

AgReview



Calendar

Ag News

May 5-7

HORSE SHORT COURSE: Texas A&M University. Contact Dr. Doug Householder, 409-845-1562.

May 15-16

OLD SOREHEAD TRADE DAYS: Courthouse lawn, Stanton. Contact Kathryn Burch, 915-756-3316.

May 20

LUBBOCK — Farm and Ranch Estate Planning Seminar for farmers and ranchers, Holiday Inn Civic Center, contact Stanley Young, 767-1190.

May 20

SMALL GRAINS FIELD DAY: Chillicothe Extension Center. Contact David Worrall, 817-552-9941.

May 20-21

AG ESTATE PLANNING: To be held in Lubbock this two day course in analyzing relevant income and estate tax rules as they affect families and their agricultural businesses. Call Wayne Hayenga, 409-845-2226.

City has stake in value-added firm

■ Bonds okayed to fund plant site

By GORDON ZEIGLER

AgReview Writer

DIMMITT — In a precedent setting move in the State of Texas, the City of Dimmitt is moving ahead to help develop a new value-added food processing plant in which taxpayers could have a \$4.5 million stake.

The venture is a marriage of citizens and private industry for the purpose of firming up the city's ag-based economy and creating jobs.

Rubinoff Foods, an Arkansas-based firm with plans to package and market boneless chicken breasts and gourmet frozen dinners, is laying the groundwork for a plant.

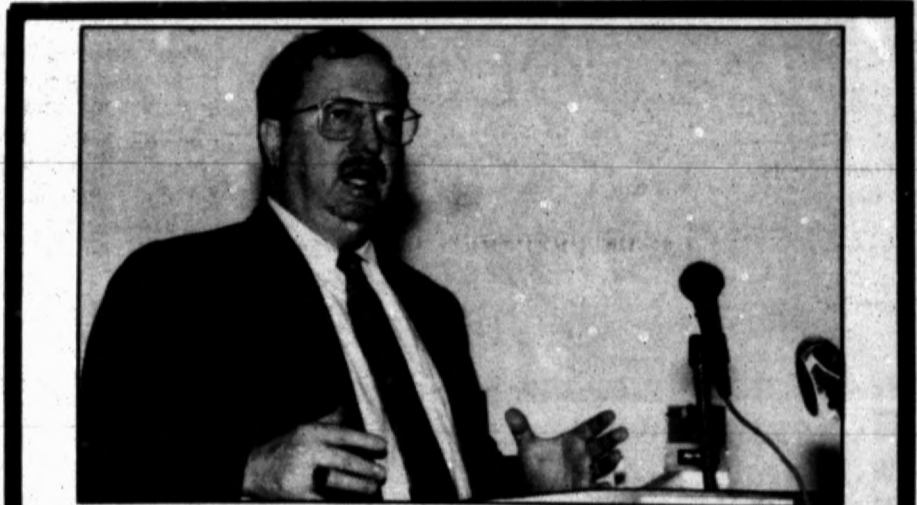
The Arkansas firm would lease a city-owned building in a venture that will produce a wide array of frozen menu items and employ 70 initially, growing to more than 500 in five years.

What makes the plan so unusual, according to Mayor Wayne Collins, is that the city went to taxpayers with a plan to build a \$4.5 million building to house the plant.

On Jan. 9 Dimmitt voters decided by a nine to one margin to back the project.

"A bond attorney working with us says this has never been done in the State of Texas before," Collins said. "It is a new concept."

Collins said many hurdles lie ahead before ground will be broken, but that the city has some big hopes riding with the project.



TALKING JOBS — Ronald Rubinoff, Arkansas entrepreneur, discusses impact his plant could have on Dimmitt.

"The big reason the city is involved is for job creation and diversification of our local economy," Collins explained. "Dimmitt, like most counties and cities across the South Plains, lost population from 1980 to 1990. This is an attempt to stabilize our population and our economy and add value to agricultural products."

Bringing the idea to the city was Ronald Rubinoff, an entrepreneur from Eldorado, Ark.

The Rubinoff Foods facility would employ 70 initially with a projected possible growth to 250 in the short term and 500 to 600 in five to six years.

Its product will be an array of 42 types of ready-to-eat meals, similar to TV dinners. Chicken will be one of the ingredients, but beef and pork lines area also envisioned. There would also be stir-fry kits, featuring

a mixture of vegetables in plastic bags, ready for preparation within 10 minutes.

"This would mean a lot to us so far as job creation," Collins said.

Don Nelson, publisher of the Castro County News and one who has followed the issue closely, characterized the citizens positive decision on the plan as a vote of confidence in the city.

"It showed the willingness of the community to take a risk with potential good benefits involved," Nelson said. "And it also showed a lot of trust in our city council, which will handle all the negotiations for Dimmitt."

Collins said the project has a lot going for it. First, it will be located with the city's enterprise zone, qualifying Rubinoff for certain tax

See PLANT, Page 12

No market ripples from March hog, pig report

The "March Hog and Pig" report did not change the outlook for spring market hog supplies, but a combination of factors sure played havoc with the first quarter supplies of market hogs.

At the beginning of 1993, first quarter (January-March) market hog supplies were estimated to be about 4 percent greater or nearly 1 million head greater than the 23.79 million head that were slaughtered commercially during the first quarter of 1992. Instead, an estimated 23.07 million head were slaughtered commercially during the first quarter of 1993, a decrease of 3 percent from a year ago. Now the questions occur . . . was the small hog slaughter a result of the winter weather conditions? Or, was the smaller than expected slaughter a result of an erroneous December Hog and Pig report? Or what?

