

'Hot boning' may cut meat prices

Special dispatch to The Register

STILLWATER, OKLA. — Beef and pork prices may be a bit lower someday because of a new meat processing method developed at Oklahoma State University here.

The process, called "hot boning," involves removing bone and waste fat from the carcass within a few hours after slaughter and before chilling. Present methods chill the entire carcass before processing.

Hot boning can reduce energy and space required for refrigeration and also reduce shipping costs because only the edible portion is included, the researchers said. The new process takes less time also, further shaving costs.

Meat scientist Dr. R. L. Henrickson of the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station first experimented with the procedure in 1965. He initially concentrated on the pork carcass, but in later years he has transferred his early findings to beef processing.

"A cured ham could be ready for the grocer's cooler 12 hours after slaughter if processing plants were set up for hot boning," Henrickson said.

Present processing methods average ten days for the

same operation. The new procedure awaits commercial testing.

"Packers are reluctant to convert their systems to the new process because their present equipment is designed for working with cold meat," Henrickson said. "Recently, however, we've had inquiries from several companies who are investigating hot boning."

Pork from the new process is "equal or better" in quality compared to conventional methods. Tests concentrated on flavor, texture, color and tenderness.

Preliminary studies with beef, however, indicated a tenderness problem with hot boning. Recent tests, supported by USDA's Agricultural Research Service, now convince Henrickson that the problem has been overcome. He tested numerous "hanging times" to determine the optimum tenderness for the carcass before hot boning.

The edible portion of a 600-pound carcass after hot boning takes only 22 per cent of the space required for the whole carcass.

The experiment station has not estimated how much refrigeration costs can be reduced with hot boning, but

Henrickson believes savings will be substantial.

"We are fast approaching the time when social and economic pressures will force the implementation of new meat processing procedures," he predicted.

SEEK IOWA'S 'FAVORITE' GIRL

CEDAR RAPIDS, IA. — The search is on for "Iowa's Favorite Farmer's daughter."

The state contest is sponsored by the Iowa Electric Light and Power Co., and the WMT radio and television stations here.

Deadline for entry is March 30. Any single Iowa girl who is 18 to 21 years of age as of June 1, 1974, and whose parents are actively engaged in farming, is eligible.

Entry blanks are available from WMT, county extension and vocational agriculture offices, and any Electric Light and Power Co. office.

The winner will receive \$500, a color TV, an AM-FM radio, three-piece luggage set, and a \$300 wardrobe. Runners-up will receive \$100, a radio, and luggage.