Limited trials with Promone, a progestosterone-like hormone, showed considerable promise for increasing weight gains and feed efficiency of heifers in the feedlot. The trial reported here tested the feedlot performance of heifers when implanted with 200 and 400 mg of Promone, as compared with stilbestrol implants and with a control group.

Feedlot operators consider the performance of heifers to be inferior to that of steers, even when under the same feed and management practices. The use of stilbestrol or other hormones (as an implant or feed additive) for heifers has not resulted in weight gains comparable with those of steers.

High-good to choice
The 146 heifers used in this trial were from a herd of high-good to choice-quality heifers raised on the Roney Brothers ranch in Butte County. After weaning, they had been on irrigated pasture and were in good fleshy condition going into the feedlot for a short finishing period. The heifers were number ear-tagged and randomly selected into four groups:

- Group 1: Control (received no hormone)
- Group 2: Implanted with 24 mg stilbestrol
- Group 3: Implanted with 200 mg Promone
- Group 4: Implanted with 400 mg Promone

All of the cattle were fed together on irrigated pasture plus a self-fed ration of one-third each of almond hulls, barley, and milo. About two weeks before slaughter (except for the first group marketed), the cattle were confined in drylot and full-fed this same almond-hull, barley, and milo ration.

Topped out
The heifers were topped out for slaughter as they reached top-good and low-choice grades. The first group was
Excellent condition of hormone-implanted heifers is seen in photo above, and cover, of the oak-shaded corral area with feed bunks used during tests at the Roney Brothers Ranch, Butte County.

topped off of pasture at 54 days. Thereafter, market loads were selected from pasture at one- to two-week intervals and placed in drylot. The entire lot of heifers were slaughtered in seven groups over a period of nine weeks.

Slaughter data obtained included hot carcass weight, final grade, rib eye area, fat thickness, kidney and pelvic fat, yield grade, and carcass index. The slaughter data were subjected to analysis of variance at the University of California Davis Computer Center (see table).

**Results**

The average daily gain of each Promone-treated group was significantly greater than that of the control group. The gains for the Promone-treated animals were also more than those for the stilbestrol-treated animals, though this difference was not significant. Carcass grade, fat thickness, yield grade, and carcass index were practically the same in all groups. Kidney and pelvic fat percentage in the stilbestrol-treated animals was significantly smaller than that of either the control or Promone-treated groups. The 400 mg Promone group showed a significantly smaller rib eye area per 100 lbs of carcass weight.

**Progress report**

This is a progress report of research and the preliminary results included should not be considered as recommendations for the use of Promone in cattle at this time.

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