The June-August 1992 pig crop, which contributed to most of the first quarter's commercial hog slaughter, was revised downwards from the December to March Hog and Pig reports, but by only 0.6 percent. The same revision was made in those hogs and pigs weighing over 60 pounds on Dec. 1, 1992. These both are relatively small and minor revisions in the December report.

But there are several factors that could explain smaller first quarter marketings other than the more obvious reductions due to increased death losses and delayed marketings caused by the winter weather. First, when the number of slaughter days are accounted for, the decline in hog slaughter is only one percent lower.

Second, and more weather related, was that last year's first quarter slaughter was record high relative to the June-August pig crop . . . a mild winter. This year's relationship was no more "unprecedented" on the low side . . . a most severe winter.

Third, sow slaughter has been lower this year. Fourth, some additional gilts could have been held back for further herd expansion in response to favorable returns. And fifth, live hog imports from Canada could have been smaller and live hog exports to Mexico could have been larger (the



LIVESTOCK MARKET UPDATE

Dr. Ernie Davis

foreign trade statistics are reported 2 months later).

The hog market has been strong in recent weeks with market hogs selling for \$48+ per hundredweight (cwt.). The market average for the first quarter of 1993 is estimated at \$44.20 cwt. That is some \$5.64 cwt above the first quarter average price of 1992. A 3 percent decrease in pork production from the previous year precipitated a 14.6 percent increase in market hog prices. The foreign market for U.S. pork has increased the demand for U.S. pork.

Consequently, U.S. market hog prices have been stronger than in recent years, given similar supply situations. For that same reason, second quarter 1993 market hog prices are expected to average near the same as those of a year ago, even while expecting a 4 percent increase in supplies.

Retail Pork Prices:

Pork production decreased 8 percent from the fourth quarter of 1992 to the first quarter of 1993. Market hog prices, consequently, rose \$1.72 cwt. to an average of \$44.20 cwt. during the first quarter. This actually represented only a 4.5 percent increase in the price of market hogs. Again, the favorable foreign trade position in pork has kept domestic hog prices stronger as it has increased the demand for U.S. hogs and pork.

Also boosting market hog prices were favorable "farm to

retail" marketing margins. The pork "farm to retail" price spread dropped 12 cents per pound from February 1992 to February 1993. The reported February 1993 farm-retail price spread was 123.1 cents per pound of retail pork. The decrease came mostly at the expense of retailers and packers. We know this because the average retail price of pork during February 1993 was 6 cents per pound below that of a year ago. The average retail price for pork during February 1993 was \$1.94 per pound which was slightly below the previous February five year average of 1.95 per pound.

U.S. Hog Numbers:

The U.S. inventory of hogs and pigs on March 1, 1993 was estimated at 58.34 million head, up 4 percent from a year ago and up 10 percent from 1991. Market hogs numbered 50.91 million head, up 4 percent from 1992 and up 11 percent from 1991. U.S. breeding hogs totaled 7.43 million head; up 4 percent from a year ago and up 6 percent from 1991.

The U.S. pig crop for December through February 1993, totaled 23.89 million head, 2 percent above last year and 12 percent above 1991. Sows farrowing during this period numbered 2.93 million head, 1 percent above the same period in 1992 and 8 percent above 1991 levels. The average litter size during the period was 8.15 pigs, compared to the last two years of 8.04 and 7.87.

Price Outlook

Given the numbers and intentions listed in the Hog and Pig report, the currently quarterly price outlook for market hogs are: second quarter average \$42-\$45 per hundredweight; third quarter 1993 average, \$41-\$45 per hundredweight and fourth quarter 1993 average, \$38-\$43 per hundredweight. Pork production during 1993 should reach new record levels at 17.44 billion pounds or an increase of 2 percent over 1992.

(Dr. Ernie Davis, Livestock Marketing Specialist with the Texas A&M Extension Service, is an authority on the livestock markets.)

Ag computing

HALFWAY — The Texas A&M Computer Education Center — the only facility of its kind in Texas — still has openings for its remaining 1993 ag computer courses.

Arrangements to attend can be made by contacting local county ag agents.

The computer center and its program are sponsored by the Texas A&M University System, The Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station and High Plains Research Foundation.

The schedule includes:

- June 3**
Quicken statements
- October 20-21**
Ag spreadsheets
- October 27-28**
Beginning Quicken
- November 9**
Advanced Quicken
- November 16**
Quicken statements

Quicken

Developing Financial Statements with Quicken is a course in Quicken6, an inexpensive, easy-to-use record-keeping program that is widely used by agricultural producers.

In this two-day course participants will use a case study to learn to use Quicken6 in a hands on setting.

A 'PC' on every farm by 2000?

By **JENNY O'BRIEN**

Communicating for Agriculture

Personal computers and agriculture make a great mix.

They can be used for everything from accounting to zoning, and can save you time, money and maybe even a few headaches. Some ag specialists predict that nearly 100 percent of farms will have a computer by the year 2000.

But how do you get started? How do you know what is right for you? Does the investment pay off in the long run? What can computers do for you?

There are many questions that spring to mind when considering the use of personal computers for farm and ranch operations. Where do you begin?

BE PREPARED TO DO some learning before your fingers ever touch a mouse or a keyboard. Talk to others you know who are using computers in their operation.

