

# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat. - Joshua 6:5

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December 1983

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It seems impossible to stand still - one thing leads to another and one is left with a choice: put your head under the covers and stand still, or follow the leads and questions. Thus we have moved from producing lambs to marketing lambs to examining the red meat industry in Canada to the food distribution system as a whole and on to the global connections. The question that we hope informs our research and reporting is that of justice. As our concerns have broadened, so has our readership, both in occupation and geography. We hope, as we begin our fourth year of publication, that we can continue to grow, and that you will accept the challenge as well. We don't intend to give up the practical, but justice is also a very practical matter - a matter, in fact, of life and death. B.K.

From the Globe & Mail, Nov 21/83:

(AP) The lone Cuban diplomat on Grenada says he's staying put until Cuba gets back \$2 million in equipment used to construct the airport the Reagan administration contends was becoming a Cuban and Soviet military base.

"It's paradoxical and ironic that the country that accused us of building the airport for military purposes has now turned it into a military base," said Gaston Diaz during an interview at the embassy.



From Gwynne Dyer's WAR series on CBC-TV:

"War brings out the finest aspects of the human spirit and it wastes them. It calls out the heroism and self-sacrifice of young men and it wastes them, it kills the young men."

"If we want peace, we have to prepare for peace."



At the Saltsprings Elementary School Remembrance Day essays are posted on the wall:

"We should care because our country is free and we don't depend on other countries to keep us alive. ...Many people in other countries have joined together to try and take over the world but these countries cannot support themselves, they depend on us to send them food to live on."

At a time when the world looks increasingly grim and gloomy, it is still impossible to hide the birth of a baby among the poor and oppressed.

Oh, we try - with tinsel and glitter and too much to eat and drink. But nevertheless before we return from the feast to the everyday world we can shed our hopelessness in joy at the promise of new life - a life that we know (because we have heard the story before) can grow into the struggle for justice and the promise of peace.

C.K.



Nov. 3 '83 CH

# Farmers likely to raise profit by spending less this year

By OLIVER BERTIN

Prairie farm profits are expected to rise slightly in 1983, but only because farmers are spending less, says Lorne Hehn, president of United Grain Growers Ltd. of Winnipeg.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the farm co-operative, he said farm receipts are expected to decline by \$224-million to \$9.3-billion. However, farmers will likely spend \$308-million less on fertilizer, seed, interest and other items.

Mr. Hehn said operating costs have risen steadily since the mid-1970s. Farm rents have followed the trend in land prices, while interest costs have nearly surpassed machinery operating costs.

In 1982, he said, interest payments made up 69 per cent of the cost of farm equipment, compared with 45 per cent in 1975.

Fertilizer costs, typically the third-greatest expense, climbed by 243 per cent in five years, while energy costs have risen by an average of 21 per cent a year.

As a result, an increasing number of farmers have failed. Mr. Hehn cited figures that indicate there are more than six voluntary liquidations for each bankruptcy.

Many farmers are surviving by deferring their income for tax purposes. He said prairie farmers are expected to defer about 75 per cent of their income this year.

Mr. Hehn warned the delegates that many farmers are building a "financial trap" by living on the depreciation of aging farm equipment. They have been financially squeezed for several years and have delayed normal replacements. Eventually, the equipment will wear out and they will have to borrow heavily to stay in business.

**They are blind men leading blind men; and if one blind man leads another, both will fall into a pit.**  
Matthew 15:14

## 'Tremendous potential' for agriculture in region

By TOM McCOAG  
Amherst Bureau

NORTHPORT — Tremendous potential exists for the development of agricultural land and products in the Atlantic provinces, an official of Agriculture Canada said Monday night in his address to the Amherst Rotary Club's annual urban-rural night.

Dr. Ed E. Lister, director general of research for Agriculture Canada's Atlantic division, said farmland is a very precious commodity and under certain farming conditions could disappear.

Despite this fear, he stressed that in all Atlantic provinces there is lots of land that could be improved that is now being cultivated and lots of land that has never been used for agriculture that could be developed.

"Sometimes we see things in the paper that in the Atlantic provinces we have lost a lot of land. Well, a lot of it wasn't terribly productive and I think the programs by the provincial and federal governments in the last few years have allowed us to develop the good land and made a lot of land better that it once was. I think we have a fair land base."

## Farm outlook bleak, commissioners told

By JOHN DeMONT  
Business Reporter

REGINA — The Macdonald commission on the economy Wednesday received a crash course in the stark realities of farming for a living in Canada's prairies during the opening day of hearings here.

Uncertain weather, escalating energy prices, unstable crop prices and increasing land prices have squeezed farm incomes and driven farmers into bankruptcy at rates unprecedented since the Great Depression.

With the Crow rate discarded and the powers of its chief marketing agency waning, Saskatchewan's farmers are worried the future may be even more bleak than the past.

Ottawa is the villain. Its recent passage of Bill C-155, which abolishes the Crow Rate, has left many farmers worried that they too will join the growing list of bankrupt farmers. Ottawa had previously subsidized the transportation of Western grain, but the new legislation does away with the subsidy and passes the new costs on to the farmers.

Wayne Easter, president of the National Farmers Union (NFU)

## N.S. pork producers need help . . . soon

By FRANK DePALMA  
Truro Bureau

TRURO — The consensus at the annual meeting of the Pork Producers Association of Nova Scotia was that producers need help and they need it soon.

Producers urged their board of directors to ask the provincial government for more money within the next few months.

Producers are getting about 60 cents per pound for pork, with the stabilization price set at 77 cents. The difference between these prices is provided to the farmer by the provincial government in the form of a grant for half the amount, and the other half in the form of an interest-free loan.

Since April 1, there have been \$675,000 in grants and \$660,000 in loans.

Agriculture Minister Roger Bacon said the marketing of 4,200 hogs per week requires about \$135,000 each

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week in grants and loans to stabilize the price at the 77-cent level.

The province has paid \$4.1 million in stabilization grants since 1978; during 1974-1978, \$340,000 was paid out in grants.

As a long-term approach, the association will meet with Agriculture Canada officials to determine how the long-term needs of the pork industry can be met.

The association's board of directors recently met with representatives of major banks, the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board and major feed companies to discuss the economic situation of hog farms, and summarized comments made by various creditors in a special report made at yesterday's meeting.

The report states that in general, bank representatives agreed the hog industry is in serious financial trouble. "There are about 10 farms in the province which are not expected to last through the winter," says the report.

The most serious problems seems to be with units which started during the last two to six years. These producers have experienced mostly low pork prices and have had no opportunity to build equity in the farm.

Farm loan board spokesmen said hog accounts with the board have exhibited serious deterioration over the last couple of years and that refinancing is not the answer for all accounts. The report suggests that those in deep distress should be allowed to go out of business and allowed \$20,000 to make a new start.

Monday, November 7, 1983 THE CHRONICLE-HERALD 13

## Hog producers urged to maintain current levels

AMHERST — Maritime hog producers should maintain their current levels of pork production and not aim for 100 per cent self-sufficiency, the chairman of the Maritime New Brunswick Pork Marketing Board told a study conference on the Maritime red meats industry.

Stephen Moffatt, speaking to about 60 members of the Maritime Farmers Council,

said Maritime hog producers are supplying about 85 per cent of the present Maritime hog market, a figure contested by several of the producers.

## Agriculture asks Macd

By JOHN DeMONT  
Business Reporter

WINNIPEG — Great prosperity could lie ahead for Canada's agrifood industry, but the federal government must play a leading role if the industry is to realize its full potential.

This was the message Wednesday during the final day of hearings of the Macdonald commission in Winnipeg, as spokesmen from the various links in the food and agriculture industries urged a variety of federal intervention to cure their ills.

The agrifood sector accounts for almost 18 per cent of Canadian employment and for about 26 per cent of Canadian exports.

A brief from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture predicted a bright future for Canadian farming, with a few uncertainties clouding the horizon.

Canadian farmers could be in a position to fill the gap as world-wide demand for food outstrips available supply, stated the brief, as long as events such as a rekindling of inflation, another energy crisis or sky-high interest rates don't drive more farmers to the unemployment lines.

To combat these variables, the association urged Ottawa to take some steps to ease the burden of higher interest rates, while also adopting some sort of stabilization policies to protect farm incomes from uneconomic uncertainties, both in Canada and abroad.

## Farmers must prepare for food shortage — Whelan

By JOHN DeMONT  
Business Reporter

REGINA — A world food shortage is coming and Canada's western farmers need to be ready to meet the challenge, federal agriculture minister Eugene Whelan told the Macdonald Royal Commission Thursday.

The growth in world population will mean demand for food will rise faster than the world's ability to produce it, Mr. Whelan said. The end result will undoubtedly be higher food prices. The central issue for Canada, he said, is how best to exploit this growth opportunity.

"It seems apparent that Canada will have the opportunity to expand greatly exports of agri-food

commodities as food needs continue to exceed the ability of many countries to meet them from domestic production," he stated in his brief to the commission.

He said farm bankruptcies are climbing, while in Saskatchewan nearly half of the farmers now operate their farms on a part-time basis and take outside jobs to make ends meet. Mr. Whelan said one way of more satisfactorily financing family farms might be through tenure instruments which would enable producers to rent land, buildings and equipment without undertaking large debt commitments.



### THE HIGH COST OF CREATING UNEMPLOYMENT

Some official programs figure the cost of creating a job at \$5000 to \$6000 per job. In New Brunswick it costs a million dollars per job to destroy jobs.

During the last year (spring 1982 to July 1983) Consolidated Bathurst Inc. engaged in an extensive renovation, involving the installation of new machinery at a total cost of \$175 million, \$25 million of that from the Provincial and Federal governments. This new machinery allows the company to produce newsprint pulp which will be shipped to a Bowater plant in the U.K. for final finishing. The product can then be sold in the Common Market at favourable rates as a British product.

