THE MEAT EXTENSION SPECIALIST'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY:

EFFECTIVENESS OF PAST AND PRESENT PROGRAMS AND FUTURE TRENDS

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Specialists in the meat field are a relatively new addition to state extension staffs where such positions exist today. The majority of the state extension services have not committed a position to this subject matter area. We in Nebraska have about 30% of a man's time assigned to meat extension programs. For the sake of this discussion let me use a generalization of the definition of extension education and of the meat specialist.

Extension education might be defined as the assistance given by university staff members in solving problems of clientele through the application of pertinent technical information. In this discussion let's consider the meat specialist to be the university staff member and the livestock industry to be the clientele. Now let's paraphrase the title to read: Relationships resulting from the past and present effectiveness of University staff members in solving problems of the livestock industry through the application of pertinent meat information (and future trends). At the 1955 RMC, Paul Miller, Michigan Extension Director, said, "It appears to me there is no better opportunity to expand the notion of Animal Husbandry than by persuasive interest in meat _____ from producer to consumer _____ to carry Animal Husbandry to almost every walk of life." Director Miller, mentioned meat education opportunities (1) in use of mass media, (2) in the livestock and meat marketing channels, (3) in the growth and expansion of meat consumption, (4) and in increased concern with carcass evaluation and testing of meat producing animals. Most meat extension methods fit in one of these four categories. Most meat scientists involved in extension activities agree with A. B. Graham's (1925) statement to the American Society of Animal Production, "We cannot extend ourselves and our work to each individual, we have to do much of it by proxy. The greatest lessons in the world have been taught by proxy, whether through a system of disciples or monitors, or sponsors or local leaders."

The past 50 years of activity in meat science has been a developmental and maturing period. Relationships of scientists within a science to the users of that science are often different during the developmental period than at later periods. Study of Extension activities concerning meat during this evolution of meat science shows that specialists have been redirecting their energies from home slaughtering, curing, storing and canning of meats to the breeder based on type of work suggested by Paul Miller in 1955. However, as early as 1933, E. N. Wentworth, suggested to ASAP that the livestock industry was faced with a dilemma wherein the demands of the consumer in meat products conflicted with the specifications prescribed by producers for a meat animal to transform feedstuffs into meat. Wenthworth concluded that the industry needed to work toward carcass standards established by "cut-out values

obtained by the retailer." Eight years earlier C. Robert Moulton, had referred to "consumers deplorable preference for all lean meats ignoring the better flavor and tenderness of meats with more fat." He suggested further that, "the customer may even demand his butcher to trim off extra fat and not charge him for it." So_____some problems utilizing the educational time of meat scientists today were developing simultaneously with development of "meat science" as a science and a technological area for extension work.

Meat Scientists were not exempt from a very trying period in the overall extension relationships with the livestock industry during the late forties and the fifties, marked by interactions and reactions of the producers, the packers, the processors, retailers and consumers in the marketing and distribution channels. All segments of the industry were under going change. The extension portion of the Land-grant University system was in the midst of re-orientation of programs to the more urbanized society. During these times the traditional livestock industry friends of Extension Specialists may have thought the meat specialists a bit fickle for developing opportunities to work with the consumer and retailing segments of the clientele. Time and some reallignment of forces in the industry have caused all industry segments to become more aware of the overall value of educational activities at all levels in the meat field.

During the 20 year Reciprocal Meat Conference history, the influence of new meat science technology has been evident in the programs and projects developed by livestock producer organizations. These programs represent educational challenges and opportunities for improved relationships with the livestock industry. No doubt some of the early activity of RMC pork carcass evaluation committee and somewhat simultaneously the development of the backfat probe for swine by Hazel and Kline (1952) influenced the formation of the Certified Meat Type Programs by all of the major swine breed registry organizations in the mid 1950's. Similarly the work of the RMC beef carcass evaluation committee was a significant force in the development of the progeny-testing programs for beef sires initiated by breed associations and Performance Registry International in the early sixties. The Coordinated Beef Improvement Conferences sponsored biennually since 1961 by American National Cattlemen's Association has contributed to an improvement in climate for meat extension activities. The 1963 Coordinated Beef Improvement emphasized "Live Animal and Carcass Evaluation." The development of the cutability grading procedure by USDA workers (1961) is also a significant technological step in the extension educational opportunities in the meat science field. Most of you are aware of the fermentation in attitudes and relationships in the industry during the period of development of procedures for implementation of the cutability grades and in their final USDA clearance for use in the field.

The lamb carcass evaluation committee of RMC worked for several years before the time was right for the development of the "Consumer-preferred Lamb" concept. Meat science worker's relationships with the sheep industry are gaining materially for involvement in this program. The National Lamb Show in Iowa is another significant development in the sheep field.

In 4-H club programs, two new concepts are developing. First, animal-of-merit programs have been developed in several states patterned after the Washington steer-of-merit program (1963). Secondly, a national committee has been named to develop a National 4-H Meat Science program (1967), to utilize the product "meat" as a basis for providing 4-H type educational project opportunities to boys and girls. This program may provide the means of taking "the meat and livestock industry story" into many American homes.

These several examples are the basis for my belief that the Meat Extension Specialist has the opportunity for a very satisfying relationship with his clientele in the future. In planning for the future Extension Specialists must realize that clientele will always be struggling and reacting with new technology. Furthermore, Specialists must accept the fact that the clientele aren't reacting to them personally. The seeming reaction to the Specialist is only as he is the symbol of technology which may change the status quo. For example, the current study and ferment among groups concerned with beef shows. Meat Science provides the basis for some new approaches in beef show. Breaking of traditions in beef shows is sometimes difficult even though some leading steer show judges are encouraging us to pay attention "to pounds of edible meat per day of age", and "to slaughter the top steers in open shows and junior shows and for those steers to constitute the carcass contest."

There is no "pat formula" to developing and maintaining a good relationship between the Meat Extension Specialist and the livestock industry. I believe that the specialist should continually study people, situations and the history of relationships in which he is involved. This type of study will show opportunities for improved relationships, disclose hints of deterioration of relations which can be overcome, and can prevent the waste of time in situations where chances for success due to relationships are low. To be effective in many situations with the meat and livestock industry the specialist must have the combined desirable attributes of a Nobel prize winning scientist, a UN diplomat, a Marine Chaplin, a kindergarten teacher, and an old-time mule skinner.

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DR. PIERCE: Thank you very much, Frank. That is the comment I had reference to earlier, and I believe it is certainly appropriate for all of us who are working in extension programs. We are nearly back on schedule, so we're going to dip into the "More Opportunities for Reciprocation" a little bit to carry on our discussion. I think it would be a shame if we missed out on an opportunity to pose more questions to some of these very stimulating speakers. I think Jim, in his opening remarks, indicated an area of responsibility with almost unlimited bounds for areas of work in meat extension. And Frank has just now indicated the wide range of areas where we can be of great benefit and service to the industry. One example that comes to my mind of using technologies which have been developed and which are being used by our clientele in the field is a little item of sona-rays for measurements on purebred swine which are offered for sale. I know some