Direct/Local Meat Enterprise

This newsletter is mailed to anyone who is interested in learning about and helping with direct and local meat marketing opportunities.

This Project is a joint effort of several groups, farmers, UK, KY Dept of Ag, KY State U., Partners for Family Farms and others.

It is supported by UK, the Ky Dept of Ag and the USDA.

More info?
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USDA Inspection

Following the upgrade of C & W Meat Packers, there has been a great deal of interest from Kentucky Meat Processors in becoming USDA inspected. The primary question that I am asked is “What is the cost of the inspection process?”

There is no charge to the meat processor for being USDA inspected. The only costs involved would be in changes made to the facility or increased labor as a result of inspection. There are numerous facility requirements, but I will discuss only a few.

Of course, the facility must have proper water, sewer, lighting, and drainage. The facility must also have a processing room that is separate from the kill floor. Additionally, the plant must have slaughter pens and isolated pens for “suspect” animals.

Beyond these basic guidelines, the facility must have both a men’s and women’s restroom. It must provide office space for the USDA inspector including a telephone. The plant must also have HACCP and SSOP plans in existence. Before the plant can begin slaughtering under USDA inspection the district inspection supervisor must inspect the facility.

These are only basic guidelines and are not intended to be all inclusive. If you desire more information please contact the USDA directly.

Feb. 20 Workshop

We were very pleased with the turnout at our two workshops on February 20th. The morning workshop was a value added workshop that focused on how to get as much out of a carcass as possible. Both beef and pork were explored in detail.

The afternoon workshop was focused on business planning. Participants were introduced to the components of a business plan and given advice on how to assimilate their individual plans. A great deal of discussion was generated as part of these presentations.

The last part of the workshop was reserved for individual consultation. Most all participants stayed for a while to work individually or in small groups. Based on these conversations, it appears that great progress has been made and many questions have been answered through collaborative efforts.

Chef Focus Group

On Sunday, February 25 a focus group was held at the University of Kentucky with chefs in the Lexington area. Each chef was given a local meat product and asked to prepare a dish using that meat product. Everyone sampled each product and then the floor was opened for discussion.

The discussion focused on how local products could help the restaurant industry and what concerns the chefs had about those products. The chefs generally agreed that local products were beneficial to their restaurants, but they also had concerns about...
consistent quality and dependable supply.

It became clear during the discussion that potential exists for livestock producers to supply meat products to chefs. However, it was equally as clear that the producer needs to understand the restaurant business and be willing to make the sacrifices necessary. This includes taking criticism, working out a delivery schedule that fits the restaurant, being available at odd hours should problems arise, and backing any product that is sold. The producer must assume the role of a salesperson.

These types of interactions are very important as we try to develop a local meat system. We hope to have more contact with groups of chefs in order to truly assess the needs of the restaurant industry. Thanks to all who participated.

### Meat Price Report (per cwt.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beef</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Yr. Ago</th>
<th>Pork</th>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Yr. Ago</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slight. Steer</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>$68</td>
<td>Slight. Hog</td>
<td>$42</td>
<td>$42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whsl. Ground 90%</td>
<td>$131</td>
<td>$102</td>
<td>Whsl. Ham</td>
<td>$49</td>
<td>$45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whsl. Chuck</td>
<td>$99</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>Whsl. Loin</td>
<td>$88</td>
<td>$85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Retail</td>
<td>$282</td>
<td>$267</td>
<td>Avg. Retail</td>
<td>$261</td>
<td>$246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Livestock Marketing Information Center
USDA - Livestock Situation and Outlook