Meanwhile, back in New Brunswick, there are 125 fewer jobs at the CBI mill.

More cost-effective was the recent renovation at New Brunswick International Paper which managed to destroy about 200 jobs at a total cost of \$160 million. Only \$12.5 million of that is government money, because the work was already undertaken before the grant was approved.

Comments a local woods worker: "People and trees are just minor elements in the decision-making process made in Montreal or New York."

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### FRANCHISING

A report from the Financial Post Oct 8/83,  
by Frances Phillips

"I WISH this had happened to me 20 years ago," says Terry Nicol, franchisee of the third **Mr. Grocer** store to open in Ontario. "If you enjoy meeting the public and are prepared to put some effort into the business, you can compete with the independents without much difficulty at all."

And that's precisely what the Mr. Grocer franchises are set up to do.

Independent food retailers, offering good values and old-fashioned service, have sliced into the market share held by supermarket chains. By joining forces with large buying groups, these corner-store grocers purchase produce at competitive prices, and the smaller store size lends itself to a more personalized service.

Realizing they couldn't afford to fight back on the service front with their cavernous, impersonal stores, supermarket chains launched a three-pronged response.

They chose between closing down their smaller and mid-sized (8,000-20,000 square feet) stores, expanding them to more cost-efficient super-supermarkets, diversifying into warehouse retailing, or taking the franchise route.

Rather than sell off valuable real estate, **Dominion Stores**, through subsidiary **Willett Foods Ltd.**, of St. John, New Brunswick, has created the Mr. Grocer franchise. Those stores which had no growth potential, or were losing money, have been made over, and fresh, green and white signs have replaced Dominion's red and white logo. Ontario is the starting point for an expansion plan Willett Foods hopes will encompass greenfield sites, and conversions of existing grocery stores in other provinces as well.

Willett Foods is the franchisor, and supplies Mr. Grocer franchisees with most of the merchandise and services they need. After that, the new operators are on their own.

"It's a Mr. Grocer run by a family," says Rollie Ferencz. "My wife, daughter and son-in-law work with us, and there's more to come if I need the help." Ferencz and family feel right at home in

their new Toronto location — he managed the store for seven years when it was operated by Dominion.

Willett expects to open at least 10 stores in fiscal 1984 (yearend March 17, 1984). "The following year, we plan to match that growth, or double it," says Ross Bletsoe, director of franchise operations for Willett's Mr. Grocer chain.

By the time the franchisees take over, their Mr. Grocer stores are ready to roll. Willett Foods remodels the premises, and leases the property and equipment to operators. Franchisees pay no franchise fee, but must remit a royalty payment of 3.85% on total weekly retail sales (excluding tobacco), plus 0.75% of total gross sales for group advertising services.

While franchisees take advantage of Willett's buying power and obtain most of their produce from the wholesaler, they can also make their own deals with suppliers on selected items.

Willett offers additional backup to help franchisees remain competitive with neighborhood supermarkets. There's a computer system to calculate payroll and monitor inventory, a group employee-benefit program, and advice on everything from communication skills to cashier training, and customer relations.

On the labor front, these new food retailers can remain competitive with independents because operators are free to hire staff, including family members. However, they have to work with any collective union agreements in place when Dominion ran the stores.

Franchisees say the biggest boost to business has been the addition of deli counters and in-store bakeries, which were not an in-store feature before the conversion.

"Retirees come in here and buy three-four slices of cold cuts for their lunch," says Ferencz. "It's something we've needed in this neighborhood for a long time."

As well, the smell of fresh-baked bread has spurred sales in that department, and volume is building each week. (The goods are delivered frozen, but uncooked, to Mr. Grocer stores, and baked on the premises.)





THIS IS A CHRISTMAS SERMON ABOUT PEACE

"God, too, acted in a mighty unilateral manner when he began to live unarmed and vulnerable, that is, as a human being." Dorothee Soelle

The mood of public pessimism is profound. There are signs in unlikely places that we are beginning to get some sense of the situation we have put ourselves in. I think that among those who dare to recognize their true feelings there is almost a certainty that there will be a nuclear war in the near future. In most cases, the response is one of despair or fatalism. Once more, the final time, we seem to have no choice but to be the victims. There is also a rising tide of voices calling for a halt to the arms race, for a nuclear freeze, for arms control... yet we do not seem to have faced up to a fundamental question. We cling to an idolatrous notion of security and we tell ourselves that negotiations are the only way to halt the arms race. It seems to be quite unthinkable that any people should actually take concrete action to reverse the process.

Christmas is upon us. Despite the commercial deluge, it is the season to prepare ourselves for the celebration of the unilateral action of God manifest in the birth of Jesus. So this should be a time of reflection about the nature of our relationship to God and our willingness to receive the gift of life. It would be good also to remember that Christmas comes to us not because of some agreement reached with God, but rather as a gift given freely in spite of what we have or have not done - which is not to say that what we have or have not done doesn't matter!

The Incarnation - the action of God in taking on human form and living among us for a while - was God's unilateral action for humanity. Mary was not given a choice, she was simply "picked on", in the same way that the Prophets of the Old Testament were, often in spite of their protests that they **could** do nothing!

There are times when I would like to be "picked on" by God, to be told with authority what I should be doing! Instead, I embark on every day having to face decisions about what I will do and not do. As a farmer those decisions have to take into account a host of factors over which I have little or no control, such as market, prices, the weather, animals that get sick without permission, or family making a variety of demands on my time, or on their own, so that they are not available to do the chores. But I simply cannot avoid making decisions; with inadequate information and limited vision I still have to decide what to plant, when to breed, how much to feed, and when to sell, and there is no guarantee that the decisions will be the right ones, and no verification of their validity until after they are made. Other people have a regular job, and their freedom appears to be more limited. Often they simply feel that they have to do what they are told, or what their job requires, but is this actually the case? Are we still not responsible for saying "no" at some point, or of taking alternate action? Morally, are there not always points at which we must make unilateral decisions based on conscience and conviction? Who will bring justice or build peace? What if the American marines who were sent to Grenada had produced shovels instead of guns and had offered to help build the airport?



I am a unilateralist. That means: I do not believe that the madness becomes rational simply because both sides carry it out in an orderly and agreed-upon manner. Some groups in our country sign two-sided, bilateral appeals to the governments in East and West. ... In reality, this bilateralism is politically and morally impotent. ... in truth, we are deeply involved, we pay for the madness, we tolerate it, we elect the officials of the lunatic asylum to which we are assigned. We, the innocent tax-paying citizens, are part of the murderous system. If we truly want peace, we must begin where we are, on this our side, necessarily one-sidedly.

It is rationalistic stupidity to assume that the mutual threat of murder could be removed from this world as a kind of business transaction.

- Dorothee Soelle

See, today I set before you life and prosperity, death and disaster. ... I set before you life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life, then, so that you and your descendants may live.... - Deuteronomy 30:19

This choice is and must be a unilateral act. It is like the time Jesus asked some men to follow him, and one of them said, I must go and bury my father and than I will come. And Jesus was sad, and went on without that man,

How many of us really want to live? Are we becoming afraid to live because of the horror we fear awaits us? Who want to survive a nuclear war?

But why do we attribute to other motives and intents that we say are not ours? Are we so abnormal? What has convinced us that someone else is out to destroy us if we do not want to do that to anyone else? Is Dorothee Soelle right when she says: "Our affluence is a brutal thing and therefore has to be protected by ever greater force and terror." We will have peace when we actually take the step to peace of laying down our weapons and beginning the huge task of building a world based on justice. We cannot wait for someone else to begin, nor can we build justice while we build for war. The choice is given to us. Let us celebrate the gift of Christmas, of freedom and opportunity to act unilaterally, to choose life. Then we can get down to the questions worthy of our attention: how to build a world of justice for all.

Brewster Kneen

Quotes are from Dorothee Soelle's THE ARMS RACE KILLS EVEN WITHOUT A WAR, published by Fortress Press, Philadelphia.

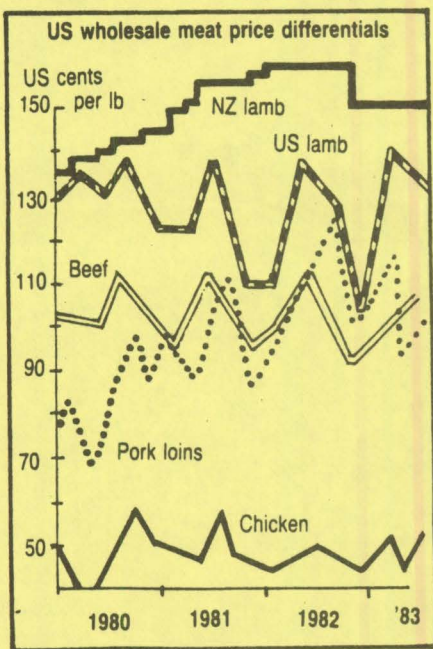


# Competing in the Lamb Trade

The Oct. 13 issue of New Zealand Farmer presents a remarkably candid picture of N.Z. lamb marketing philosophy and practice as applied to the United States. What is intriguing is that the relationship between N.Z. and U.S. lamb in the marketplace is just the reverse of what it is in Canada. In the U.S., lamb from Devco (the N.Z. government agency for marketing lamb in North America) sells at a premium price, well above the price of American lamb, while in Canada it is priced below Canadian lamb. This would indicate the arbitrary character of marketing decisions.

Without a national lamb marketing agency, what chance do we have to compete against New Zealand? Without a national red meat authority, encompassing beef, lamb and pork, what chance do we have for survival?

The graph shows how the relativity between New Zealand frozen lamb and domestic US fresh lamb prices had widened since 1980 while beef, pork and chicken prices hover far below. In 1984 Devco wants to pitch the New Zealand price in the 130-140cUS/lb bracket to try and regain the sort of relativity of 1980.