Seeing any system at work might be good, but it will be especially helpful to see software systems that are working for someone whose business and goals are similar to yours.

"Start by figuring out what you want the computer to do for you," advises Erlin Weness, area farm management agent for the Minnesota Extension Service.

"Look at software. What do you want it to do?"

Consider whether it will just spit numbers back at you or will analyze the information you enter, he suggests.

"My advice would be to start with a pretty friendly program," says Douglas Pohlman, a Lake

Park, Iowa, farmer who has been using a computer since 1986. "Basically, do your book work with it. The more you work with it, the more you'll want to work with it."

Pohlman grows corn and beans, and has a farrow-to-finish hog operation. "It can be scary at first. You wonder where all that information you're putting in is going."

HAROLD MELLEMA is a farmer from Reading, Minn., who has been using computers in his hog and grain operation for five years. "I would recommend finding a good and simple menu program," Mellema says. "You can be more computer illiterate that way. It can get quite complicated otherwise."

There are many, many programs available for farm and ranch operations. To learn what is available, drop in at a computer store and talk to the sales people, check out the library where there is a lot of information in books and magazines, talk to your Extension agent, and check out beginning computer classes offered in your community.

Whether you want to simplify and speed up your accounting, keep track of equipment maintenance and operating costs, or track your herd in any number of ways, there is probably a software program for you.

ONCE YOU KNOW what you want and have found the software that will work for you, find out what kind of equipment that program needs.

"You want a system that will

last for you," Weness says. "I'd say at least 386 speed capacity, an 80 megabyte hard drive and a color monitor. Prices are fairly reasonable now."

Weness also advises considering where you buy your equipment. "When you buy from a discount store, service is probably not included," he notes. "You may be on your own as far as setting up and getting started. Consider a vendor that can get you started, will help with set-up and give you a few hours of instruction, if you need it."

CONSIDER WHETHER there is a toll-free number to call for help with your questions.

You can also buy computers over the phone.

There are now many used computers on the market as some computer users frequently update their equipment.

Both Pohlman and Mellema began working with computers through Weness and a Minnesota extension service program.

Mellema says he's satisfied with his current set-up. "We use it for accounting, mainly. We also do inventory and some word processing, but that's mostly family use. I can enter everything a lot faster and it's always totaled. I can put in a budget, and it'll show me right where I am, down to the dollar."

IT WAS THE tediousness of record keeping that got Mellema to consider using a computer.

"Computers are so much more accurate," he said. He is now a part-time dealer for the same

computer company where he bought his original equipment.

Pohlman has found that his original system couldn't keep up with the information he was looking for and has recently upgraded his system and software.

"We invested a lot this year (in the computer system)," Pohlman says. "But it's worth it. I spend maybe two hours a day on the computer. It forces you to keep your book work up-to-date. I was always three to four months behind before. Now each day we know exactly where we are according to budget, both projected and actual."

ALL OF THE business is kept on the computer, Pohlman said. They keep the sow records and individual pig records on the computer, tracking them through four buildings. "There's the pre-nursery, then the regular nursery, then the grower building, and on to the finisher."

"We always know the pounds of pork and the pounds of feed in each building. We can track the rate of gain and cost of production on a daily basis," Pohlman said. "As far as the sow records, we couldn't operate, really, as we do now, without the computer."

But Pohlman also says that, "as with anything else, you want to keep progressing. At first you want a lot of answers, but the more answers you get, the more answers you want. You start to want an even more detailed report than you have."

And have I mentioned computer video games. . . .

(This article reprinted from Communicating For Agriculture's monthly publication by permission)

STAMPEDE

By **Jerry Palen**



"Spring time makes them really crazy like that."

Pork exports soared last year

By **MARGARET SCHERF**
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. pork exports increased 44.5 percent in 1992 over 1991, catapulting to a record high level of 185,000 tons, according to a report by the Foreign Agricultural Service.

At the same time, U.S. pork imports dropped 16.5 percent to 293,000 tons, the lowest level in eight years, it said in a report this month on the world livestock situation.

"U.S. pork exports have been very strong due to highly competitive prices

and the devaluation of dollar," the report said. "Sales to Japan and Mexico were exceptionally strong, with increases of 78 percent and 33 percent, respectively."

Forecasts for 1993 indicate continued increases in U.S. pork exports, but a lower growth rate than last year. Exports for 1993 are expected to hit 204,000 tons.

"Moderate growth in U.S. exports will be fueled primarily by the further expansion of the Japanese and Mexican markets," the report said.

"U.S. pork exports are

expected to remain very price competitive," it said.

Imports from all major suppliers fell significantly in 1992, it said, adding that the decline was especially noticeable from Denmark and Poland.

"In 1993, imports are forecast to increase slightly over last year's level to 302,000 tons," it said. "Low prices and abundant supplies of pork in Denmark and Canada will boost their exports to the United States this year."

The report said U.S. hog producers are continuing to expand inventories modestly.

"Since the beginning of 1991, inventories have increased steadily and pork production in 1993 is projected to reach a record high 8.1 million tons in 1993, nearly 4 percent above 1992's record of 7.8 million tons," it said.

Total world pork production is forecast to increase 2 percent in 1993. However, further contraction of production is expected for Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Japan.

Total world consumption is expected to increase 2 percent in 1993.

