

# A&M's meat laboratory no place for the squeamish

By RICHARD CHAMBERLAIN  
Battalion Managing Editor

The A&M Meat Laboratory is no place for the squeamish. There is more blood and gore in there than in a Sam Peckinpah movie.

Cattle, hogs and sheep are slaughtered and processed there. Although many of the animals come from A&M's Beef, Swine and Sheep Centers, the Animal Science Department buys stock in order to obtain the type of cut needed for a given purpose. They also buy partially processed parts.

The lab, a division of the Animal Science Department, is located in the Animal Industries building. Its primary functions are teaching and research; although the system usually operates in the black, selling meat is only incidental.

Students learn USDA grading standards by examining wholesale and retail cuts. The main difference between prime, choice and good grades of beef is the degree of marbling. Marbling is the flecks of fat in the meat. Determining the grades of beef takes skill and practice.

The manner in which meat is chilled affects its tenderness. The standard method for years has been to put the cut into the "hot box" immediately after slaughtering. The temperature in the box is 10 degrees Fahrenheit; it is called a "hot box" because the meat is still warm. However, this causes the muscles to contract as it freezes and the tougher meat results.

A&M researchers have devised a method to leave the carcass at room temperature for four hours. After rigor mortis begins to set in, the meat is cooled to 50 degrees for eight hours. The rigor mortis prevents the contraction of the muscles and keeps the meat tender. Finally, the carcass is cooled to approximately 33 degrees. Only after it is processed into retail cuts is the meat frozen. Meat freezes at 28 degrees.

Researchers at the lab have developed, somewhat by accident, a method of hanging sides of beef to keep it tender. The old method is to hang the side of beef by the hock (similar to the ankle in man). This, however, allows contraction of the muscles and, hence, tougher meat.

Several years ago, after tearing and mangling a hock to the point that it would no longer support the weight of the side, workers hung the meat by the aitch bone (hipbone). They found that this prevented the muscles in the legs and back from contracting as much. The Tenderstretch method gives more tender round, T-bone, rib and porterhouse steaks.

The first step in slaughtering an animal is to stun and bleed it. If the animal is killed before it is bled, the blood will settle in, and ruin the lower meat on the carcass. The animal is bled by hanging it by its feet and cutting its throat. The foreshanks and head are then cut off and the hide is removed. After the entrails are removed, the carcass is split into sides and cooled.

Retail cuts are sold, at prevailing market prices, at the A&M Creamery. The meat lab itself sells 50-pound boxes of meat at lower prices. Incidentally, if you have a strong stomach, visitors are welcome to watch the lab slaughter and process animals.



Photo courtesy of Jim Pack

J. D. English prepares a shipment of retail cuts at the Texas A&M Meat Laboratory. English, meat lab foreman, oversees all phases of slaughtering and processing of animals that come in to the lab.

# Arabs to push Soviets from peninsula

Associated Press

CAIRO — Saudi Arabia is quietly using its petrodollar power to push Soviets from the Arabian Peninsula, diplomatic sources report. They say King Khaled intends to rid his southern neighbors of Communist influence within a year.

Khaled, who came to power 14 months ago, is considered as staunchly anti-Communist as his late predecessor, King Faisal. For both the monarchs, the presence of Soviet arms on their strategic peninsula — an arid wedge of land between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf — has constituted an irritant and a threat.

Saudi Arabia is the biggest and richest country on the peninsula, whose other residents include North and South Yemen, the Sultanate of Oman, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates.

The Saudi efforts are now focused on convincing the radical Marxist president of South Yemen, Salem Robaya Ali, that it's more rewarding to cooperate with Saudi Arabia than with the Soviet Union. The Soviets have a naval base and an airfield in South Yemen, an impoverished land of 1.4 million people on the southwest corner of the peninsula.

The sources said Saudi Arabia believes it has already virtually excluded the Russians from North Yemen.

Saudi Arabia has agreed to finance \$104.8 million worth of arms from the United States for the military regime of North Yemeni President Ibrahim el Hamidi, a moderate. Once the arms deal goes through, Hamidi

has said he will expel the Russian advisers who have supplied and trained his nation's small armed forces for the past 20 years.

