

Hay should not be strictly limited or eliminated during the latter part of the feeding period merely in an effort to reduce the size of the paunch or middle on steers. It is doubtful whether this practice accomplishes its purpose. It may well lead to digestive disturbances and lower gains, as well as to a higher feed cost per pound of gain. Even though the dressing percentages could be increased by withholding hay, the weight of the carcass would not be increased, so the cattle feeder would actually have no more to sell.

It is true that among cattle of similar type that have been fed in the same way, dressing percentage is a good indication of the degree of finish. However, the feeder should fatten his cattle as well and as efficiently as he is able; and rather than trying to reduce the paunch on his cattle so as to increase dressing percentage, he should endeavor to produce as heavy a carcass as possible with a minimum feed cost.

#### **SALE WEIGHT**

Cattle are customarily sold on the basis of shrunk weight. When hauled for a considerable distance to market, there is an actual shrinkage. In this case the sale weight is generally the weight on foot. However, if the cattle are weighed on the farm or hauled for only a short distance, a calculated shrinkage usually is deducted from the weight on foot and the actual weight on foot minus the calculated shrinkage is taken as the sale weight. In the latter case, 3 percent is ordinarily deducted from the live weight in calculating the sale weight.

If cattle are weighed on the farm or hauled for only a short distance to scales, it is the usual practice to weigh them in the morning. Afternoon weights are considerably heavier than morning weights because of fill acquired during the day. This fill is mostly water and is of no value to the purchaser. Thus, if cattle are allowed to take on a fill before weighing, the buyer is placed at a disadvantage and must take this into consideration in the price paid. It is to the seller's advantage to weigh his cattle early in the day when weights are most reliable.

#### **FACILITIES FOR FEEDING**

Feed troughs, water troughs, hay racks and pens are needed for fattening cattle. Feeding may be done either under shelter or in the open; in the latter case, feed troughs should be sheltered in the Southeast. Cattle fed in the shade tobacco area of North Florida are fed under shelter to conserve manure.