Texas livestock shipped to 26 countries

AUSTIN — More than 1.12 million head of livestock worth \$203 million were shipped through the Texas Department of Agriculture's export pens during 1992, Agriculture Commissioner Rick Perry said today.

"Our exports did not surpass the record-breaking number of 1.3 million head shipped out of Texas in 1991, but the 1992 exports were still almost double the 1990 numbers," Perry said. In 1990, 621,713 head valued at \$90 million were exported.

Even though 1992 livestock exports decreased, the value of animals shipped was \$1 million more than the \$202 million value in 1991, Perry said.

Breeding stock and show animals helped increase the value of 1992 exports, Perry said.

"Of the \$9 million worth of horses shipped, we recorded more than \$6 million worth of thoroughbreds, show horses and race horses exported out of the Houston airport," he said. "This indicates that international buyers are clearly recognizing the quality found in Texas breeds."

The largest drop in exports occurred in hog shipments, with about 200,000 fewer head shipped in 1992 than 1991. The decrease was caused by Mexico restricting the number

of hogs allowed into the country by requiring all slaughter hogs be shipped to federally inspected slaughter facilities, which are limited in that country, Perry said.

The number of goats also dropped by more than 20,000 compared to 1991 exports. However, the value of goats rose by about \$700,000 in 1992 compared to the previous year due to increased demand in Mexico for dairy goats, which sell for an average of \$300 per head, Perry said. In comparison, the average price for Angora goats was \$36 per head and Spanish goats \$34 per head.

The 1993 livestock export breakdown is:

- Sheep — 859,972 head valued at \$48 million — up from the 1991 shipment of 812,516 head valued at \$41.6 million.
- Cattle — Beef cattle — 80,064 valued at \$71.4 million Dairy cattle — 41,728 head valued at \$54.7 million. These exports are up from the 1991 total cattle exports of 116,934 head valued at \$106.8 million.
- Hogs — 104,463 head valued at \$16.9 million — down from 1991 exports of 327,379 head valued at \$44.1 million.
- Goats — 35,043 head valued at \$3 million — down

from the 1991 shipment of 56,661 head valued at \$2.3 million.

• Horses — 3,033 head valued at \$9 million — down from the 1991 exports of 3,720 head valued at \$7.4 million.

• Exotic species — 158 head valued at \$158,000. No figures for comparison to 1991 are available.

TDA's six export pens are at Del Rio, Eagle Pass, El Paso, Brownsville, Laredo and at Houston Intercontinental Airport.

Twenty-six countries accepted livestock exported from Texas, Perry said. They are Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Colombia, Ecuador, Venezuela, Peru, Uruguay, Argentina, Thailand, Australia, South Africa, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, El Salvador, Hungary, Holland, Qatar, Sweden, Great Britain, Belgium and Japan.

Almost 80 percent of the shipments consisted of Texas livestock, with the remainder originating from other U.S. or Canadian ranches.

Survival steps vital when outing goes awry

By **BILL SCHULZ**
AP Outdoor Writer

It takes training, planning and common sense to prevent a wilderness adventure from becoming a tragedy.

"Don't just go to Alaska and walk off into wilderness, because if you do, you're in trouble very shortly," says Bill McRae, a veteran outdoorsman from Fairfield, Mont. "Start with very modest adventures."

"You can't expect to live off the land. It's not the sensible thing to do," says McRae, an outdoor photographer who spends long periods of time in the wilderness in pursuit of pictures.

"If you had a rifle, you could shoot game, but that's illegal part of the time. You could eat ground squirrels and that sort of thing, but that's rough roughing it."

"The idea of living off the land is something you do in an emergency."

There's little room left for wilderness adventures in the East, but a lot remains in the West and in Alaska. Any trip out into it must be carefully planned if you want to enjoy it.

Start early with short practice trips. Learn your limits. Don't go anywhere the first few tries you can't walk out of in a few hours, McRae says.

"Think survival on short trips," he says. "Build yourself a lean-to and sleep in it. Think about what you're going to need to survive."

"To draw a parallel, if you were going to take up sailing, you wouldn't just get a sailboat and head out to sea."

Physical fitness is important, he says, but knowing your limitations is more important.

"You can be rather old and not in great shape if you don't overdo it," he says. "But a young person in good shape can go too far too fast and end up with hypothermia or end up killing himself some other way. Caution is the key."

Your gear may make the difference between walking out and being found by a search party.

Start with a good backpack and a light tent.

"It's good to learn to build shelter out of things you find in the forest, but take a tent," says McRae, 58, who has lived in Montana since 1957.

"I think it's also important to have some kind of a backpack stove and some fuel, but be prepared to build open fires and cook over them."

He also carries matches and three or four butane cigarette lighters — which are just about weatherproof.

One of his secrets is to carry a small can of Sterno fuel,

the stuff used in fondue cookpots and chafing dishes.

"You take a little piece the size of a marble, set it on a rock, put a little tinder around it and no matter how wet or windy it is, it will start a fire. It really burns hot," McRae says.

He also carries a light knife and a day pack every time he goes into the woods.

"I know people who have died because they didn't have the elements of survival," McRae says.

Other basics include:
— A plastic painter's drop cloth, about 9 by 12 feet, for an emergency shelter.

— A small first aid kit with pain pills, tape, bandages and antiseptic.

— Sunglasses and sunscreen.

— Flashlight with extra bulb and extra batteries.

— A signal mirror — and be sure you know how to use it.

— Compass.

— Map of the area.