Over the past three seasons the relativity between New Zealand and US lamb has deteriorated as US sheep numbers were built up. The domestic price subsequently dropped as more volume hit the markets. New Zealand's price meanwhile, as has always been Devco's policy, remained at a stable premium price above US domestic. That has been necessary because of high New Zealand processing and cutting costs (the US requires that all imported lamb be cut to at least primal stage). But New Zealand lamb has always been marketed as an upmarket premium product.

Lamb's opportunities hinge on three current factors — the depleted US lamb and sheep flock; slower New Zealand cost increases and widespread introduction of vacuum packaging technology in New Zealand plants this season and in Devco's cutting plants.

Devco has been faced in the US with steadily rising sheep meat production since 1980 — 143,000 tonnes in 1980, 152,000 tonnes in 1981, 164,000 tonnes in 1982 and 170,000 tonnes estimated for 1983.

Analysts had anticipated that the 1983 kill would be down because of the lower inventory of stock at the start of this year. But the liquidation has continued as many ranchers cut the size of flocks or have left the sheep business altogether. The move to reduce sheep numbers follows enormous financial losses faced by sheep ranchers. Present returns for lamb are at their lowest levels since 1977. The increased kill has also been aggravated by widespread and severe droughts in the major lamb production area of Texas.

If all the elements are got right, packaging, image, advertising — there is an opportunity to be a premium product. But the premium price can only be relative to US domestic lamb. So, in 1984, Devco has to position itself at a realistic margin above domestic. Even at a premium, New Zealand lamb has still got to be good value and seen as value.

WOOL GROWERS SUPPLIES still has automatic backpack drenching guns for \$105. Don't you deserve a break?

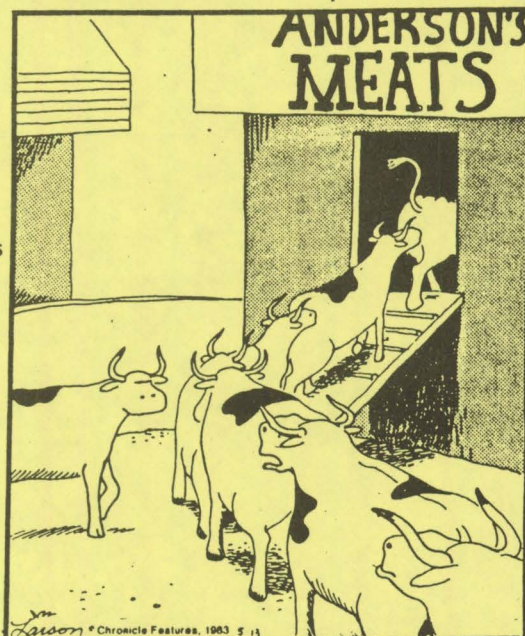
Spending on promotion and advertising is expected to be almost \$5 million by the end of this year.

The trouble is a lamb leg is a lamb leg in anyone's language. There's little that can be done to change that. It competes purely on price.

Devco is now taking advantage of packaging options (particularly vacuum packing now being installed throughout the New Zealand meat industry) that weren't available 18 months ago. Its own cutting plants in Toronto, New Jersey and Los Angeles are expected to have the capacity to cut about 40% of Devco's North American sales within two years. In Canada a second vacuum packing cutting line is being installed. Nearly 40% of Canadian sales should be portion controlled while in the US just under 20% are likely to be fabricated beyond primal cuts.

## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"Hey! You! . . . No cutting in!"



## THE FAMILY FARM

Those of us who are involved in full-time small commercial farms in the Atlantic region are fond of pointing out that the family farm has been proven time and time again to be the most efficient mode of food production. What we fail to point out, however, is that this is because the family farm exploits the unpaid labour of women and children. If I were to be paid a wage for even the field work and animal husbandry I do, let alone the record-keeping, organizing, catering, etc. there is no way the farm would be viable, let alone efficient.

Why, then, continue to defend the family farm? The virtue of this particular type of organization is not that it is the property of one family - indeed, in these days the very definition of "family" becomes problematic - but that it is a system in which the people who do the work are in control of making the decisions about that work.

There is certainly a parallel between the exploitation of the unpaid labour of women and children on family farms in Canada, and the exploitation of peasants in the Third World (many of them women and children too). But at the same time, there is a parallel between the notion of workers' control both here and there as a key which might open the future of a genuinely sustainable agriculture and economic system for all of us. C.K.

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## PRETEND THIS IS THE POLISH MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE

In the last issue of the Ram's Horn, we reported that a small group of farmers had begun to organize the National Farmers Union in Nova Scotia. Commented N.S. Agriculture Minister Roger Bacon, speaking to the Federation of Agriculture on Dec. 9th:

"I have had some concerns this past year, particularly when I heard there was a move to have another general farm organization started in this province. I cannot support such an idea and as far as I am concerned, there is only room for one such organization. This Federation has served farmers of this province well and I do not support any action which will weaken your organization." In a later interview, he added that farmers can be better served by the Federation commodity group structure with their well-forged links to government bodies.

## EDITORIAL: COUNTRY GUIDE, December 1983

"The C.F.A. ... would do well to assess its current usefulness to farmers. ...On domestic issues, farmers have come to expect similar behaviour from the C.F.A. and provincial umbrella groups. Meeting after meeting produces the same results: agreement to agree on the most general of general principles, and agreement to disagree on anything the least bit controversial.

If that's all the C.F.A. and its affiliated organizations can manage, farmers are right to look for an alternative. The goal of consensus at any cost isn't working and isn't serving farmers. ..."



# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
-Joshua 6:5

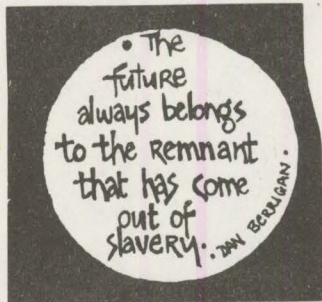
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As THE RAM'S HORN begins its fifth year of publication, another dimension is being added: THE RAM'S HORN will also be the newsletter of The Nutrition Policy Institute.

Long-time readers will be familiar with the development of our perspective: from a critical view of sheep farming in Nova Scotia, to the political issues involved in agricultural "policy", and on to the national and international issues in agriculture and the food system. The Nutrition Policy Institute is really just the next step. The "manifesto" of the Institute will appear in the January issue.



GOVERNO  
**PARANA**  
JOSE RICHIA  
Secretaria da Agricultura

## Alternative Agriculture

by David Patriquin

A major revolution - or as they prefer to describe it, "evolution"- is taking place in Brazilian agriculture: a number of prominent politicians and agronomists are advocating the replacement of the conventional, chemical-intensive type of agriculture by a non-chemical, "organic" (ecological, biological) agriculture.

There are many reasons for their disenchantment with conventional agriculture. First, since the introduction of intensive techniques to Brazil twenty

to twenty-five years ago, yields have increased by only 5%. Why this is so is not completely clear; erosion and compaction are certainly contributing factors. Whatever the reason, the result has been increasing dependence on agrochemicals (most of which are imported) without proportionate increases in yield.

Secondly, there has been an appalling number of deaths associated with use of "agrotoxics" (Brazilian term for pesticides). In the State of Parana alone, there were 34 reported deaths last year, and more than 1500 persons were treated for poisoning.

Third: There has been conspicuous deterioration in the environment. Many attribute the severe flooding that occurred in southern Brazil in the last few years to mismanagement of land for agricultural purposes.

continued...



Fourth, researchers have become frustrated with their inability to make agriculture more profitable.

Finally, there is growing recognition that a chemically-intensive type of agriculture cannot feed the poor.

In April of 1984, over 2000 people attended a meeting of Alternative Agriculture held at Petropolis, in the State of Rio de Janeiro. Twenty-five state secretaries of Agriculture, Health and Environment present at the meeting signed a document committing them to "redirection" of research and to more stringent monitoring and regulation of agROTOXIN use.

As the first stage in the redirection of research, the Agronomical Institute of Parana hosted a National Meeting on Alternative Agriculture Research in early December of 1984. Parana is a key agricultural state in Brazil (major cash crops include soybeans, wheat, coffee, cotton and cane) and the Agronomical Institute is perhaps the most prestigious in the country.

The meeting was opened by Claus Germer, State Secretary of Agriculture, and one of the most outspoken advocates of organic agriculture. He remarked that the "pasteurized bureaucracy" has never made critical changes itself, that changes of this type will meet a lot of resistance but that they MUST be effected, that this is crucial to the survival of the country. He recounted the development of the animal traction program. Many laughed at it in the beginning, but it is now a huge success (and Brazilian manufacturers are designing and producing implements specifically for horse traction).

Luis Machado, president of the Brazilian Federation of Agronomists, was another strong advocate of organic agriculture. Proof of its practicality was presented by Yoshido Tsuzuki, originally a professional agronomist and pesticide expert who for the last twelve years has been raising poultry and producing vegetables organically on a 300 hectare farm in Sao Paulo State. He talked about the relationship between soil health and plant health, drawing upon Japanese literature, little known or recognized in the West, to explain it. In the last 7 to 8 years, he has had no problems with pests and diseases, which he attributes to a balanced plant nutrition and to naturally induced immunity in the organic system.

Tsuzuki believes that recent declines in production in coffee and other perennials are due in large part to acidification of subsoils resulting from use of nitrogen fertilizer. He advocates use of "nitrohumates" in combination with other organic techniques to deal with this problem.

Tsuzuki's success is a major reason for the credibility given to the organic approach in Brazil today.

On the second day of the meeting, presentations were made by a Chilean, a German, and myself on organic agricultural systems in Chile, Germany and Canada respectively. About 5 years ago, Miguel Altieri (now a professor in biological control at Berkeley in California) and four colleagues purchased some land in Chile. They drew upon the fundamental principles of organic agriculture (diversity, soil cover, recycling) to "design" a self-sufficient, low input system. It is now functioning well and individual small farmers or groups brought together by church organizations reside at the farm for varying intervals to learn how it functions. While they do so they live



entirely off of its produce. Ironically, Altieri says, the climate for practicing this type of agriculture is better today than it was under Allende: under Allende, the government gave peasants fertilizers and pesticides, but today they have absolutely nothing!