Sources said there are about 150 Soviet military advisers in North Yemen. It is expected they will be replaced largely by Jordanian and Saudi officers, with "only a handful" of Americans on a temporary basis, the sources said.

The efforts to nudge the Soviets from South Yemen will be more protracted, the sources said. The Soviets have between 2,000 and 5,000 men there, working in the Soviet military facilities and providing training and maintenance for the Yemeni armed forces.

Sources said ships from the Soviet Indian Ocean fleet visit the South Yemen facility frequently and Russian reconnaissance planes fly out on patrol sweeps about twice a week from the city of Aden.

In addition to the Russians, Ali's government employs about 200 Cubans to train the militias and cadres of the ruling party, the National Liberation Front (NLF). An equal number of East German specialists train internal security forces, the sources said.

Despite this sizable Communist presence, the sources said, the Saudis believe they have made a good start and hope to reduce it to insignificance in about a year.

The sources said Saudi Arabia and Egypt last year persuaded Ali to prohibit the possible use of Perim Island by the Soviets. The uninhabited island has strategic value be-

cause it controls the Bab el Mandeb Strait at the southern end of the Red Sea.

Unconfirmed reports last year said South Yemen received \$40 million from Saudi Arabia in return for the agreement. Last March, Saudi Arabia and Aden agreed to establish diplomatic relations for the first time since South Yemen gained independence in 1967.

The sources said Saudi Arabia agreed to grant a further \$60 million to ease the transition to good neighborliness. In return, the sources said, the Saudis made clear to Ali that he will have to dilute the Marxism at home and stop trying to export revolution to the rest of the peninsula.

Saudi Arabia and South Yemen fought a brief border war in 1969, and Ali's government supported a Marxist rebel movement in the neighboring Sultanate of Oman. The rebellion fizzled out early this year, the sources said. South Yemen also fought a border war with North Yemen in 1972.

Although the Saudis would prefer to deal with an entirely new regime in South Yemen, the sources said, they are prepared to work with Ali if he curbs the pre-Moscow hardliners in his regime.

Arab sources believe Saudi Arabia is prepared to extend \$250 million to South Yemen over the next five years. This would be paid in installments to make sure Ali lived up to his side of the bargain.

At the urging of the hardliners, the sources said, Moscow came up

with an 18-million ruble loan this month — about \$20 million at Soviet exchange rates.

But one diplomat said: "The Russians are not about to get into a bidding war with Saudi Arabia. If the Saudis play their cards right and don't force Moscow to lose face, the Soviets are not likely to put up a fight to stay in South Yemen."

Departure from Aden would not be a strategic blow for Moscow. Sources said the Soviet naval base at Berbera in Somalia, 150 miles away across the Gulf of Aden from South Yemen, contains missile stockpiles and is much more important than the Aden naval facility.

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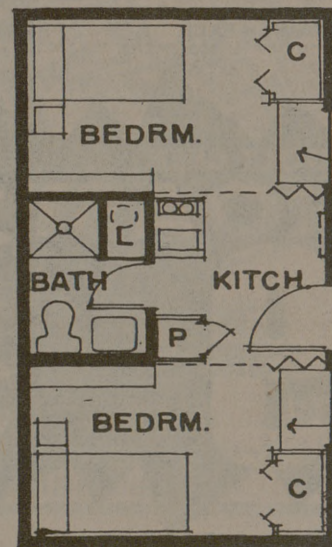
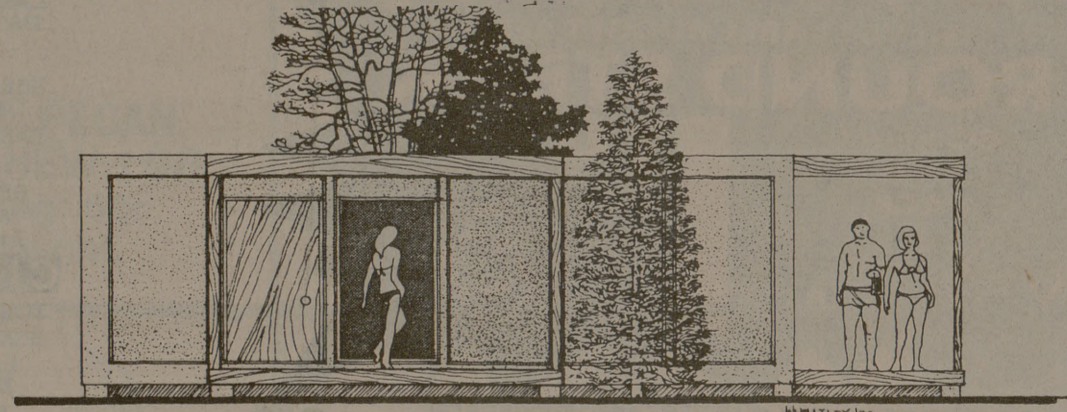
# 2-4-6-8, Why the hell matriculate?