— Two days supply of trail food. "Almost no one ever starves to death, but it has a psychological effect."

— Lightweight rain gear.

— A change of clothes.

— Gloves.

— Binoculars.

— A plastic water bottle and either filters or disinfectant tablets for water.

"In Alaska I always carry

an emergency flasher. Like the mirror it can signal an airplane," he says.

"You don't need a gun," McRae says. "There's hardly any place where anything's going to eat you. The only possible place is national parks in West, where grizzly bears are habituated to people."

"Everybody thinks you need a gun, but when it comes down to survival, it doesn't make that much difference."

In places like the Yellowstone or Glacier national parks, take a can of bear spray. It's a pepper-based repellent.

"People I know personally have used it on grizzlies and it works," McRae says.

Take a warm cap to cover your ears if you're going anywhere chilly and underwear of new synthetic fibers which don't absorb water.

"I've actually waded a river, in winter, then took all my clothes off, took this polypropylene underwear wrung it out, put it back on and it felt dry," he says. "You want at least one spare set."

Take outer garments that can be worn in layers. Take a pair of gloves. If you don't need them for warmth, you'll need them to protect your hands. In cold country, take big, warm mittens.

In addition to a lightweight sleeping bag, McRae carries a foam pad, an air mattress and a piece of plastic tarp for a ground cloth.

The choice of footwear depends on weather and location. Take good, warm boots in winter.

In swampy or wet country, take hip boots for both wading and walking through wet brush.

He carries freeze-dried foods and few cooking utensils.

"I only carry a spoon, a cup and a little pot I can put on an open fire. Just set it at the edge of the fire and pretty soon you've got boiling water."

If you have to live off the land, you can eat almost any kind of bark, fish, mammal or bird. Be very careful about picking plants.

"Learn about plants by getting a good book on wilderness foods," he says.

Chris McCandless, 24, of suburban Washington walked into Alaskan wilderness April 28, 1992. He survived nearly four months, living off the land.

But a plant apparently did him in, according to Jon Krakauer, writing in the January issue of Outside magazine. McCandless apparently mistook seeds of a wild sweet pea for those of a wild potato. The sweet pea seeds are

poisonous.

McCandless apparently died Aug. 18, after 113 days on his own, Krakauer concluded from entries in McCandless's diary.

Other survival tricks depend on where you are.

In the desert Southwest, carry plenty of water.

If you get lost, walk downhill, follow a stream. If you're in the lower 48 states, it will lead you to civilization.

In northern Alaska or Canada, the streams flow north and will only lead you deeper into the wilderness.

"A person's greatest survival tool is a cool head. Don't go tearing through the woods. If you seem totally stymied, sit down and think."

Finding emergency shelter can be as simple as getting under a thick evergreen tree.

"It hardly ever rains enough to get under the things," McRae said. Other possibilities are a small cave or into a gap in some rocks, enough to get out of the wind.

"Stop and find shelter before you're exhausted," he said. "Try to get some sleep or rest. The old idea that if you go to sleep you're going to freeze to death is just not true."

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Area Farms Work On Ways To Protect Soil

Area wheat farmers are looking for ways to keep the soil on the ground and more money in the bank.

"Farmers are looking for ways to reduce tillage either for economic reasons or to meet conservation compliance," explains Wayne Schumacher, a cereal manager.

"Farmers who have highly erodible land, for example, are in need to tools to keep their stubble cleaners so they can keep the crop residue intact to meet compliance. If they don't they stand to lose all farm program benefits."

The Environmental Protection Agency has approved an expanded label for DuPont Finesse herbicide that gives farmers more flexibility in their weed control programs to reduce tillage and maximize yield potential.

Under the new label, the herbicide can be used for fallow weed control under either a wheat-fallow-wheat or ecofallow program. This will aid farmers who are reducing

their tillage practices to save costs and erosion, and especially those who must meet federally mandated conservation compliance requirements by the end of next year, Schumacher says.

Finesse can also be applied with low rates of Lexone in a spring weed-and-feed program for grasses and broadleaves.

"What's important is that farmers now have more flexibility in matching their weed control programs to their specific needs," Schumacher says.

In fallow, farmers can use a tank mix program

using Roundup, Bladex, atrazine or paraquat to control both broadleaves and grasses in one trip. That saves the cost of multiple chem fallow applications or tillage trips.