Hardy Vogtman from Germany described his collaboration with a manufacturer to design and produce tillage implements suitable for organic agriculture - which he says in Europe must be highly mechanized. I described the scientific observations I and my students have made over the last 5 years on a laying hen/grain farm in the Annapolis Valley, N.S. in the course of its (successful) transition from conventional to organic techniques.

Each presentation was followed by lengthy discussions in which the pros and cons, the weaknesses and the strengths, the philosophy, the principles and the economics of organic agriculture were vigorously debated. It was this aspect of the meeting that I found most impressive. This is a country about to throw off the shackles of a dictatorship, a country that is struggling with the shackles of IMF loans, a melting pot of Portuguese, Africans, native Indians, Germans, Italians and Japanese which generated incredible vigor and competence; and all of its diversities and energies were thrown around in the discussions. ... They were profound, honest discussions, dealing with the soul of a nation and its roots in the land and its people.

Against the backdrop of Bhopal, of starvation in Africa, and of the militarization of space, I found them encouraging to say the least. At best, I could hope that the Brazilians had initiated a process that would one day bring an end to the conflict between man and nature.

\* \* \* \* \*

A FEW SNAPSHOTS FROM THE NFU ANNUAL CONVENTION (Charlottetown, Dec 3-7/84)

... The young people who had participated in the Canadian-Caribbean youth exchange using skits and dialogue to explore the profound contradictions they were exposed to in learning about both the agricultural and political problems of that region ... and a little later, the very competent chairing of the plenary session by a 19-year-old....During discussion of a resolution on the new national security service, an Ontario farmer describing how she gathered together a few other women to fight the destruction of their tobacco marketing board - and as a result has had her phone tapped and been harrassed in other ways by the RCMP for the past 3 years....The interruption of the proceedings to demonstrate in support of an Island farmer in financial difficulties with the bank....The intense discussion in the lobbies of various people's experiments with non-chemical farming - "I've only been doing it for three years and I'm not sure it works yet"....And the constant refusal of delegates to waste time in chatter when there is so much to learn from one another: a man from Manitoba who had been insistent that I save a dance for him at the social, finally whirled me onto the dance floor and whispered in my ear: "Now, what exactly is happening with this potato marketing business?" ....C.K.

\* \* \* \* \*

"YOUR MORNING SMILE" from the Globe & Mail 26/12/84

One kid hauled out a packing box and made a sign for it that read SALOON. Another kid ran up, pounded on the top of the box and said, "Gimme a rye!" Another, much younger one, sidled up and demanded: "Gimmer a whole wheat!"



# EAT UP, IT'S GOOD FOR YOU

February is MEAT AWARENESS MONTH! Its aim? In the words of the Canadian Meat Council: "an excellent opportunity for your company to relay a positive message about meat to the public". The background sheet, prepared by Agriculture Canada, the Canadian Meat Council (representing the packers), along with the Canadian Pork Council, the Beef Information Centre, and the Canada Sheep Council, gives four objectives:

- 1) To develop and extend the positive story of meat...
- 2) To ... reinforce positive perceptions of meat in today's diet.
- 3) To stimulate consumption and utilization of Canadian red meats.
- 4) To enhance the credibility of red meat in today's diet with the media and health professionals.

This is apparently a rather modest effort: \$20,000 from the participating groups listed above, \$20,000 from AgCanada's Canadian Agriculture Market Development Fund, and ... three full-time staff people assigned by AgCanada to assist with the program.

(One might note that the name of the Canada Sheep Council was on the promotional material before the Council, such as it is, met to discuss the matter. It was no big deal, amounting to \$500, but the principle of democratic organization remains.)

In introducing the program, the coordinator commented that "the consumer is just plain confused about meat," and, "more and more young people are turning off meat, turning vegetarian".

In 1979 AgCanada published a very sophisticated computer-based study of Food Demand and Nutritional Requirements in Canada... with projections for the period 1976-2001. The contrast between these projections and reality is breathtaking: According to the AgCanada study, beef consumption should rise from 50 kg in 1976 to 75 kg in 1986 and 111 kg in 2001 (other projection models had consumption ranging from 88 to 138 kg per capita). This does not lend much credibility to the professional forecasters, but it may offer a partial explanation for the big federal-provincial push to expand beef production in the late 70's. Reality, however, never did look quite like this, as the following figures show:

## Per Capita Consumption of Red Meats in Canada (Basis: Cold Dressed Carcass Weight)

	Five-year Average 1974-1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
			- kg -			
Beef .....	47.6	39.9	39.5	40.7	40.5	40.1
Veal .....	2.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.7	1.7
Mutton and Lamb .....	1.0	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8
Pork .....	25.7	29.1	31.3	30.1	27.8	28.6
Offal .....	1.7	1.4	1.9	1.4	1.3	1.4
<b>TOTAL RED MEATS .....</b>	<b>78.1</b>	<b>72.9</b>	<b>74.9</b>	<b>74.5</b>	<b>72.0</b>	<b>72.6</b>

Source: Statistics Canada

Canada Packers, who ought to know, figures beef consumption is likely to decline 5 to 10% in 1985 and 1986, while pork consumption increases about 5%. A more startling figure comes from the American Sheep Producers Council: "ASPC's targeted consumer group is serving lamb more often this year than last...: net gains of 5% in serving lamb more often while reporting a net loss of 26% in serving fresh meat in general."



In September the Ontario Pork Producers published a study that recognized that "Today's consumer is concerned with health and safety, demanding leaner meats, reduced additives in processed products and clearer product labelling." The report called for measures to improve the efficiency of farmers, promote consumer sales and improve exports. "An improved advertising campaign to dispel negative attitudes towards pork" was one of the recommendations.

The Cattlemen propose to do their bit, too, according to Breeder and Feeder (Sept-Oct/84), the monthly magazine of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association:

The new TV commercial "Lookin' Good, Beef" commenced on air October 1st. It shows beef in a contemporary setting, with active, lean, healthy people of all ages. Taste appeal is still an important element of the commercial which depicts a variety of appetizing beef dishes.

The magazine ad emphasizes the low fat, low calorie and high iron content of beef. The first ad appears in November issues of Chatelaine, Canadian Living and Homemakers and points out that **you can have steak for less calories than a tossed salad with dressing.** That's right! Check the ad for details.

The new campaign strategy was adopted after considerable research showed that nutrition concerns now exceeded price concerns as the major consumer issue with fat, calories and cholesterol being the major problem areas.

# BEEF SOUNDS GOOD

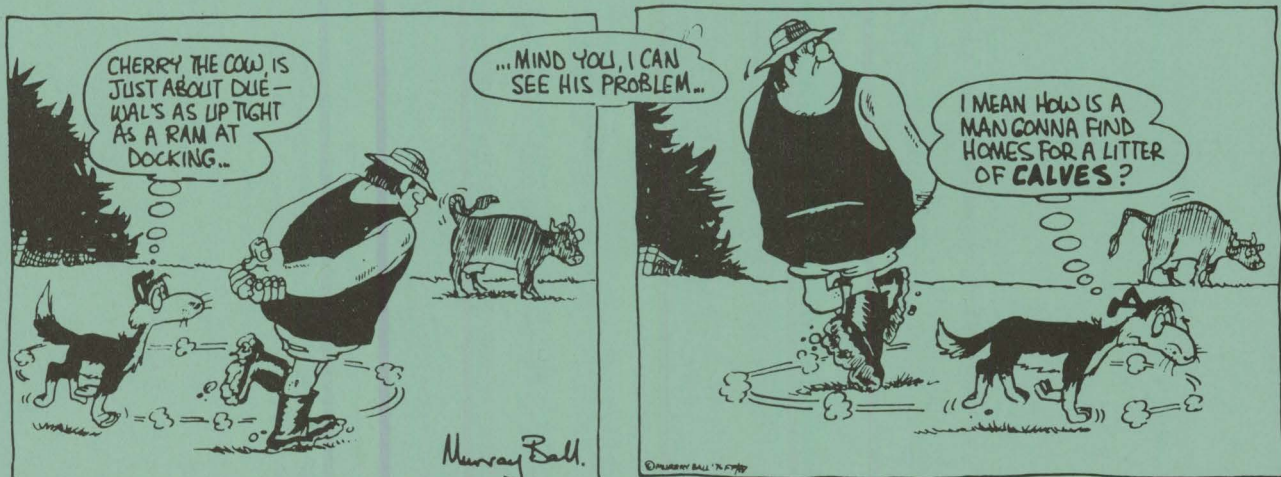
Our total advertising budget is approximately three million dollars per year, just over one-half is spent on TV advertising. The remainder is spent on magazine advertising, retail merchandising, summer BBQ promotions, promotions aimed at reaching the medical profession, evaluation and administration.

TV allows us to show the important visual elements of our product which create appetite appeal and provide emotional impact.

Commencing October 1, BIC will be back on air with a new T.V. commercial, designed to show consumers that beef is contemporary, nutritious and in keeping with today's lifestyle. Be sure to look for it!

One must question the knee-jerk response of throwing large sums of money into promotion, trying to get the public to eat more meat, without considering the need, the economics, or what may be legitimate reasons for the decline in consumption.

B.K.





# DRUGS IN FEED: FATTER CATTLE, FITTER BACTERIA

A New York Times editorial, quoted in the Chronicle-Herald, 13/8/84, states:

Antibiotics are a uniquely potent defence against bacteria, but they possess a fatal weakness: If used to excess, their power fails. That's what's now happening because of doctors who overprescribe antibiotics and farmers who routinely add them to animal feed.

