Dark-cutting: What’s Wrong with Your Meat?

COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS—Dark-cutting in beef cattle is a major concern for researchers and cattle producers alike. Scientists are conducting research to find effective methods of treatment for the meat condition.

“Dark-cutting is costing the nation $132 to 170 million annually,” said lead researcher J. K. Apple. “Research is being done to find ways to prevent the condition from occurring.”

Dark-cutting beef is a meat condition where the meat is dark red or black in color and dry and sticky in texture. Finding methods to produce the condition in order for it to be studied to find a treatment to prevent it from occurring seems to leave the researchers stumped.

In a study conducted in 2005, restraint and isolation stress proved to be a successful method to produce the dark-cutting condition in Holstein steers. Developing methods to prevent the condition in beef cattle are still under investigation.

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