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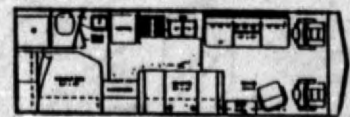
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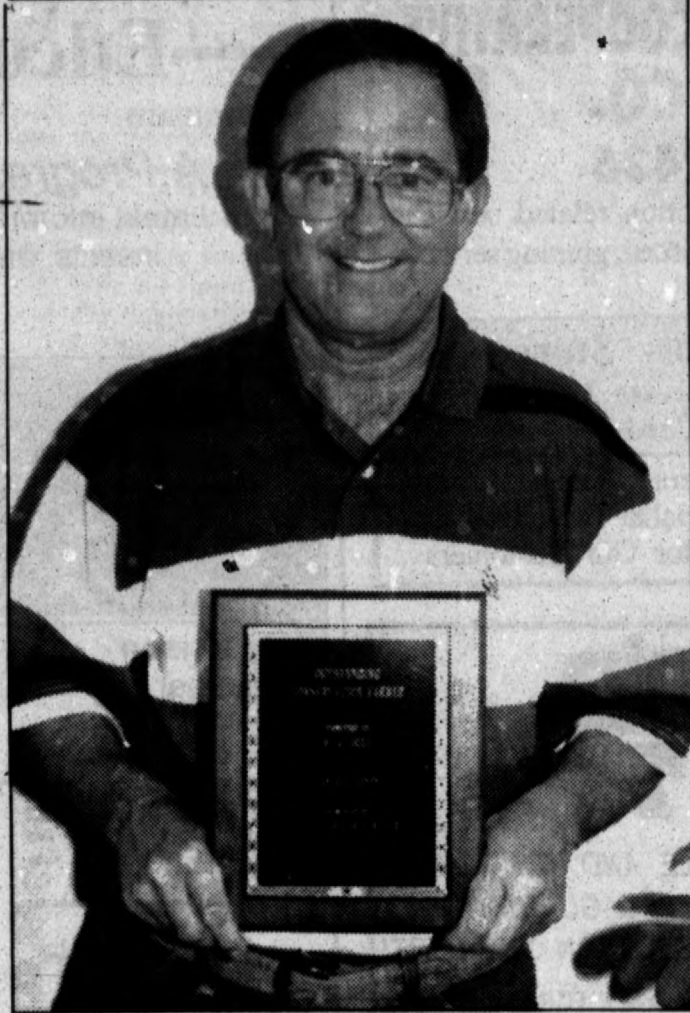
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CONSERVATION FARMER of the Year in Castro County is Dr. W. J. Hill, Dimmitt veterinarian. He was recognized at the Running Water Soil & Water Conservation District annual banquet, along with other honor winners.

SCS banquet honors conservation winners

The Running Water Soil and Water Conservation District held its annual banquet April 24 in Dimmitt and honored several conservation winners for 1992.

Dr. W.J. Hill was named Conservation Farmer of the Year for 1992. He was honored because of the extensive conservation work he has performed on his farmland, many times working with the SCS to achieve optimum results.

Conservation Teacher of the Year for 1992 is Jerry Mathis, a vocational teacher at Hart High School. He was commended for his continuing efforts to train his students in conservation methods and helping them see the importance of preserving our resources for the future.

Arlene Miller was named Conservation Homemaker of the Year for 1992. She is the wife of Jerry Miller and they farm about two sections near Hart. She helps her husband with the farming and has been an active participant in the windbreak tree program.

Flagg Fertilizer, which is owned and operated by Fred and Helen Kuntz and their son, Ricky, was named the Conservation Business Professional and Individual of the Year. They were portrayed as leaders in the field of drip and LEPA irrigation systems, which they use in maintaining their commercial tree business. They have also been strong leaders in the windbreak tree program.

Robert Baker, a biology professor at Texas Tech

University in Lubbock, was named Absentee Wildlife Conservationist of the Year for the extensive work he has had done on a section of land he owns south of Dimmitt. He seeded the land and even planted a food plot to help sustain wildlife. He has worked closely with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept. in managing the land to the best advantage for the wildlife.

Honored as the Outstanding Conservation Absentee Rancher of the Year was the late A. "Gill" Adams. He was described as "a true cowboy-cattlemen who raised his stock from the ground up."

Also honored were the winners of the poster and essay contests for the district. Poster winners are Sage Annen, first, Cathy Birkenfeld, second, Gerardo Dozal, third, and Matthew Wright, honorable mention.

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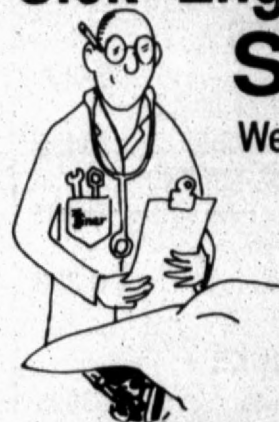
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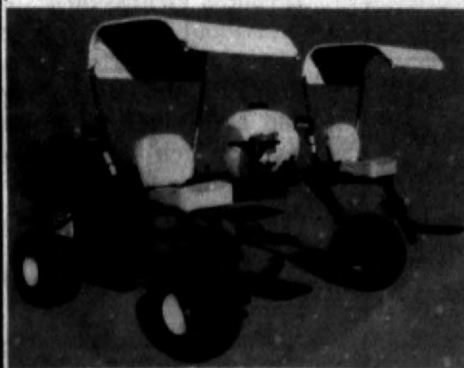
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TUCSON, Ariz. (AP) — Here is a quick test of your knowledge of wildlife from the International Wildlife Museum:

1. Which causes more human deaths — sharks or bees?
2. When during the day or night do bison show increased activity?
3. Why do lizards bob up and down?
4. Can hippos float?
5. Can you find penguins in the wild in the northern hemisphere?
6. What is the gestation period of an elephant?
7. Is the rhino's horn actually a horn?
8. Is a giraffe born with horns?
9. Do female moose shed their antlers yearly?
10. Can two zebras have identical markings?
11. Does a rattlesnake grow a new button on its rattle each year?
12. How many of the 50 states have resident wild coyotes?
13. What do a wolverine, a skunk and an otter have in common?
14. Are gorillas carnivorous?
15. What do the porcupine and guinea pig have in common?
16. Do all bats have poor eyesight?
17. Do male kangaroos have pouches?
18. Which is larger — an African lion or a tiger?