Many disease bacteria are now resistant to six or more different antibiotics. They can be killed by others to which they have not yet acquired resistance. But the fallback antibiotics are often more toxic and more expensive than those they replace. And there's no guarantee that there will always be new antibiotics in reserve.

In a Special Report by William F. Allman in the Dec/84 issue, *Science* 84 notes:

Of the nearly 30 million pounds of antibiotics produced yearly in the U.S., about half is fed to farm animals. The Federal Food and Drug Administration estimates that 80 percent of swine, 60 percent of cattle, and 30 percent of chickens are raised with antibiotic-laced feed. "Farming would be completely different without antibiotics," says Jukes, now professor of biophysics at the University of California, Berkeley. By checking diseases and promoting growth, the drugs help make possible the densely packed, high-yield modern farm.

The NY Times editorial continues:

Several European countries long ago banned medically useful antibiotics from animal feed. They feared that the resistance genes were being transferred from animal bacteria to those that infect humans. In 1977 the Food and Drug Administration followed suit, proposing to reserve penicillin and tetracyclines for combating disease, and letting farmers switch to alternatives for promoting animal growth.

But Congress has persistently thwarted the proposal, demanding one new study after another. Producers of feed antibiotics, a \$250-million-a-year industry, contend that hospitals, not farms, are the main forcing grounds of resistance, and that it's mere speculation to suppose that disease bacteria that gain resistance on a farm ever in fact infect humans.

An article from NY Times News Service by Bill Keller (G&M 17/8/84) notes that this evidence is now forthcoming:

One new study, conducted by the Federal Centres for Disease Control and published last week in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, connected 18 cases of human poisoning, including one death, to hamburger meat infected with a resistant strain of *salmonella* bacteria. The study traced the source to a South Dakota farm, where the cattle had been fed on grain mixed with tetracycline.

Twelve of the victims had been taking antibiotics for other medical

problems. The authors said this medication, rather than helping contain the food poisoning, killed off competing organisms and allowed the resistant bacteria to flourish.

Another study by the same scientists, published in the journal *Science* in August, reviewed 52 outbreaks of salmonella infection and found that cases involving resistant strains of the bacteria resulted in a higher fatality rate.

*Science* 84 explains:

A bacterium's ability to counter antibiotics is often coded into a tiny loop of genetic material called a plasmid. When two bacteria come in contact, a plasmid in one bacterium can transfer a copy of itself to the other. Thus some researchers fear that the resistance to a particular antibiotic, once it is coded into a plasmid, could spread to other bacteria including ones dangerous to humans.

The transfer rates of plasmids are typically very low, says Harvard microbiologist Thomas O'Brien, but the presence of an antibiotic gives resistant bacteria a competitive edge. "Only one in 10 million may acquire resistance," he says. "But that's enough, because the antibiotics kill all the others."

Bill Keller points out that substitute growth-promoting drugs have been developed and are extensively used by the producers of broiler chickens;

**Pork and beef producers, however, have resisted the change. Drug companies say the substitutes are not as good at preventing disease when animals are packed together.**

Scientists in industry also argue that even if antibiotics were eliminated from animal feed, their widespread use to combat infections in animals and humans alike would permit the continued evolution of resistant bacteria.

*Science* 84 agrees:

Removing antibiotics from feed may help check the proliferation of drug-resistant plasmids, but it's uncertain that a ban will return bacteria to their native, vulnerable state. "Less use of antibiotics might have prevented the problem," says O'Brien. "The interesting biological question is can you go back? Can you go home again?"

and Keller concludes:

"I would be perfectly willing to admit that human misuse is perhaps more important," said Richard Novick, an outspoken critic of medicated feed who is director of the Public Health Research Institute in New York. "I would argue you have to control both. Animal use is indiscriminate and easier to control."



## GOOD NEWS

from YEAR ONE, the newsletter of the Jonah House community in Maryland, USA

A glimmer of hope shines from the Sperry Software Pair in Minnesota. On Aug 19, 1984, John LaForge (28) and Barbara Katt (26) acted to disarm Trident II missiles by hammering on computer components and dousing them with blood at the Sperry Corp. plant in Eagan MN. Convicted by a jury in mid-Oct. the Sperry Software Pair were sentenced on Nov. 8 by US District Judge Miles Lord, who made the following statement:

"It is the allegation of these young people that they committed the acts here complained of as a desperate plea to the American people and its government to stop the military madness which they sincerely believe will destroy us all, friend and enemy alike. As I ponder over the punishment to be meted out to these two people who were attempting to unbuild weapons of mass destruction, we must ask ourselves: Can it be that those of us who build weapons to kill are engaged in a more sanctified endeavor than those who would by their acts attempt to counsel moderation and mediation as an alternative method of settling international disputes? Why are we so fascinated by a power so great that we cannot comprehend its magnitude? What is so sacred about a bomb, so romantic about a missile? Why do we condemn and hang individual killers while extolling the virtues of warmongers? What is that fatal fascination which attracts us to the thought of mass destruction of our brethren in another country? How can we even entertain the thought that all people on one side of an imaginary line must die, and if we be so ungodly cynical as to countenance that thought, have we given thought to the fact that in executing that decree we will also die? Who draws these lines and who has so decreed?

"How many of the people in this democracy have seriously contemplated the futility of committing national suicide in order to punish our adversaries? Have we so little faith in our system of free enterprise, our capitalism and the fundamental concepts that are taught us in our constitutions and in our several bibles, that we must, in order to protect ourselves from the spread of foreign ideologies, be prepared to die at our own hands? Such thinking indicates a great deal of lack of faith in our democracy, our body politic, our people and our institutions.

"There are those in high places that believe Armageddon is soon to be upon us, that Christ will soon come to earth and take us all back with him to heaven. It would appear that much of our national effort is being devoted to helping with the process. It may even be a celebration of sorts. When the bombs go off, Christ won't have to come to earth - we will all, believers and nonbelievers alike, meet him halfway.

"The anomaly of this situation is that I am here called upon to punish two individuals who were charged with having caused damage to the property of a corporation in the amount of \$33,000. It is this self-same corporation which only a few months ago was before me accused of having wrongfully embezzled from the U.S. Government the sum of \$3.6 million. The employees of this company succeeded in boosting the corporate profits by wrongfully and feloniously juggling the books. Since these individuals were all employees of a corpora-



tion, it appears that it did not occur to anyone in the office of the Attorney General of the United States that the action of these men constituted a criminal conspiracy for which they might be punished. The government demanded only that Sperry pay back a mere 10% of the amount by which the corporation had been unlawfully enriched. Could it be that these corporate men who were working to build weapons of mass destruction received special treatment because of the nature of their work?

"I am now called upon to determine the amount of restitution that is to be required of the two individuals who have done damage to the property of Sperry. The financial information obtained by the probation officers indicates that neither of the defendants owes money to anyone. While Ms. Katt has no assets, Mr. LaForge is comparatively well endowed. He owns a 1968 Volkswagen, a guitar, a sleeping bag and \$200 in cash.

"The inexorable pressure which generates from those who are engaged in making a living and a profit from building military equipment, and the pork-barreling that goes on in the halls of Congress to obtain more such contracts for the individual state, will in the ultimate consume itself in an atomic holocaust. These same factors exert a powerful pressure upon a judge in my position to go along with the theory that there is something sacred about a bomb, and that those who raise their voices or their hands against it should be struck down as enemies of the people, no matter that in their hearts they feel and know that they are friends of the people.

"Now conduct of this sort cannot be condoned under the guise of free speech. Neither should it be totally condemned as being subversive, traitorous, or treasonous in the category of espionage or some other bad things. I would here in this instance take the sting out of the bomb, attempt in some way to force the government to remove the halo with which it seems to embrace any device which can kill and to place instead thereon a shroud, the shroud of death, destruction, mutilation, disease and debilitation.

"If there be an adverse reaction to this sentence, I will anxiously await the protestations of those who complain of my attempts to correct the imbalance that now exists in a system that operates in such a manner as to provide one type of justice for the rich and a lesser type for the poor. One standard for the mighty and another for the meek. And a system which finds its humanness and objectivity is sublimated to military madness and the worship of the bomb.

"A judge sitting here as I do is not called upon to do that which is politically expedient or popular but is called upon to exercise his calm and deliberate judgement in a manner best suited to accomplish and accomodate and vindicate the rights of the people acting through its government and the rights of those people who are the subject matter of such actions. The most popular thing to do at this particular time would be to sentence them to a ten-year period of imprisonment, and some judges might be disposed to do just that."

... The judge then imposed 6-month suspended sentences, as supporters cheered in the courtroom. WE REJOICE WITH THEM!



# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
- Joshua 6:5

Published 6 times/year: subscriptions \$6 (\$10 institutional) to:  
Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. #3, Scotsburn, Nova Scotia BOK 1R0

## BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

For advertising information call (416) 585-5600

"Business opportunities": that is the heading for the ads for franchises in the papers. Some require a mere \$10,000 while others may have a price tag of \$200,000 or more. They run all the way from a distributorship for video games to having your own supermarket. All are presented as opportunities to run your own business and make a pile of money. The distributor, when selling a franchise, is selling a package that will include regional or national promotion, a training program for owner and staff, a store design and merchandising program. The distributor will also supply all the inputs in most cases.

A recent article on Dominion Stores pointed out that "Dominion and Steinberg both fell behind the leaders in getting into wholesaling - and expanding their supply networks to restaurants, convenience stores and independent supermarkets through franchising.... A dozen years ago, Loblaw Co. Ltd. saw the writing on the wall.... Today about 60% of Loblaw's revenue is derived from wholesaling, which is carried out on a cost-plus fee basis that protects profit margins during retail price wars.... Statistics Canada keeps reporting that independents such as... IGA... and a growing number of convenience stores are eating into market share. But what it fails to say is that these so-called independents are really controlled by the major wholesalers..." (Globe & Mail Dec. 5/84)

Virtually every aspect of retailing has been struck by this racket, as a visit to any large mall will indicate.

