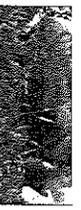


gain weight and increase body condition.

If successful, she produces more offspring.

Flushing can affect the birth rate in two ways.
Flushing might result in the



Sheep and Goat Specialist University of Maryland Extension

female ovulating more eggs, as females on a rising plane of nutrition drop more eggs than those on a steady plane.

It is important to remember that it is the female, not the male, who sets the upper potential for reproductive rate by the number of eggs

It does little good to have multiple ovulations, if they die as embryos.

Flushing should begin a few weeks before breeding and continue

See **SCHOENIAN, Page 17**

USDA Rural Development never works alone

USDA Rural Development is successful due to our network of partners and our mutual interest in the future of rural communities.

By working together we share resources, ideas, and focus.

This collaboration enriches our investments and work in communities throughout our region.

As our partnerships strengthen, we grow our organizational capacity and that of rural communities.

I want to talk about a few of our partners and the work they do.

Highlighting their important work across Delaware and Maryland is the strongest testament to the



KEEPING THE FARM

By *Dr. Bill McGowan*

**State Director for USDA Rural Development
Delaware and Maryland**

power of partnerships I can provide. I apologize in advance for not including everyone!

Partnerships with state, county, and local institutions are the foundation for our everyday work. Elected officials, agency profes-

sionals and representatives of our congressional delegations are some of our strongest allies.

They direct constituents to us for assistance because they trust our programs.

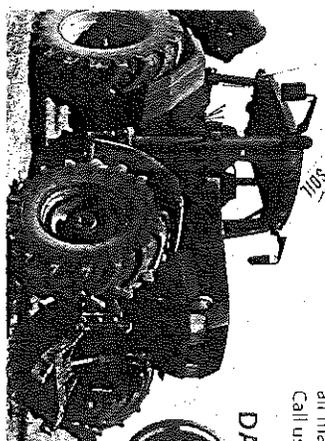
It's because of them we know about issues that may impact the quality of life for a citizen or a community affording us the opportunity to be a part of any solutions.

We sincerely value our role supporting their work as advocates for rural Americans.

Maryland's five regional councils serve as conveners of tri-county regions for planning, economic development and regional cooperation to address common issues.

We are fortunate to have long standing partnerships with all including the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland, the Tri-County Council for the Lower Eastern Shore, the Mid-Shore Regional Council, the Upper Shore Regional Council, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland.

We turn to them to provide direc-



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tion on the economic development support Maryland's rural regions need.

We then work together on technical assistance activities to encourage economic growth in these regions.

They are extremely supportive of our efforts to start a regional conversation about regional growth and prosperity on the Delmarva Peninsula.

You can't work in rural Maryland and not talk about the Rural Maryland Council! And the Rural Maryland Foundation! The Rural Maryland Council brings together stakeholders to collectively address the needs of rural communities.

Thank you to Gov. Hogan and the Maryland Legislature for significantly increasing the funding for the Rural Maryland Prosperity and Investment Fund.

In 2017, the Fund will receive \$2 million dollars to promote economic prosperity creating tremendous opportunity for organizations and communities throughout rural Maryland.

We accomplish a high volume of lending year after year because of our partnerships with regional financial institutions.

Community Development Financial Institution partners, such as the National Council on Agriculture

See **McGOWAN, Page 14**

Guebert . . .

Continued from Page 5

The same goes for Chicago's famous pork belly futures.

As Big Meat extended its reach all the way down to the farm through either direct ownership or contract production, meatpackers stopped trading pork belly futures. They stopped because they didn't need to; they already owned the contracted hog and its price was locked in at birth.

Belly futures died shortly thereafter, in July 2011. A similar change has been underway in the cattle market for more than a decade.

In 2005, explained the *Journal*, about 60 percent of all cattle sold in

the United States were sold in cash markets.

The remainder was sold through either forward contracts, "formula" prices (with a cash price as the basis of the "formula") or a "negotiated grid price."

Today, cash markets are less than 25 percent of all sales while formula-priced cattle are now more than 50 percent.

The other two sales mechanisms, grid and forward contracts, haven't grown as much as formula pricing but continue to be used.

That means over 75 percent of all U.S. cattle sales are now made outside any observable "cash" market.

That also means that hardly anyone in the marketplace — excluding the big meatpackers who developed and use the "formula," grid, and

forward contracting methods — has any idea what the value of any animal is because there's no cash market big enough anywhere on any day of any week for anyone to find out.

So how do cattlemen know what's a fair price when they sell cattle?

"We call the one or two packers in our region," a South Dakota cattle-feeding friend related in an Aug. 30 telephone interview, "and we take what they give us."

"Then we start crying."

What else can they do? With no working cash markets anywhere, there can be no workable futures contracts elsewhere.

Thus the CME Group Inc.'s (the former Chicago Mercantile Exchange) likely exit from the cattle

futures business.

It's just too risky — too "thin" — without any cash market underpinning it for even the wildest speculator to trade it.

That departure, however, virtually guarantees that independent cattlemen will be even more at the mercy of Big Meat. How, after all, can the big meatpackers determine what to pay for their formula, contract- and grid-purchased cattle if there's neither a cash nor futures market to set the price?

Oh, says my South Dakota friend, "They'll do what they've been doing for the last couple of years; they'll just make it up."

* * *
(Editor's note: Reach Alan Guebert at agcomm@farmmandfoodfile.com.)

McGowan . . .

Continued from Page 8

Life & Labor Research Fund, Inc. and the First State Community Loan Fund, are private lending institutions dedicated to delivering financial services in hard-to-serve markets. Together we finance deals in communities who need investment the most.

Lenders participating in our Rural Housing and Rural Business loan guarantee programs steadily

invest in rural communities.

Their work helps rural families buy homes, community facilities expand, and business owners create jobs. Regional banks with available Community Reinvestment Act funds, capital designated to be reinvested within the community in a variety of ways, partner with us as well.

Discover Bank, one of our CRA partners in Delaware, plays a tremendous role in our housing programs and is currently working with us on rural water and wastewater infrastructure in Sussex County.

Discover Bank, one of our CRA partners in Delaware, plays a tremendous role in our housing programs and is currently working with us on rural water and wastewater infrastructure in Sussex County.



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Rural Development programs to community members.

They increase access to our programs. Allowing more community members access to all that Rural Development has to offer.

Because of the value we place on collaboration and partnership, we actively seek it out. It makes us stronger as an organization and our work more impactful.

Thank you to all the organizations who work, serve, and believe in rural Maryland and Delaware.

It is our privilege to stand alongside you in that work.