2. Bison activity increases on moonlit nights.
3. To chase off intruders.
4. Hippos cannot float because their heavy muscles weigh them down.
5. No. All wild penguins live in the southern hemisphere.
6. 22 months.
7. No, because a rhino's horn doesn't have a bony core. It's made of keratin fibers resembling highly compacted hair.
8. Yes. At birth a giraffe's horns lie flat upon the skull, but adopt the typical upright stance during the first week of life.
9. No, because the female moose doesn't grow antlers.
10. No. Every individual zebra has its own unique set of stripes and markings.
11. No. A new button is formed every time the snake sheds its skin.
12. 49. Only Hawaii has no resident coyotes.
13. They all belong to the weasel family.
14. No. Gorillas are predominately folivorous, feeding mainly on leaves and stems.
15. They both belong to the rodent family.
16. No. Some bats, such as flying foxes, have excellent sight.
17. No. Only female kangaroos have pouches.
18. Tigers are the largest living felids. Siberian tigers are the largest of all.

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Refuges hit million acres

By BILL SCHULZ

Associated Press Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — During the 3½ years John Turner was its director, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service added 60 refuges and 1 million acres of land to the National Wildlife Refuge System.

"I'm really proud of that," says Turner, a former Republican legislator from Wyoming who was appointed by President Bush. "We put emphasis on wetlands, habitats and neotropical birds."

Neotropical birds are songbirds which sing and breed in the United States in the summer and fly to Caribbean Islands or South America in the winter. Their numbers have been declining at a rate of 3 percent per year for the past decade, mostly because of the destruction of eastern forests.

During his tenure Turner handled bitter controversies over use of the endangered species act to protect the spotted owl in the West, reintroduction of the wolf into the Yellowstone National Park area, protection of grizzly bears and protection of red cockaded woodpeckers in the Southeast.

"This job is like walking around each day with a sack of bobcats over your

shoulder," he says.

"Five years ago, I think the betting would be that we're going to lose the red cockaded," he says. "Today with new biology, the ability to move colonies, to move nest cavities and a new attitude among the major players, including the timber companies, we can make recovery work for the red cockaded."

He said he would not change the way his agency has used the Endangered Species Act.

"I think we've taken the Endangered Species Act and used the flexible parts of it, used multiple species conservation planning," Turner says. "We've got an increased effort to go from listing a species as endangered to developing a recovery plan."

He says that despite his agency's shortage in resources, it has "fulfilled its obligation under a very complicated act."

He says a major problem has been other government resource management agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, the military, the Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers.

"When other laws and other mandates are ignored, you get a decade-old bank account and suddenly the Endangered Species Act becomes the intensive care ward for protection," he says.

Under Turner's direction, the service began the greatest planning effort in its history, Refuges 2003. The system will hold a second series of national public meetings this summer on the plan which will guide the system of 487 refuges to its 100th anniversary.

"They already had done an environmental impact statement when I came in," says Turner, who was confirmed by the Senate in 1989. "We scrapped the whole effort. We started over. People need to get involved, but we stood up for management on the refuges, stood up for what our obligations are."

Under Turner's leadership, the service expanded its role off federal lands. "We impacted 5 million acres of wetlands," he says, meaning they had been restored, their productivity improved or just placed under some form of protection from the plow.

In the Partners for Wildlife program, he says, "we will bring the pipe, the backhoe and the expertise" to improve a wetland if the farmer promises to allow the land to be used by wildlife, particularly waterfowl.

"We have kept waterfowl a priority," he says, noting that North American duck populations were reduced to record lows because of drought on the prairies of the U.S. and

Canada.

Responding to criticism the service is too concerned with ducks and waterfowl, Turner says "we know that by taking care of waterfowl we take care of a lot of other species and resources, things like migrating birds, fisheries, groundwater recharge areas, water filtration."

"I was at a refuge in Texas that was founded 40 years ago for red head ducks," he says. "Today it is one of the premier birding places in the world."

"One third of our endangered species depend on wetlands. Our salt water commercial fisheries depend on coastal wetlands."

He says the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an agreement between the United States and Canada signed in 1986, with Mexico joining in 1988, to restore North American duck populations "is the most significant biodiversity habitat protection effort in the history of the country."

"The benefits far outweigh what we were originally trying to do for ducks," he says. "It is one of the great success stories on conservation."

He says one of his goals was finding a new way to protect wildlife resources, and that became increased partnership programs with

federal government, states, local governments, business and conservation groups in conservation projects "where the whole becomes bigger than the parties."

The Ace Basin restoration project is South Carolina is a classic example of business, government and conservation groups working together to protect a critical piece of habitat, he says.

"We put the Fish and Wildlife Service in as a major player in the restoration of bays and estuaries," he says.

A Wyoming rancher, outfitter and legislator, Turner says he developed a strong sense of pride in service employees.

"I'm a rancher from a Western state and I came to this job with a great deal of skepticism about government employees, especially federal employees," he says. "But they have tremendous dedication, hard work, professionalism and street smarts. They work in the real world. They are very common-sense in their approach."

The challenge for wildlife managers, he says, is to keep interest in wildlife "in a society that is becoming more and more removed from the land, that is more and more susceptible to easy answers and emotional appeals."