### OWN YOUR OWN Business Opportunity Centre

If you have management, financial and people skills, don't let this opportunity pass you by. Investigate this proven profitable franchise plan. We are North America's largest broker network. Call Garin at (416) 497-1545 or 268-5414 for details.



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NO. 24 JANUARY 1985

### INVESTORS

The largest operation in the world

What we are seeing is the shedding of the high risk, labour intensive aspects of retailing, spinning these off as owner-operated business flogging whatever-it-is to the public while the seller of the franchise and of all the goods and services to the retailer works on a cost-plus basis, thus ensuring profitability. If the goods don't sell, in most cases it won't be the wholesaler that gets stuck, it will be the family that bought the franchise in order to be independent and make a good living.

It should be almost unnecessary to point out that most convenience stores and other franchises operate far more than eight hours a day and often utilize unpaid family labour (strikingly like the 'family farm'). The wholesaler, on the other hand, may work a 35-hour week with a stable, even unionized, labour force.

In the Maritimes we see an interesting variation of this with Sobeys. The family business operates a constantly expanding chain of supermarkets - 85 now - under their own name, but they also franchise the QUIK-PIKS and operate TRA Foods and other suppliers, so that as wholesalers, Sobeys supplies their own supermarkets, the franchised QUIK-PIKS, and a great variety of "independents" who purchase their goods through one of Sobeys' wholesale businesses. One of Sobeys' competitors, Atlantic Wholesalers, carries on in the same fashion, their line of franchised convenience stores being called the QUIK-MARTS.

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NATIONAL VIDEO FRANCHISE

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**I F I HAD GONE INTO BUSINESS FOR MYSELF 10 YEARS AGO, I WOULD BE FINANCIALLY SECURE TODAY!**

**HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SAID JUST THAT!**

Today is not too late. MAACO Auto Painting & Bodyworks, at the Dawn of our 2nd Decade

Dominion Stores and its Best-For-Less appear to be going down the drain as retailers, but Conrad Black will surely leave behind Dominion's wholesaling subsidiary, Willett Foods ("The Food Family [!]"). In any event, virtually every retail food supplier, whether an "independent" convenience store, restaurant, or large supermarket, is supplied by one of three or four wholesalers: Clover Produce/TRA Foods/Johnson & MacDonald (Sobeys), Atlantic Wholesalers (Loblaws/Weston), Co-Op Atlantic, and Willett Foods (Dominion). Thus the issue of who controls the food distribution system grows in importance. How responsive will the suppliers be to the real desires of the buying public rather than to the advice of their marketing experts, who will manage sales according to profitability?

**Look this Gift horse in the mouth.**



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This brass miniature has come to represent the exciting range of gifts offered in Panhandler Stores, Canada's fastest-growing gift and gourmet franchise - and it can mean money in your pocket. Join our coast-to-coast chain of more than 65 stores and benefit from our 15 years of retail experience. We have franchise opportunities in Toronto, Sudbury, Sarnia, Moncton, Calgary, Edmonton, Nanaimo and Kelowna. A minimum cash investment of \$40,000 to \$50,000 can make you part of the Panhandler family.

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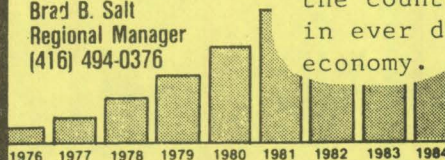
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Investment from \$75,000.00

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Join the natural movement to Orange Julius where good taste reigns supreme.

If all this is happening in the retail sector of food distribution, what is happening at the production end? How soon will we see franchise farm operations where the farm family puts up a limited amount of capital and assumes all the risks of a commitment to up a limited amount of capital and assumes all the risks, with a commitment to purchase all inputs from one supplier and then sell everything produced to one buyer, who happens to also be the supplier of inputs? (This is already the situation for most of the poultry industry in North America, and is becoming true for New Brunswick potato producers, among others.)

One might ask which is to be preferred: ownership by the Farm Loan Board or the Farm Credit Corporation, or by the Royal Bank, or McCains or Irvings?

A more intriguing question is, what happens to whatever entrepreneurial skills there may be in a community, when every business is a franchise with such buying power and public relations money behind it that no truly independent business can compete?

The capital outlay required for a small local business to compete with a franchise would simply be beyond reach. More importantly, franchising may mean that genuine entrepreneurial talents are lost to the society by being siphoned off into the operation of franchises which foster dependence on outside expertise. What does the child of a franchised convenience store operator really learn while growing up 'in the business'? My own opinion is that this gives the hinterland regions of the country an even greater handicap in ever developing a self-sustaining economy.

**BALLOON EXPRESS B.K. U. INC.**

is a unique party-service business that operates from a retail store environment.

Franchisees are required now for exclusive territories in southern Ontario.

We offer a complete turnkey package, a proven business system and complete training.

If you are interested, with an outgoing personality, we offer an investment of \$40,000.



In the past, farmers have been the providers of life-giving nourishment for their families and communities. Today, farmers produce for the "market", and nourishing food is a by-product for those who can afford it.

In Canada, at least since 1969, we have deliberately followed the path of industrializing food production, reducing the number of farms and farmers while increasing "productivity" through massive infusions of capital and <sup>11</sup> technology. Today the food provided by the farmer is just another raw material out of which the industrial sector - processing, packaging, distributing and marketing - makes profits.

Internationally, Canada's policy has been to produce for export those crops for which it claims to have competitive economic advantage, particularly cereal grains and oilseeds. At the same time, Canada imports food from countries where cheap labour subsidizes the multinational "food" companies which produce specialized crops for export, such as bananas and sugar. The net effect of this system is that Third World countries participating in this system are producing poverty and starvation for their own people while exporting crops which displace Canadian domestic production. Both in Canada and abroad, this agricultural system is also degrading the land and malnourishing it for the sake of short-term "efficiency".

The Nutrition Policy Institute regards such an agricultural system as both inefficient and unjust. In place of an industrial agricultural policy that produces malnutrition and poverty, we wish to develop a nutrition policy committed to providing nourishment and health both for the land and for the people.

We recognize that significant work is being done in a number of food-related areas, such as ecological (sustainable) agriculture, the use and control of pesticides and herbicides, and land use and degradation; while at the other end of the 'food chain', there is substantial research available about the level of national nutrition, malnutrition resulting from poverty, and international food aid and trade.

Building on this work, we will engage in whatever other research is necessary to provide the basis for a coherent national food policy. Particular attention will be paid to the structural aspects of the problem which can be overlooked when research is done in isolation: for example, the relationship between land use and land ownership and control; or between malnutrition and the structure of the food marketing system.

\* \* \* \* \*

PROGRESS REPORT: Organizing the NPI has been going on since September 1984.... individual and institutional contributions (\$25 to \$2000) provide support, expenses, and encouragement.... a small ecumenical group in Toronto is forming a non-profit corporation for funding.... scientists, health care workers, farmers and teachers are being drawn together as a regional (Maritimes) advisory committee.... and the organizer (Brewster) tries to fund-raise, study, and hold it all together as time permits among shifting responsibilities.



## Tradition and Modern Marketing : MAKING THE CAP FIT...

This week, a reader commented that the last Ram's Horn was "all politics". A comment received from another reader was "it takes more reading than it used to".

We won't apologize: we are engaged in a struggle to understand what is happening in our society from the perspective of a working farmer. It is political, and it isn't simple.

Take, for example, the issue of franchising highlighted in our first pages. It's not just another method of delivering goods to the public: it's part of a whole new way of life, called "marketing", which is being touted all around us as the solution to many of our problems. Certainly in farming: if we seem to be producing more of a certain commodity than anyone wants to buy, the answer isn't to question our production, or to ask why nobody is buying (they can't afford it? there is a healthier alternative? they don't know any better? it's cheaper imported from the Phillipines?). Our answer is **MARKETING**: push it hard enough and people will buy. And the techniques are the same, whether what we are marketing is beef, milk, sugar, shirts, or rock videos.

A recent article in the Manchester Guardian Weekly, by Jeremy Seabrook, discussing Mrs. Thatcher's description of Britain's striking coal miners as "the enemy within", poignantly outlines the concerns which beset us, as farmers in the Maritimes of Canada, as we struggle to see beyond "marketing" as the answer to our economic problems. He says:

.... The altered feeling of contemporary life is a consequence of newly invigorated and unchained market forces which have thrust deeper and deeper into our lives, turning into money, it seems, every aspect of experience, materialising even the most intangible things through the strange alchemy of marketing, so that even qualities as abstract as charity, care, compassion, hope or security become commodities no less than loaves, houses or coal.

The enemy within, if it exists, is to be sought elsewhere than in the besieged communities around the coalfields. It should be looked for in those who have allowed free passage once more to those forces which seem to have robbed us of so

many of those features we have cherished, and have substituted a necessary harshness for that phlegmatic good nature and more tolerant humour which many people were pleased to think of as essentially British.

.....

All those who have prated most gustily about patriotism and love of country are themselves the bearers of those ugly and denatured influences that have set us against each other. Those who have most noisily deplored the persistence of a residual class consciousness among the workers have never themselves for one moment lost sight of the interests of those they serve. It is they who have been busy warping and de-

stroying what is loved and familiar, tearing the heart out of the undistinguished little towns as well as the cities, tearing up the hedgerows, poisoning the beaches and polluting the landscapes — internal as well as external, turning the loyal, warm-hearted pit villages into places of siege, using up humanity with the same careless disdain with which they devour the natural treasures of the earth.

At the same time they insist that we grovel before every new investment, no matter where it comes from, no matter what vain, futile or destructive product it is for, even though it ravages the planet or threatens us all with annihilation....

Mr. Seabrook's depressing vision may or may not be correct, or complete — though his picture of present-day Britain sounds awfully familiar to a Maritimer. But what he does make very clear is that as farmers we cannot easily accept the facile response to our economic problems set forth by the present-day gurus in the banks, the advertising agencies, the seed/chemical companies, ... and even the Departments of Agriculture. C.K.

