



Camel gets better, humps it to Waco

by Susan Talbot
Battalion Reporter

Have you heard the one about the camel that came to Texas A&M University?

After a two-week stay, Pops, a 9-year-old camel from the Central Texas Zoo in Waco, was released last week from the Large Animal Center at the College of Veterinary Medicine. He was treated for listlessness and lack of appetite.

The dromedary, or one-humped camel, is ridden in

some parts of the world and is generally swifter than the Bactrian, or two-humped, camel.

Dr. Charles D. Brown, associate professor of small animal medicine and surgery, was in charge of the camel during its stay.

Brown, who teaches a course in exotic animals, said the camel was probably suffering from a vitamin deficiency, but no one was certain why it was ill.

A special diet was part of the camel's treatment. Brown said

the camel wasn't completely well, but was eating and apparently on its way to recovery.

Fourth-year veterinary students observed and helped with the animal's treatment.

Brown said the veterinary clinic treats animals from around the state. Although the clinic usually receives dogs and cows, sometimes it receives more uncommon animals. For example, the clinic also treated a sea lion last week.

Restaurateurs oppose beef grading changes

by Brenda C. Davidson
Battalion Reporter

Proposed changes in the meat grading system by the U.S. Department of Agriculture should increase efficiency in carcass beef production, meat specialists say, but the Texas Restaurant Association warns it will lower the quality of beef in retail stores.

Beef quality grades are used to describe the maturity of the animal and the different degrees of fat distributed through the lean (muscle) tissue, referred to as marbling. For steers and heifers, USDA Prime Quality grade has the most marbling, followed by USDA Choice, USDA Good and USDA Standard.

Dr. Jeffrey W. Savell, assistant professor of animal science, said consumer demand for leaner beef has prompted the USDA to propose changes that would

allow leaner beef to qualify for grades of prime, choice and good.

The proposed changes would give the producer an incentive to market a leaner and more desirable product, Savell said. Under the current system of meat grading, producers tend to keep cattle on feed longer than necessary so they will grade higher, he said.

However, the Texas Restaurant Association opposes the changes. Conn McCampbell, assistant director of governmental affairs for the organization, said customers want a steak ordered in a restaurant to be as juicy and tender as possible. Proposed grading changes probably wouldn't affect the price very much, but it would lower the quality, he said.

"You will end up paying the same price for a lesser grade of meat," McCampbell said.

Meat grading is an optional service, and some major food chains and grocery stores do not use it. They set their own standards for quality and use a brand name to market the product.

Savell said the purpose of the proposed changes is not to lower standards, but to update them. But, problems have occurred because of the different interest groups involved in the issue.

Cattlemen want to update the system by reducing the emphasis on marbling. Consumers want leaner beef and producers want a more cost-effective operation.

Hearings already have been held on the proposed changes. Interested parties have until March 31 to submit written data, views or comments on the proposal to the Department of Agriculture.

Pops, a camel from the Central Texas Zoo in Waco, mugs for the camera before his release last

week from the Large Animal Clinic at Texas A&M University.

staff photo by David Fisher

PETITE CONCEPTS

Pared down shoulders

Slimmer, shorter jackets

Redefined hips and waist

Slacks you need not shorten

25% off
select groups of petite famous label sportswear
Regularly \$38-80 28.50-\$60

Choose from a marvelous selection of linen-like polyester/rayon fashions in mix and match hues of black, red or tobacco... all classically tailored and pared down to perfection for the petite woman who wears sizes 4-14.

Dillard's

shop Dillard's monday thru saturday 10-9; post oak mall, college station we welcome the American Express® card