

Large scale feedlots will dominate the beef production scene and will lead to a "Beef Belt" in the plains states within the next 20 years, Dr. L. S. Pope of the Texas A&M University College of Agriculture predicted here Monday night.

The associate dean for administrative affairs said the Beef Belt is already emerging along a line stretching roughly from the Midland-Odessa area to northeast of Omaha in Nebraska, "the most extensive and specialized area of

livestock production in world history." Pope was banquet speaker during the 18th annual Beef Cattle Short Course Aug. 19-20 sponsored by the A&M Animal Science Department. His talk centered on expected developments in the beef cattle industry between now and 1988.

Texas, he said, will have a major role in the Beef Belt. In just a few years, the state has jumped to a third ranking position nationally.

But there is a big obstacle now and in the years ahead in beef production. That, Pope said, is the lack of control over the genetic ability and background of feedlot cattle.

Here is the reason so many large feedlots are using computer methods to break down the source of superior cattle and why they are so interested in "pre-conditioned" calves, he said.

"Make no mistake, tomorrow's premium will be paid for cattle coming from performance-proven

herds, properly 'packaged' to go on feed with a minimum of shrink and death loss," the dean said.

Another change will be in the type of cattle preferred. The day of the "Okie" steer is about over. In his place will be a large, framey, muscular animal that will grow to 1,100 to 1,200-pound weights without excess fat. And tomorrow's steer will likely be a crossbreed.

The revolution that has and is sweeping feedlot operations could well set the pattern for cow-calf

herds, Pope said. There may be gravitation toward one of two poles—large, integrated operations versus small, part-time herds. There is already corporation ownership and cow-leasing.

Future cow herds will probably have to have more than 300-500 head to permit efficient use of labor, capital, equipment, more elaborate breeding plans and marketing opportunities. Crossbreeding in cow-calf setups will continue to grow in importance.

## Swimming Pool Closes For Break

Wofford Cain swimming pool closes Friday at Texas A&M for the two-week class break between the summer session and fall semester.

The Olympic-size pool reopens Sept. 9 and will remain in operation through Oct. 12, announced Dr. Carl W. Landiss, Health and Physical Education Department head.

He said the fall schedule will be from 2 to 6 p.m. on weekdays, 10 to 12 a.m. and 1:30 to 5:30 p.m.

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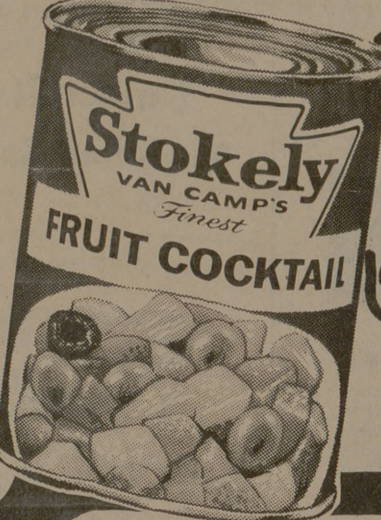
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