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*"The rushing river they call violent. But the riverbank  
pressing it in, nobody calls violent." Bertolt Brecht*



# MARKETING: PERSPECTIVES ON A PANACEA

"The time has arrived for agriculture to take the bull by the horns and make marketing the solution to its economic plight. ...The agri-food industry must step into the shoes of organized marketing and start climbing to the top of the marketing mountain!"

Farm Focus, Oct. 1984

## SUGAR MARKET SOURS

Sweeteners are being consumed in near-record quantities — 133 pounds for each person in the United States this year — but despite this vast craving for the taste of sugar, the sugar industry itself is languishing...

As the proportion of those in the 10- to 25-year age group declines, so does the demand for sugar-rich foods and beverages. Food and beverage companies, which use 75 per cent of the sweeteners, have willingly promoted the notion that less sugar in products is better.

Sugar is rapidly losing ground in the commercial sweetener market. In just two years, sugar has been almost entirely replaced in the soft drink

industry by either Nutrasweet, a low-calorie sweetener, or by high-fructose corn syrup, a substitute that costs about two-thirds as much as sugar. ...

The food industry has recognized that consumers are concerned about their diet; and it does not hurt to reduce ingredients like sugar, fats and salt because food with less of those products has higher profit margins.

The sugar industry is trying to fight back. Last month, members of the Sugar Association Inc., a trade group in Washington, decided to spend \$3-million on a consumer awareness campaign aimed at spreading "the sweet truth" about sugar.

Globe + Mail 11/12/84

## Marketing Cans

The Ontario canning industry is launching a major promotional campaign in an attempt to reverse the 15-year decline in the consumption of canned fruit and vegetables.

The members of the Canned Food Council and the Ontario Food Processors Association plan to begin a \$600,000 pilot project in February, 1985. If it proves successful, they will move into a \$2.25-million full-scale national campaign. ...

Brian Buckingham of Buckingham White Salituro Inc. of Toronto, is handling the advertising part of a multi-media campaign, which will be based on the slogans: "You can"

and "With cans, you can." ...

Mr. Buckingham said the public has a poor perception of canned goods. They are considered low in nutrition, low in quality and high in additives.

The industry hopes to remove this perception and rejuvenate the products. They intend to build on canned food's strong points of convenience, versatility, value and nutritional quality. ...

Consumption of canned fruit and vegetables has fallen by about 11 per cent in 10 years, enough to threaten the industry and cause serious concern to the steel industry, can manufacturers

and food processors.

Reduced profits have forced many canneries to sell or close.

The industry is loath to change to modern containers. Some of the new products are unproved or expensive to introduce and the industry has a built-in inertia — it has \$1.1-billion worth of can-making machinery in place, which would have to be replaced.

Also, cans are an important product for the steel and can-making industry — about \$250-million worth are sold every year.

Globe + Mail 5/12/84

## PROCESSORS SEEK EXPORT MARKETS

The Canadian Food Processors Association is setting up an industry-wide committee to stimulate export sales of processed fruit and vegetables. ...

The mandate and budget of the committee will be finalized at a meeting of the participants next week. The budget is expected to total about \$100,000

annually for three years and the financing will be provided by 37 food and canning companies and the Ontario Government. The federal Government is also expected to contribute.

The committee will take a three-pronged approach to export sales. It will try to improve market intelli-

gence for the industry and watch for market opportunities in such areas as Japan, the United States, the Middle East and the Caribbean. ...

The industry currently exports about \$200-million worth of food a year, a minuscule part of the \$35-billion in annual food sales.

Globe + Mail 4/12/84

## 'Cereal of Champions' finds fashion market fickle

General Mills Inc. of Minneapolis has been bitten by its little alligator.

The company, home of such powerhouse brands as Wheaties, Cheerios, Gold Medal and Bisquick, disclosed that troubles at its Izod Ltd. unit, which makes the shirt with the alligator emblem, would cost it 45 cents to 55 cents (U.S.) a share this fiscal year.

Despite repeated changes of management and futile efforts to reposition the brand, the chairman of General Mills, H. Brewster Atwater, said Izod Ltd. would lose money in its 1985 fiscal year, which ends next May.

"Izod's current-year sales prospects are down nearly 50 per cent from the peak," he said. The peak came in 1982, when sales of the

Izod knit shirts surpassed \$400-million, according to analyst estimates.

Izod is a small part of General Mills — the fashion group that includes Izod contributes just 10 per cent of the company's operating profit — but the decline in Izod's performance has affected the entire company. General Mills shares have

dropped at each new mention of Izod's troubles.

"Izod is not likely to keep General Mills from having record earnings and earnings per share," said Alan Greditor, an analyst at Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. of New York.

Globe + Mail 4/12/84

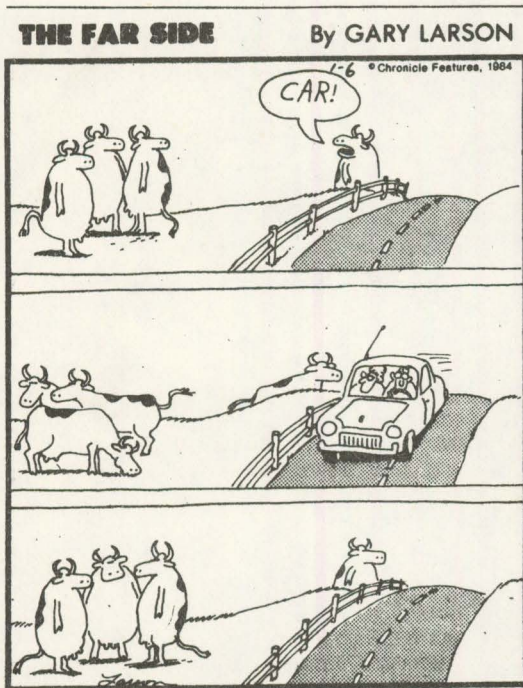
Outdoor outfitter Eddie Bauer Ltd., a unit of General Mills Canada Inc., Toronto, has been using the Canada goose symbol for a decade in Canada and for 60 years in the United States. T-shirts depicting the geese in hiking gear are popular at Eddie Bauer this year.

Globe + Mail 2/12/84



## READERS BEWARE:

### AGRO-TOXINS AND PBR: CONDITIONING AT WORK!



When you look at a cow, you see her from a certain perspective and any accurate description should acknowledge the place where the viewer is standing: in a barn loft looking down, from the milk stool, or in a car on the road by the pasture...

When an individual representing an association or a corporation presents a point of view, it is only honest to describe the perspective - the interest - of the author or speaker. When the Canadian Seed Trade Association (CSTA) publishes a little book - financed by the Canadian International Development Agency, the International Association of Plant Breeders for the Protection of Plant Varieties (ASSINSEL) and the American Seed Trade Association - one might well be advised to suspect a certain bias or to regard the book as propaganda for certain interests, in this case, the lobby pushing for patent legislation for genetic material - "Plant Breeders Rights" (PBR). (Should we not organize a counter-lobby for Plant Eaters Rights?)

One becomes immediately suspicious about a book whose foreword proclaims:  
"This book ... merely explains the truth ..."

Despite this disclaimer, the book is full of purportedly objective language used to deliberately mislead, confuse, and condition the reader who has no specialized background in the subject at hand.

"the raw material for criticism will always be present for any group seeking a cause to exploit ..."

Such a comment applies directly to this book, even though its intent is to deflect criticism. In fact, the moralistic, paternalistic tone of the whole tract is a dead giveaway for the absence of honesty and the thinly veiled self-interest.

This book, by the way, was distributed by Mr. William Leask, Executive Vice-President of CSTA. Mr. Leask, himself a plant breeder by training, is the lobbyist in Ottawa for CSTA seeking "Plant Breeders Rights". He also distributes a much more professional and attractive booklet entitled: "Feeding the 5000 Million", which proclaims that "the most cost-effective way of preventing famine is to breed more productive plant varieties. This sounds fine, unless you stop to think of the interest ASSINSEL (the publisher) might have in that activity.

It is not difficult to be persuaded by this booklet that attending to genetics, more fertilizer, and more chemicals will solve all the problems of the hungry. One doesn't need to be an "expert", however, to ask if the corporations represented by ASSINSEL don't see themselves reaping perpetual benefits in the form of royalties from every mouthful of grain consumed by the world's hungry people. Do the chemical companies that virtually control the seeds industry possibly have an intent to breed seeds that are dependent on inputs of chemical fertilizers or pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, etc.?



The reader of even the common press must be continually on the lookout for vested interests. For example, FARM FOCUS, a regional advertising vehicle distributed to all farmers in the Maritimes free of charge, often uses free handouts as filler or "news". In two issues in October, 1984, there were three articles that appeared to be "news" items but which, on close examination, were clearly propaganda pieces provided by chemical company lobbyists. In the October 10th issue there was an item about 'Advances in Western Agriculture' that made high claims for herbicides as the essential key to present farm productivity. Only the careful or suspicious reader would have noticed that the content of the article was, in fact, attributed to a Mr. John Oliver, Vice-President of Eli Lilly Canada and director of ELANCO division - Lilly's agricultural chemicals division.

In the very next issue, October 24, there were two articles datelined Jasper, Alberta, reporting on speeches made at the annual conference of the Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association (CACA). One speech advised the corporate representatives that "most of the changes to be brought about in the agricultural chemicals industry by bio-technology will be favourable."

In the same issue, another speech was reported, that of J.S. King, Chairman of CACA. He told the conference:

"while Canadian agriculture is still carried out in close and continuing harmony with nature, it has also become science-driven, research-based, capital intensive, high risk, and plugged into the information society as solidly as most of the other high-tech industries."

The significance of these comments only really becomes clear when it is kept in mind who was speaking and what interests he and the meeting itself represented.