Why, indeed, asks the current issue of OUI magazine. Even if you overlook the fact that you're not being prepared for a job, how can you stomach not being prepared for life? For four long years! At your own expense! We could go on, but then there'd be no need to read *The Case Against College* in the June OUI, and you'd miss such titillating addenda as a *Conversation with Pelé*, wherein the soccer ace explains why fans kill each other in the grip of their enthusiasm for the game. Or you'd miss Timothy Leary's examination of the technique of *Brainwashing*, must-reading for you potential newspaper-heiress kidnapers out there. Worse yet, you'd miss Letitia in the OUI center spread, which would sorely disappoint our photographer, who spent mucho bucks and some of his best lines getting her to disrobe just for you. So say OUI. It's at your newsstand now.

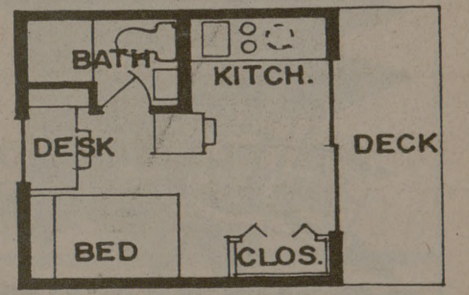


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# Truck crash kills 4, hurts hundreds

Associated Press

HOUSTON — A tank truck loaded with 19 tons of anhydrous ammonia plunged off an overpass onto a busy freeway and exploded, trapping motorists in the toxic white cloud of fumes. Four persons were killed and about 200 injured.

The explosion on impact released ammonia and the fumes spread, turning the vegetation in its path brown, an official of the Texas Air Control Board said. Up to 20 vehicles were caught in the cloud from the explosion yesterday on the Southwest Freeway.

Most of the injured were overcome by fumes. Many were released after treatment, but Houston hospitals said 68 remained hospitalized today. At least seven were reported

to be in critical condition. The air board said it would conduct an exploratory investigation today into the crash. The National Transportation Safety Board said a four-man team from Washington also would investigate.

Witnesses said the truck failed to make a curve at an exit ramp onto the freeway, plunged 15 feet to the pavement and exploded. A dense, white cloud of ammonia fumes billowed into the air, forcing motorists to abandon their cars.

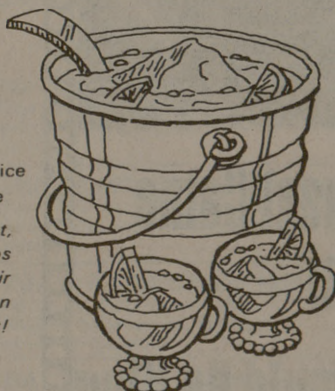
Others had to evacuate homes and offices near the site, one of the city's busiest traffic interchanges. The dead were identified as William Gregory Schmidt, 28, of Corpus Christi, driver of the tank truck; Gordon D. McAdams, 40, of Conroe; George Henry Pearson, 33, of Sugar Land, and David Randall Whiteman, 48, of Houston.

Schmidt's truck was owned by Transport Co. of Texas and was hauling ammonia from Tenneco Chemicals Inc.

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