Beef Techie – Maybe a New Career

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The world around us is high technology and seems to get more "techie" daily. A common point of the discussion whenever the family arrives in one place is who has the neatest cell phone.

The most recent addition to the lineup gets the nod. We all know that in a matter of days, the most recent becomes old.

You now can do about anything you want with that small device in the palm of your hand. You can take a small stick device and manipulate the keypad in a way that the world knows who you are, where you are and what you need.

This is common among the new generation. The older generation is quickly getting acclimated.

Therein is a great opportunity: new jobs and new expectations. In the beef world, the beef techie soon may be listed in the classifieds under the help wanted section.

During a quick look at the local auction barn crowd, the buyers and spectators were fairly well equipped with good cell phone technology. Calf weights, lot weights, average calf weights and prices were displayed in a matter of seconds on digitized boards and other incidental electronic equipment.

Many of these conveniences always have been there, but technology has aided the process and speeded things up. Enter the beef techie, who brings efficiency to the process of making technology work in environments that are not technology friendly.

Many environments are a combination of old technology merged with new technology. Some merges well, while other technology has trouble fitting in. Regardless, technology is coming and knowing how to plug things in becomes important.

Perhaps the concept of a new television, disc player or surround-sound system, with individual remotes and interfaces, has arrived in the beef barn. Interestingly, the other day, the NDSU Dickinson Research Extension Center (DREC) team added some thoughts to the technology world.

The DREC and many others worked on a project that was developed on older, low frequency electronic identification technology. Restraining cattle was required to use the technology. It took significant effort and time to fully implement.

The latest development has new technology reading high-frequency tags with no interference or performance issues at local livestock auctions. The reading took .338 second per group lot, with 99 percent read rates. Connecting the calf with the data package and opening the door to track comingled and re-sorted lots of calves is a major leap forward

The 10 lots of cattle that were read averaged 18.8 calves per lot. Each tag was read 238.5 times during that .338-second time frame.

Now that is the job of the beef techie. The beef techie has to figure out how all this works and effectively implement the technology into a very large, mature industry. In the meantime, the industry needs to find the value of both the calf and the accompanying data.

We also must go one step further and accept the fact that there are two principles at work. The two principles are trace back and trace forward. The discussion of marketing is strongly related to trace forward.

Trace forward is the process of presenting to the market around the world a product and data package capable of providing assurances of the authenticity of the product offered and accompanying data package.

Trace forward is a sequential step that, when combined with trace back, creates a synergism around what was, what is and what will be relative to authenticated producer products involved in domestic and export markets. The bottom line is technology does open doors, but keeping the doors open will require the beef techie.

May you find all your ear tags.

Your comments are always welcome at http://www.BeefTalk.com.

For more information, contact the NDBCIA Office, 1041State Avenue, Dickinson, ND 58601, or go to http://www.CHAPS2000.com on the Internet.

High Frequency Tag Performance at Auction

Number of lots	10
Average number of calves per lot	18.8
Number of tags scanned	188
Number of tags read	186
Average scan time per lot	.338 second