

bolizing hope instead of suffering and concern in place of apathy could be the figurative mark in all countries illustrating our impact on this moment in history.

Table 1  
Projected Animal Requirements for the Year 2000  
for a Population of 300 Million

Product	Probable annual per capita consumption	Numbers required	% increase or decrease over 1968
Beef	105 lb.	53.5 mill. to slaughter	+ 51
Veal	9 lb.	19 mill. to slaughter	+244
Lamb & mutton	6 lb.	36.5 mill. to slaughter	+301
Pork	75 lb.	131.5 mill. to slaughter	+ 52
Broiler meat	40 lb.	26 billion to slaughter	+ 78
Turkey meat	9 lb.	180 mill. to slaughter	+ 69
Eggs	360	394 mill. laying hens	+ 25
Milk	610 lb.	11 mill. milking cows	- 22

Source: United States Department of Agriculture. Yearbook of Agriculture, 1971. Washington, D.C. (92nd Congress, House Document No. 29).

Table 2  
Livestock Populations in the Americas

Category	Estimated No.
Cattle	484,188,000
Swine	179,219,000
Sheep	150,234,000
Goats	41,597,000
Poultry	1,218,937,000*

\*Excluding commercial broilers.

Source: B. E. Hill, The world market for beef and other meat, World Animal Review (Rome), 4:1-10, 1972.

#### References

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## The Veterinarian's Position in the Economic Crisis

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With all due respect to our small animal colleagues, let me first say that my comments are restricted in scope to that field of our profession that I refer to as "Food Animal Medicine." In that this is the AABP meeting, I suppose that's assumed, but in a true economic crisis I'm sure they have problems too. True, but not ones I'm going to talk about.

I suppose I'm just aging, but somehow I get the feeling that if we haven't been we're becoming a "crisis" oriented society. This crisis, that crisis, money crisis, morals crisis, energy crisis. Today you want to hear about an economic crisis. Picking someone who's deeply involved in the cattle industry was sure a good prospect. My boss, Ken Monfort, recently referred to himself as a "cattle feeder with far less equity than a year ago." That was one hell of an understatement.

Everything considered though, it's not my nature to take the role of a pessimist. To the contrary. To me a "crisis" is really just an unexpected or undesirable challenge. We are in an economic bind, yes. We do have a severe energy problem that is unseparable. We have a balance of trade relationship which is causing an entirely new world economics picture. But

gentlemen, I think emerging through all this mass of confusion is the real challenge to us today. That is a "food crisis."

In the next quarter of a century I think we will be far more concerned about nutritional intake of humans than with miles per gallon. We'll hear more about starvation and malnutrition than about lifestyle and the quality of the environment. Turning down the thermostat or turning off the Christmas decorations won't supersede what's on the stove.

Food is the crisis—population is the problem.

I don't want to get into the pickle Earl Butz did, but as good bovine practitioners, we've got to be the world's experts on how to control that. Unfortunately, that technique doesn't seem to be socially acceptable.

I don't know how many of you saw the recent NBC news presentation on "who shall feed the world." It was good, but shocking. Big, softhearted, generous Americans just aren't equipped to look at starving and maimed children without feeling that we should make available anything we have to alleviate the problem. As I watched the show I got the feeling that I was supposed to be ashamed of the healthy, well-fed American wheat farmer. I sure had guilt pangs when

the camera zeroed in on the overextended waistline of a cattleman buying cattle in a sale ring.

But wait a minute. Americans, as a breed, have been a hard-working agrarian society. We worked and we developed a very desirable way of life. We've industrialized as a direct result of an ever-increasing capacity to feed more people better through the efforts of fewer and fewer. Don't try to tell the men on our farms, the men on the processing lines of our packing plant, the guys on horseback in our feedlots, or the man behind the wheel of those yellow and white Kenworths you see rolling along I-80, that Americans are overfed, overstuffed gluttons. They work hard, they eat well, they feed their families well, they don't want to live and eat like citizens of Bangladesh and why should they?

Am I wandering from my topic?

I'm talking about the veterinarian in an economic crisis. I said we are in one. I said we're involved in food production. The world is facing a food shortage.

Our company has a market group meeting every Friday noon, F.A.C. - T.G.I.F. It is very informal—no format—we just discuss current feelings of people closely involved in our particular industry. Needless to say, the last year has seen some interesting and philosophical discussions.

Let me see if I can stimulate some thought by relating some of my current feelings, mostly derived from that group.

We developed a cattle feeding industry in this country to use an abundance of available feed, not because Safeway wanted USDA choice meat. High plains farmers had barley and oats. They had crop residues, the sugar companies had piles of wet pulp. Midwest farmers could grow more corn than his hogs could eat. Cattle from rangelands were available on a seasonal basis. Consumers wanted a consistent steady supply of beef. We could use eight to ten lbs. of grain to produce a pound of beef because we had it and because the economics were positive for all levels of the production chain. The consumer liked the product and we marketed well.

**Today we are facing a new game, or maybe going back to an old one. I don't mean we are going to quit feeding. We have a consumer that wants our product and will buy it. But I do think we're going to put a whole lot more of the total growth on that animal by using forage and roughage instead of grain.**

I think beef consumption will go up for the next couple of years, but the increase will be in the form of cow non-fed beef. After that, per-capita consumption may fall well below the 100 lb. level, because that's what we'll produce. It looks like the nation's cow herd is going to be cut by something between four and ten million head. We'll probably cut cattle on feed from 13 to eight million head. We've been taking calves off range at 400 lbs. and finishing them on grains. We're going to leave them on forage until they're 700 - 900 lbs. We've been feeding in feedlots for six to 12

months, it's going to be closer to four. We're going to maximum utilization of the feedstuffs from our farms. We're going to continue to market consistently, so that producers have relatively stable schedules, and consumers stable supplies.

We're not going to forfeit quality. We've been over-finishing cattle because of the nature of the feeds we've been using. That's going to cure itself. The USDA will change the grading standards so that as applied they will more logically meet the needs of the consumer and more properly evaluate the product. Either they'll change or the industry will develop its own.

**Now, how does the veterinarian fit into this picture? Frankly, I can't see the picture without him.**

I said earlier that the crisis was food, population the problem. Our professional skills won't be used widely to control the population, but they will be very much a part of the production of food. Animal food products: maximum utilization of all available feeds will mean extended use of many now so-called was-be products. Decreased cow herd will mean economics advantage of increased calving ratios. Maximum efficiency of production will mean even higher emphasis on herd-health management. And then, last but not least, as the living standards continue to increase worldwide, which I think they will do, we are going to see increased cattle production in forage-abundant areas of the world. These areas also have an abundance of communicable disease problems which will have to be controlled coincidentally to that production. Our colleges are going to go beyond the present lip service stage of food animal medicine. Regulatory agencies will have to admit publicly, as well as privately, that in the real world there is no such thing as absolute safety. Logical and reasonable men will accept the obvious and start to say so. And someplace out of the great unknown will have to step some government leaders who will stand up to some of our current "consumer spokesmen" and say, "Hey, do you want food or don't you?" Again the answer is obvious. Somebody will tell some foreign nations, if you can't control your population, we can't feed you.

We will want the food, we will produce it. It will be in the longest quantities and highest qualities ever known. And it will be done on an economically sound basis for the producer. Isn't that what it's really been all about since the beginning of mankind?

**And who is better suited for involvement in this age of advanced technology food animal production than the veterinarian? Maybe the private practitioner, consultant, or someone on a company staff. The challenge is production. Quantity, quality, and efficiency. Let's work on that - hard, and the economic crisis will have been but a passing problem.**