Ag school dedicates new animal facilities

By Beverly Burge

New University livestock centers totalling a cost of $337,565 were dedicated Saturday in a program beginning at the Agricultural Administration Building.

Three hundred people, including students, alumni, faculty and representatives of the agriculture industry toured the new facilities, located on West Lane Avenue, and Case and Sawmill Roads.

"We have been operating, teaching and conducting programs in out-dated facilities for a long time," said Roy M. Kottman, dean of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics. "We are looking forward to using these new centers and enhancing our teaching facilities.

"We started planning the centers five years ago, and started construction last autumn."

The centers are for beef and dairy cattle, horses, sheep and swine.

The beef cattle center consists of a calf development barn that will house 150 to 175 calves. Other parts of the building include an animal preparation room, teaching and demonstration room, medication and treatment area, feed room, hay and straw storage as well as office and student housing.

Dairy facilities will accommodate 117 milking cows plus dry cows and young stock.

Other facilities include an isolation barn for treatment and breeding and an observation room for visitors.

A main feature of the horse center is an indoor arena which will be used for class demonstrations, tours, riding instruction and training. It has a bleacher seating capacity of 475.

Each of the two wings of the sheep facility has a maximum capacity of 100 to 125 ewes. The total sheep inventory at Ohio State ranges from a low of about 300 head in October and November to a high of slightly more than 400 head after lambing in March.

The swine center consists of approximately 15,160 square feet of floor space. It will be used for teaching, research, and extension activities with teaching as the principal use. It also will house a farrowing facility.
OSU cows have I.D.s, too

By Michael E. Hatherill

Students aren't the only ones at OSU identified by numbers. Livestock at Don Scott Field also carry I.D. numbers.

Don Scott Field, located near West Campus, houses a variety of barnyard animals, and the numbering system, like human social security numbers, is necessary for distinguishing between breeds of cattle.

Gary Wilson, manager for OSU beef farms, says he numbers cattle by use of ear tags. The number printed on a tag is inserted on the inside of the calf's ear at birth.

The tags are placed on the second or third rib of the ear so they will not get caught on fences and be ripped out.

Wilson says the ear tags serve only as a temporary identification and it is necessary to tattoo a number in the calf's inner ear as a permanent form of identification.

The tattoo is made by an instrument which resembles a large pair of pliers with a needle attached. Ink is smeared on the calf's ear and the needle punctures the skin marking the numbers in the ear.

Wilson says the same number that appears on the ear tag is the number which is tattooed on the ear, adding that the identical number is given to the new-born calf as that of its mother.

Wilson says the ear tagging and tattooing has replaced the old method of freezing or hot branding because they are quicker.

He says that certain hides on cattle are thicker than others and it requires more time to brand the thicker-hided cows.

The branding method kills the cow's skin pigment which results in white hair growing in that spot.

Wilson says a color code is also used as a form of identification, distinguishing the various types of cattle at the farm from their sires.

"It's much easier to remember color codes than to remember the relationships of the calf and sire with the 17 different breeds we have," Wilson says.

Hog herders use ear notching as a way of identifying hogs.

Ear notching involves cuts out of the perimeter of the ear and the specific location of the cuts are the hog's identification.

Unlike cows and hogs, horses are not given identification numbers at OSU.

Gary Stoffer, manager of the OSU horse barn, says numbering is a necessity and a form of convenience if herders are dealing with a large number of animals.

"Most horse people deal in small numbers and do not need a numbering system," Stoffer says.

Stoffer says horses in this part of the country are seldom branded, unlike the West, where horses are very popular.
OSU farms welcome students

By LISA HILL
Lantern staff writer

- Students suffering from midquarter burnout can get away from the hustle and bustle of campus and visit the quietness of the countryside only minutes from campus.

- The OSU farms are located close to campus and are open to the public, said Michael Day, assistant professor of animal science.

- The beef barn located at 3658 Kays Ave. at Don Scott Field houses a total of 350 cattle, with 150 of those being mother cows that have calves every year. The steers are used for teaching and research purposes like animal science classes, he said.

- Horses from the livestock center on Kays Avenue, off Sawmill Road, can be seen grazing in nearby fields.

- Gary Stauffer, coordinator - horse production and management, said the horses are used for a variety of purposes. Some of the farm's 20 brood mares are used for handicap riding programs that various agencies sponsor, he said.

- Many of the yearlings and weanlings are for sale. A few of the horses that are donated by private citizens are either sold or kept to improve the breeding stock, Stauffer said. The farm's stallions are used for reproduction research and teaching breeding classes.

