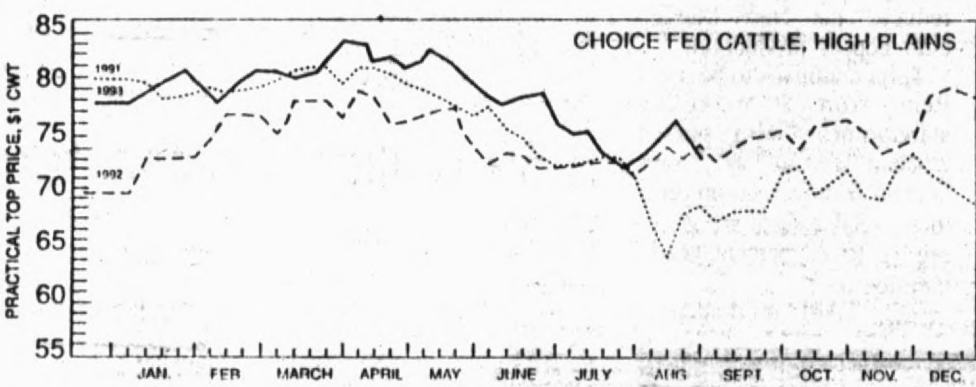
AS FOR YOUR yield prospects, they vary from year to year. A rule of

thumb is if your silking date is two weeks later than normal, you can expect a 25 percent yield reduction; if three weeks late, a 40 percent reduction.

Corn will likely yield less with late silking

regardless of whether you escape frost damage.

(Questions for Dr. Bohling may be forwarded to him at Crop Talk, PO Box 2421, Kansas City, MO 64195. His phone is 316-764-3739.)



Courtesy Texas Cattle Feeders Association, Amarillo

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The above report reflects market activity through August 27.

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