

Agriculture Update

Beef industry is in decline

The picture emerging from the \$1.7 million Beef Industry Marketing Task Force report is one of an industry in decline.

Beef is still the largest sector of the agricultural industry in the province, but the current herd is smaller than at any time this century.

Since 1971, the number of farms registering cattle has fallen from 64,295 to 39,647 and a total herd of three million head is now about 2.4 million.

Much of the decline in numbers can be attributed to increased productivity, particularly in the dairy sector where per cow milk yields have risen dramatically -- but beef consumption has fallen.

Since 1976, when an average of 51.5 kilograms per capita was being consumed, beef has been going out of fashion. In 1987 the average Canadian was eating only 38.15 kg -- 15 kg less than in 1976.

Poultry has become more popular in a society in which more women work out of the home and more energy is spent on health concerns.

Society as a whole is spending less of its income on food -- and considerably less on beef. In 1969, about 11.8 per cent of total expenditure on food went towards buying beef. By 1984 that was down to 7.8 per cent.

Finally, the spread between retail

and wholesale prices has widened. The general decline in consumption and the fall in the amount of money being spent on food are bad enough -- what has made matters worse for the farmer has been a decline in the producer's share of the consumer's dollar.

Add to that increased feed costs and it is easy to understand why so many producers have been squeezed out, and so many of those still in the market find it difficult to cover their costs of production.

The size of the average beef operation has also changed with a decline in the number of farms herding in the middle range: in 1971 almost half the cattle in the pro-

OFA forms new council

The province's livestock associations and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture have formed a Farm Animal Council.

Its annual budget is near \$100,000.

The organization was formed "to protect agriculture from the legislative actions of animal rights groups."

Among the activities in which the council will engage are the preparation of classroom materials to be distributed to schools.

vince were in herds between 33 and 77 head.

Today, it is the largest farms which account for more than 60 per cent of the beef cattle in Ontario.

At the same time, the number of

beef operations where the farmer is spending the bulk of his time working off the farm has increased. As the task force puts it: "The Ontario cattle industry represents the major part time agricultural activity in the province."

According to Ontario's farm accounting* project, cow-calf operators tend to have high degrees of equity -- an average of more than 80 per cent -- and it is this which has allowed them to sustain low returns over the years.



COUPON

50¢ OFF

20 kg Bag

SIFTO

CRYSTAL PLUS

Offer expires November 30/88

J. & S. RITCHIE

FARM SUPPLIES

- Pet Supplies
- Water Softeners
- Bulk Garden Seeds
- Portland Masonary Cement

o/o by
Stan and Jackie Ritchie

Hwy. 92,
West of Elmvale

322-2363



COUPON

\$1 OFF

20 kg Bag

SHUR-GAIN

PET FOOD

Offer expires November 30/88



NOTHING WORKS LIKE A HUSKY

FALL SPECIALS



45 - 2.7 cu. in. 44cc
Lightweight, well balanced yet powerful. Excellent for home or farm. Packed with professional components. Reliable electronic ignition, matched air intake/exhaust system for smooth operation. Inertia activated chain brake standard.

NOW ONLY
\$399⁹⁵



50 - 3.0 cu. in. 49cc
Easy to use on tough jobs, this chain saw puts professional performance into the hands of non-professionals. Efficient, quiet, vibration dampened, the 50 is perfect for part-time users who demand full-time performance. Inertia activated chain brake standard.

NOW ONLY
\$429⁹⁵

NEW HUSQVARNA DEALER

Full line in stock
service & parts

One **FREE** chain sharpening
Plus **FREE** file kit

On purchase before Nov. 15/88

SOMERVILLE FARM EQUIPMENT LTD.

Hwy. 26 428-3132

Wheel Horse Power... It's Worth More!



Wheel Horse tractors are worth more, because we're different!

There are many brands of tractors available in Canada. All have a mower, a seat, and four wheels. But the similarities end there. Besides being built heavy-duty to take the tough grasses and working conditions in Canada, Wheel Horse tractors have been fine-tuned both inside and out with features such as custom designed engines, precision tooled components, high-gloss baked-on enamel paint, easy to reach controls, and a no-tools attachment system.

Don't settle for less; Wheel Horse is quality at an affordable price. That means value. Now's the time to put Wheel Horse Power to work for you!

Wheel Horse 212-5 (shown above) features:

- 12-hp Briggs and Stratton 1/C engine
- Headlights
- 5-speed gear drive
- Hourmeter
- Extra wide turf tires
- Voltmeter
- Large seat
- No-tools mower attachment system
- Unitized frame construction
- Automotive type steering column shift lever
- Optional 36" rear, 37" side mower



See your local Wheel Horse Dealer for more details

WALKER'S

SMALL MOTORS LTD.

24 Ronell Cres., Collingwood 445-0881