

# Animal oddities stored at museum

**Editor's note:** This article is part of an ongoing series on the agricultural collections stored by Curator Val Roy Berryman at the Michigan State University Museum. For more information about the museum, contact Berryman at [berryman2@msu.edu](mailto:berryman2@msu.edu) or 517-355-0322. — Jennifer Vincent

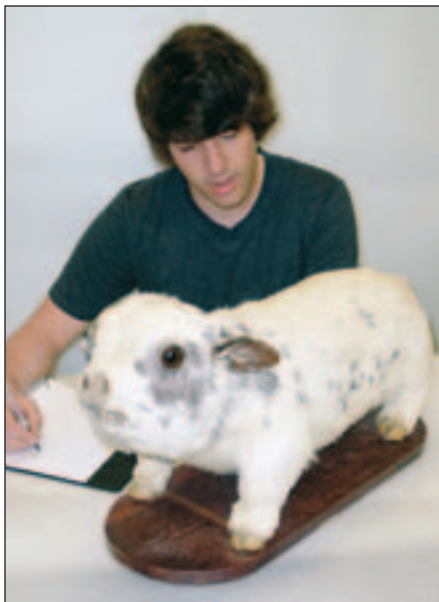
By VAL BERRYMAN

**A** FAMILY traveling on vacation across the state of Michigan in the mid-20th century was almost assured of eventually finding a roadside sign touting this message: "Two-headed calf 10 miles ahead."

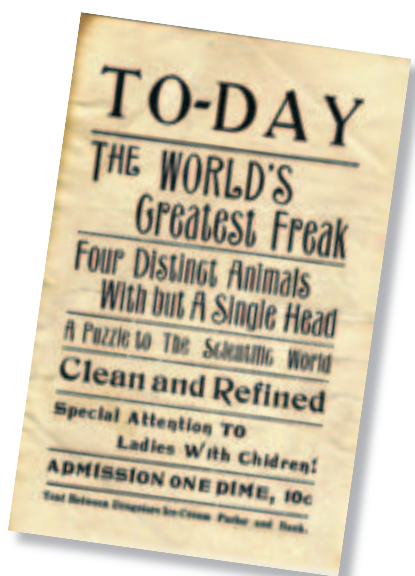
When animal breeding techniques were less sophisticated than they are today, the birth of a two-headed calf was not as rare. Most were stillborn or lived for only a matter of minutes or days. However, a nearby taxidermist could ensure that the animal still provided some income for the farmer who owned it.



**TWO IN ONE:** This two-headed calf was born in January 1943 on the farm of Marcella and Leo Wacker of Fowler. It was born of a 4-year-old Guernsey cow, the third calf of that cow. It only lived for two minutes. It had (in addition to its two heads) two hearts, two lungs, one stomach and four legs.



**DWARF BIRTH:** A dwarf calf was born in Huron County in 1909 on the farm of Edward Own in Owendale. As with most "freak" calves, this one probably died very soon after birth. It was being exhibited one month after its birth and was probably already mounted. It had been prepared by a Vassar taxidermist for exhibition and was acquired from its original owner by William J. Beadle, a farmer from Caseville who exhibited the calf at county fairs during the summer for many years. Here, Central Michigan University student intern Jon Backus of Lansing is assisting in an annual inspection of the tiny creature.



**ADVERTISEMENT:** The documentation that came with the dwarf calf (below) greatly increases its historical and educational value. Notarized statements from the taxidermist and other locals confirmed that the calf was authentic. Fliers such as this one were handed out to draw visitors to an exhibition that was deemed "clean and refined," so even ladies and children could enjoy it. Other fliers in the collection tried to entice customers by promoting the creature as being a "great freak of nature" having "the face of a bulldog, with fully developed cow's eyes, a lambs tail and pig's feet."



**EXHIBIT'S TICKETS:** A tin cigar box full of the original tickets also accompanied the dwarf calf. These tickets were sold to the customers, and after they were handed in at the exhibition, they were recycled and sold again. In the early years, tickets to the tent show were 10¢ each.

## Curriculum offered to help groups raise awareness about local food

**M**ICHIGAN State University Museum and Creative Change Education Solutions of Ypsilanti have released "Food, Farming and Community," a curriculum for adults interested in learning more about local food systems and sustainable agriculture.

This curriculum and other resources on the Food, Farming and Community Web site are available free to organizations and communities to use in their own work with planning, training, building public awareness and inspiring change around farmers, farming and local food. Anyone with knowledge and experience about contemporary agriculture and sustainable practices would be able to facilitate a full program.

### The curriculum

Six one- to two-hour sessions address broad sustainable agriculture issues and focus on making personal connections with food, understanding the environmental footprint of food production, learning about the difference between price vs. cost and understanding the historic factors that have brought us to today's food systems.

Participants come away with a better understanding of how food relates to their personal health, local and global economies, and the environment. Each lesson includes facilitator and learner guides and PowerPoint slides. Project planners expect the resource to be used by faith-based groups, education, and community or regional groups involved with agriculture from Extension to sustainable and organic agriculture. Approaches to topics include creative expression, poetry, games, group collaborations and connections to individual, family and community life.

The following is available with the program:

- a theater script — "What Will Be in the Fields Tomorrow?" — that brings to life the true experiences and voices of American farmers and presents issues in an entertaining and non-threatening manner
- an introduction to civic dialogue as a way to get people talking
- annotated book and film lists as a starting point for discussion
- promotional and marketing materials and examples of how others are using the materials

Go online to learn more at [www.foodfarmingandcommunity.org](http://www.foodfarmingandcommunity.org).

## Taste the heat of summer

**S**UMMER is the perfect time to celebrate fresh flavors, and grilling is the perfect way to bring those flavors to the plate. The recipe for Mexican Mole Pork Chops transforms the taste of a traditional Mexican mole sauce into a dry rub to use on pork. The high-impact dry rub features dried chipotle peppers, cocoa and cinnamon. Once your chops are grilled, top them with a cool mango salsa.

For other summer recipes featuring pork, visit [www.theotherwhitemeat.com](http://www.theotherwhitemeat.com).

### Mexican Mole Pork Chops

- 4 pork chops (1½ inches thick, bone-in)
- Mango Salsa (see recipe below)

### Dry Rub

- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 1½ teaspoons cocoa
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon ground chipotle pepper, depending on heat desired
- ⅛ teaspoon ground paprika
- Dash ground cinnamon
- Dash ground allspice

In small bowl, combine dry rub ingredients; rub onto both sides of pork chops. Set aside for 30 minutes. Preheat grill to 400 to 450 degrees F.

When ready to cook, spray a light coat of cooking spray on pork chops to keep them from sticking to grill. Place on hot grill.

Cover; cook for seven minutes per side or until internal temperature



reaches 160 degrees F, using an instant-read thermometer. Let rest for 5 minutes. Serve with Mango Salsa, if desired.

### Mango Salsa

- 1 large mango, peeled and cubed, pit removed
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped red onion
- 2 teaspoons snipped fresh cilantro
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Juice of one fresh lime

Combine ingredients in bowl. Serve with Mexican Mole Pork Chops. Serves four.