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# Meat Pricing Data Should Not Be Policed

Livestock and meat pricing information "is 'news' in capital letters," and should not be policed by the government, a spokesman for the livestock marketing sector said in testimony before the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat Pricing Task Force.

C. T. 'Tad' Sanders, general manager of Livestock Marketing Association (LMA), Kansas City, Missouri, said "there is a tremendous opportunity for commercial development and expansion of livestock and meat news services," and he urged the continued development and marketing of news as a product.

Furthermore, he said, this news about the livestock and meat industry, and the prices of its products, "is as diversified and complex as livestock and meat products themselves. The public is the real judge of the credibility and integrity of this news and information."

This public judgment, Sanders said, "is the most effective, in sharp contrast to any policing type of action. No monitoring, no licensing, no investigating, are involved or warranted."

The concept of further development of industry news and information

services "warrants the full support of all elements of the livestock industry," he said, as well as the understanding and support of both the executive and legislative branches of government.

Sanders said that LMA is involved in providing "more complete and useful information relating to livestock meat pricing" through its annual Volume and Value of Livestock Transactions Survey. This study measures each livestock transaction, "and should not be confused with fragmentary inventory figures on livestock, nor farm receipts for any given period," he said.

The 1978 study, widely distributed throughout the livestock industry, showed that the value of the livestock market reached a record \$45.6 billion, on a volume of 225.2 million head.

The LMA represents more than 1,300 livestock marketing businesses throughout the U.S. and Canada, including livestock markets, dealers, brokers, stockyard companies and commission firms.

Sanders said he was testifying "because we believe that the marketing of livestock in the many ways utilized by buyers and sellers is directly related to the purposes . . . intended to be served by this Task Force." 