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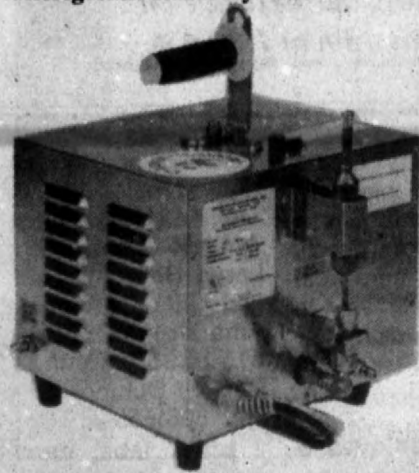
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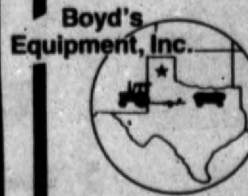
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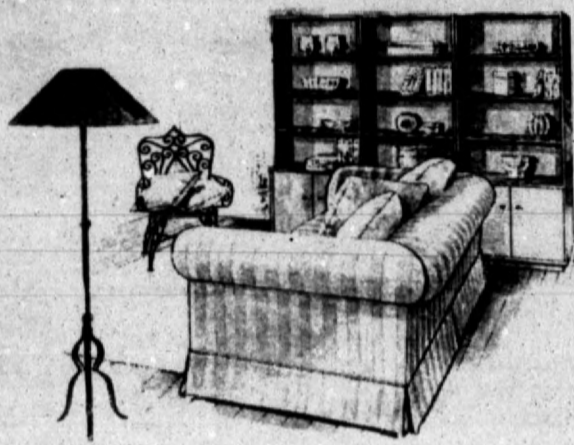
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And the growth continues in 1993 with the expansion of the Heath's Plainview location. Because loyal customers have told their friends about Heath's, the size of the store has been doubled and it has been remodeled.

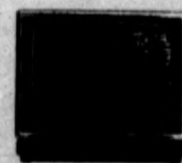
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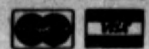


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Vacation-goers 'bonkers' over pontoon boats

By BILL SCHULTZ
Associated Press Writer

They're not fast, sexy or able to sneak up a creek to that pond where big bass lurk, but pontoon boats are casting an ever bigger wake across America's waterways. That's because you can fish, take the whole gang for a party, water ski, do a lot of things on a pontoon boat you just can't do on a runabout. "I think every manufacturer has seen an increasing interest in pontoons," says Tim Lilly of Tracker Marine of Springfield, Mo.,

which offers six models of pontoon boats, ranging from an 18-footer rigged for fishing to a 32-foot party boat at \$22,595. "It comes back to people being more interested in water-based recreation," Lilly says. "Major impoundments are close to major metro areas." He says more and more people are looking at pontoon boats for a weekend getaway. "You can swim off it, fish off it or find a cove and camp on the water for the weekend. These boats provide a whole lot of fun, a major bang for the buck."

You can get a pontoon boat for \$6,000 or pay as much as \$35,000 to \$40,000 for something with a cabin, fancy appointments and running water. Although all the major makers — Outboard Marine Corporation, Brunswick Marine, Tracker and others — offer pontoons, they also are made in small shops all over the country. That's because pontoon boats are big and bulky and hard to ship. Small operations near lakes have a major price advantage over the big companies because they have no shipping cost and they can almost tailor-make a boat to a customer's whims. They also make it hard to track pontoon boat sales. Industry observers say 21,000 pontoon boats were sold last year, or nearly 5

percent of boats sold. That up from 27,800, or 3.7 percent of the market in 1988, before boat sales crashed because of the recession. "For one reason or another, pontoons have become big business," says John Metcalf of Outboard Marine Corp., which makes Lowe, Sea Nymph, Grumman, Sunrunner and Princecraft US boats, priced from \$6,000 to \$18,000. "You get more for your money, that's why they sell," Metcalf says. "A person gets tired of a runabout. He wants something he can take his family out on." Dave Taylor, vice president of sales and marketing of Brunswick Marine's aluminum division, sees two things driving the market. "We've got a whole group of customers pur-

chasing this product who are non-boaters," he says. "It's an extension of the lake home. It's really a floating patio. That's helping the market grow because there's so many more waterfront properties opening up." Second is the size that allows group use. "What we're seeing in the U.S. is people wanting to do things with other people rather than individual

sports. It's the concept of group and family that's driving the pontoon market." To get a share of the market, Brunswick offers Fisher, Starcraft, Monarch and Spectrum boats, with 20 models ranging from 18 to 24 feet in length and \$6,000 to \$15,000 in price. In all cases you can run up the price with options and bigger motors.

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PLANT
From Page 2

breaks. Secondly, there is a possibility that Rubinoff will be able to apply for and acquire startup funds from the Texas Agriculture Finance Authority — an entity that has provided development funds for numerous value added facilities in Texas, including Beantime Foods, Inc. in Plainview, M&W Carrot in Dimmitt and Hereford and others. "This is a value added agricultural project, and meets the criteria of that program," Collins said. The TAFE however, Collins says, is unable to funnel money to such projects at present — since the Legislature must now put forward a re-authorization bill and Texas voters approve it in November. The initial \$25 million authorized earlier has been used to fund numerous projects. A proposed bill would authorize another \$250 million this time around. Collins said most predictions are that the TAFE will probably be extended.

In the meantime, Dimmitt has done its work and is now waiting on word that the start-up business has acquired financing assurances. "The city's part is pretty much done, and has been since we voted the bond issue and agreed to support the project by building a building and partially equipping it for the lease," Nelson said. As for the city's part, plans are underway to narrow possible building sites. Three in the city have been found acceptable to Rubinoff.

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