- Three hundred to 500 head of sheep can be seen grazing at the sheep farm's 45 acre site at 2425 W. Case Rd.

- Ronald Guenther, manager of animal herd, animal science, said there are some lambs at the barns now, but most of them are born between January and March.

- Most of the visitors at the farm are grade school children on tours, but parents also come out and bring their children to see the animals, Guenther said.

- The squeals of more than 1,000 hogs can be heard at the swine barn, located off Sawmill Road near Don Scott Airfield.

- Gary Stittlein, manager of animal herd, animal science, said there are certain parts of the facilities that the public can't visit, such as the areas where the baby pigs are.

- He said pigs are used for teaching and research programs, and the programs are currently switching to a more research oriented angle.

- Visitors can watch 80 of the farm's 220 dairy cattle being milked at Waterman Farm on Lane Avenue. The milk is sold to Borden Inc. in Columbus.

- The money from the sale of the farms' animals and their products pay for the barns' maintenance and feeding costs, said Julie Sterley, business services office for the animal science department.

- The poultry barn is not open to the public on an open-door policy, because of the research taking place. For more information on a tour of the poultry barn contact Kevin Dueser at 292-5341.

- The barns employ around 50 students as full-time and part-time help for the facilities. The sheep and swine barns have students who live there 24 hours a day.

"We are proud of our facilities and procedures and feel that they are the best in the country," said Ned Farrel, coordinating advisor and professor for the animal science department.
Country life on campus

Work on farm earns OSU students free housing

BY MICHELLE MEEKINS
Lantern staff writer

Most students at Ohio State live in dorms, fraternity and sorority houses or off-campus apartments, but for some agriculture students, home is down on the OSU farms.

At least two students live in each of the four apartments in the four barns, which also house sheep, beef, cattle, swine and horses. Students receive free room and board in exchange for working 40 hours a week with the animals.

The apartments, built into the OSU barns, located on Case Road, are an escape for agriculture students not used to living in the city.

Matthew Lane, a junior from Fayetteville majoring in animal science, lives in the beef barn. "I can't stand the city. If it weren't for this place, I would be living at home, or I wouldn't be going to school in a big city," he said. "I'm kind of like most people from the country. I get itchy if there are too many people around. I like open spaces."

John Sanders, manager of the beef barn, said there are no specific qualifications for doing this kind of work. The students just have to be willing to do some hard work.

"We prefer that someone has a little background in agriculture so they don't get hurt working with the cattle," he said.

"The feeling I get is that the students all like it better than the dorms or fraternities," Sanders said. "It might not appeal to everyone, but most of these students would rather be here because most of them are from small towns."

Lane said he doesn't feel he is missing out on anything by not living on campus. "I think I'm gaining more than others living on campus and who don't work. I'm making something of my time.

"Working in general is good for a person," he said. "It keeps you out of trouble."

"Living in an apartment in a barn is just like living anywhere else except we work where we live," Lane said. People who grow up in farms learn early the importance of work and responsibility. Many other people don't learn this until they are 17 or 18 years old, he said.

Seeing the results of his work is the most gratifying to him, Lane said, but the worst part about working on a farm is he can never have holidays off. The animals always have to be fed.

Kevin Jenne, a senior from Morrow County, lives in the sheep barn. He said the best part about working on a farm is being your own boss.

"You can take off if you have something to do in the afternoon. If you have to, you can work for 24 hours straight," he said.

Jenne said he likes the convenience of having his work right there when he gets up in the morning. He said he occasionally enjoys watching wild animals while he is working.

The hours are the worst part of working on a farm, Jenne said. "You are always on call."

The students have to be working at 6 a.m. every day to feed the livestock. At night the livestock have to be checked every three hours. When students are done with classes, they go right to work.

Occasionally the students will do a few chores at night so they don't have to do as much in the morning.

"If you sleep until 7 a.m., you feel like you have done something great, whereas some people if they get up at 7 a.m. they feel stressed," Jenne said. On weekends they will sleep until 8 a.m. or 9 a.m.

"You have to be a self-starter. If you don't do it, it's not going to get done. You have to be an early riser," Jenne said.

"I have learned more out here than in any class I have been in so far," he said.

Darren Bowland, a junior from Canton majoring in horticulture, lives in the beef barn. He said in the spare time the students do have, they study. They usually go out once a week. If a student likes to go out all the time, this would not be the job to have, he said.