From items such as these emerges the picture of a well-heeled, high-power lobby composed of representatives of the agricultural chemicals industries, bio-technology, and the seed companies, engaged in a skillful process of conditioning farmers and the public to accept their program for us.

When the onion growers of Ontario seek to import chemicals not licensed for use in Canada, as they are right now, it is a pretty safe bet that they will be getting support in their lobbying efforts from Mr. King and CACA. Whether this is in the interests of onion-eaters like myself, or even of the onion growers themselves in the long run, is open to question.

The proposed legislation for "Plant Breeders Rights" that died with the last Parliament will surely be reintroduced under pressure from the seed trade/chemical company lobby, hoping that the Opposition will not be looking, and that the present government will be more supportive. It is not merely a technical issue: it is crucial to the issue of who will control the world's food supply and on what terms, nothing less!

B.K.

For further information on the position of the seeds industry lobby, write to Mr. Leask at 2948 Baseline Rd (207), Ottawa, Ontario K2H 8T5. For more information on the issues at stake, read SEEDS OF THE EARTH by Pat Roy Mooney, available from DEC Bookstore, Toronto, The Red Herring, Halifax, or write to The Ram's Horn. (A tireless researcher and internationally recognized expert on the earth's genetic resources, Pat Mooney speaks on behalf of future generations rather than present opportunism.)



# GOOD NEWS

## Weaned Off Technology

**U**NDERWEIGHT babies who die in developing countries for want of expensive incubators could be saved if the 'kangaroo' technique pioneered in Colombia were adopted.

For years half of the babies born weighing between 500 and 2000 grammes at the San Juan de Dios Hospital in Bogota, Colombia, died. Today almost 95 per cent of them survive. Not a single baby of under 1000 grammes used to survive, but three out of four of these now live.

Normally underweight premature babies are placed in costly incubators for warmth and fed through gastric tubes. But the Colombian doctors pack the baby close to its mother's breast under her blouse or sweater. There the baby finds the warmth and natural food it needs. They stay packed together 24 hours a day.

When the baby is breast-fed, it has the immunological protection of the mother through her milk. This also eliminates the infection dangers a baby is exposed to when it is suddenly taken out of the incubator's 'protective' environment and placed in the generally unhygienic surroundings of a poor home.

One major weakness of premature infants is their inability to maintain a constant body temperature. The Colombians overcome this by looking upon the mother as the best incubator. They advise the mother to place her child directly on her breast so as to warm the infant - like a baby kangaroo dependent on its mother's pouch. They also encourage free feeding, appropriate affection and stimulation through the mother's singing, talking, her very heartbeat.

The approach has meant a substantial economy in bottled milk consumption (down from 300 jars to 30 a month), in the use of antibiotics, in fewer transfusions and tests. Even more importantly, it has reduced the need for incubators, which can cost as much as 12,000 dollars.

But the approach is also meaningful for the industrial world, where the care of premature babies is becoming dehumanized and overly technocratic at the expense of a healthy mother-child relationship. The cost of saving a low birth-weight baby by 'high tech' in a developed country can be as high as 100,000 dollars.

Paul Evan Ress, UNICEF

New Internationalist Dec/84

And some bad news: —

A report on CBC, Dec. 24 1984, noted that defence has replaced agriculture as Japan's 4th largest budget item: \$12.5 billion.

## Slicing it Thinner

Britain's National Institute of Agricultural Engineering has built a forage harvester which is designed to run on half the power required by conventional machines. Instead of chopping the grass, it slices it with thin rotary knives, thus using less power. It also features a pressure-release valve which automatically releases the cutters from their engaged position if a stone or other object is drawn into the machine.

## A New Twist...

Someone dumped an orange-peel-based grease remover on an anthill - and the ants died. Dr Craig Sheppard (of the University of Georgia) happened to notice, and wondered if citrus peel had insecticidal properties.

Preliminary investigations indicated that oil from orange, lime or grapefruit peel killed all the insects tested - but weren't toxic to humans or other vertebrates. Sheppard thinks that this natural insecticide could rid both livestock and humans of external parasites, be used for fumigating food-handling and storage facilities as well as for household pest control. For developing countries, many of which are citrus producers, the discovery holds promise of a low-cost, non-toxic pesticide with considerable potential for reducing food losses.

From World Development Forum 2/12.

New Internationalist 12/84

## And Another...

Caffeine may turn out to be an important insecticide. The February issue of Science 85 reports that James Nathanson, a neurologist at Harvard, has found that caffeine 'wreaks havoc in the nervous system' of several insects, including mealworms and mosquito larvae.

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## Good News?

A huge army of caterpillars is slowly eating its way across Kenyan farmlands and has even destroyed the manicured lawns of the capital, Nairobi.

A huge army of caterpillars is slowly eating its way across Kenyan farmlands and has even destroyed the manicured lawns of the capital, Nairobi.

The 'army worms', as they are known, are a variety of the *Spodotera Exempta*, a fluffy grey nocturnal moth.

The moths are confined to small colonies for most of the year but breed quickly during the rainy season, which has just ended, migrating with the wind and mating in flight.

At each stop, each female lays thousands of eggs which hatch into armies of caterpillars within five days. For the next two weeks the caterpillars eat up every green blade in sight before becoming encased in cocoons.

To date, most of the crops devoured by the worms have been on land owned by subsistence farmers. Kenya's rich farming land has scarcely been affected and, in any case, the pests do not eat coffee and tea, Kenya's main export crops and foreign-exchange earners.

Chronicle-Herald 11/12/84



# THE RAM'S HORN

*And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.*  
- Joshua 6:5

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## State Farms in Canada?

by Brewster Kneen

I've been spreading manure lately, and that gives me time to think. I've been thinking about "the State" - something we hardly consider in Canada. The State is what comes to mind when we speak of the Soviet Union or an authoritarian government.

With the next load of manure, I wonder where agricultural policy comes from and whose interests it serves. It does not seem to come from farmers, or there would not be such policies to eliminate farmers. Equally obviously, it does not come from the Federation of Agriculture as its annual reports and briefs indicate. Finally, it does not come from the Government either, since it is never the subject of debates or resolutions or discussions. (The last Chairperson of the House Standing Committee on Agriculture bemoaned the fact that his committee was merely a rubber stamp for the policies of AgCanada and the Minister.) This leaves unanswered the question of where real agricultural policy originates - and whose interests it serves.

The basic ingredients of agricultural policy since 1969 have been "rationalization" and industrialization. That is, fewer farmers operating mechanized ("technologized"?) farms with large amounts of borrowed capital according to prescribed management and business criteria. An increasing proportion of the capital which sustains agriculture today comes from the Federal treasury. The way in which this capital is allocated determines agricultural policy and ultimately the fate of individual farmers. To an extent, therefore, farmers are often managers of state farms, though few would regard themselves as such.

*continued next page.....*

No. 22

October 1984

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## Transition House Opens

The consequences of present economic and social policies are gradually forcing themselves into public recognition. The phenomenon of family violence is one which can no longer be passed off as an isolated or personal problem. Rural areas, when studied, show the same statistics as urban areas: one woman in ten is physically or emotionally battered by her husband or partner.

Back in 1982, when the Pictou County Women's Centre was beginning to discover the extent of this problem in our area, I mentioned it on Radio Noon. Shortly thereafter, at a meeting to plan the future of the program, the then-President of the Federation of Agriculture used those comments to indicate how out of touch I was with the rural community. But it has been with the support of rural and town people that the work in Pictou County continued for the next three years.

This week the Tearmann House for Battered Women, a temporary shelter for women and their children in a situation of family violence, opens its doors in New Glasgow. The house will serve Pictou, Guysborough and Antigonish counties. (The phone number is 752-0132.) It is heartening to see that, with the support of many individuals and organizations this first step is finally being taken.

C.K.



If production under this system were geared to the needs of consumers, one could argue the principle of regulating agriculture in the public interest. Therefore the question that concerns us here is, who does benefit by the system?

The farmer is seldom the real beneficiary of the "policies" of the State, though most of us have been sufficiently mystified (or stupefied) that we will defend these "policies". The fact is that the real beneficiaries are sure to be the corporate interests who manufacture and sell the fertilizer, the heavy equipment operators and manufacturers, the advertising agencies who get the marketing business, the consultants who make it appear that policies come from some external and therefore "public" source, and the banks who are involved at every turn. In red meats it is the processing sector, for example, that determines policy. This is reflected in Bill C-46, the "meat import" act, just as it is in the heavily state-supported promotional or "marketing" programs which are of benefit primarily to the processors, not the producers, of red meats. Increased beef consumption, if it has increased as a result of the multi-million dollar promo campaign, may well be of more benefit to Ireland or Australia than to Canadian farmers.

The implementation of an industrial policy for agriculture creates certain problems for the State, because some farmers realize that it is not in their own interests to go broke or to be forced off the farm to achieve the goals of State policy. Some farmers even question the wisdom of endless industrial production without regard to the full costs of that production or the needs of the public.

Two things are therefore helpful to the functioning of the State: the first is the public notion of freedom. Farmers, traditionally, have a high regard for their independence and personal freedom. At the same time, they seldom exercise it. Very often, in our present system, it is their fear of the State that inhibits them. What farmer will openly criticize an Ag Rep who must pass on any application for assistance under Provincial programs? What farmer will question Federal policy when his application for assistance on a new barn has to be approved by a Federal agent? And above all, who will air the dirty linen or raise questions about the loan criteria of the Farm Loan Board? When asked why they do not speak up about the situations they complain about privately, many a farmer has said they might need another loan some day! The State has a thousand forms of police. A hog farmer didn't want to be associated with the Farmers Union because he had the State police in his barn every week, he said. What he was referring to was the provincial inspector/graders. Never mind what the graders/inspectors themselves thought they were doing; it was the farmer's attitude that mattered, and consequently they became very effective police, encouraging the farmer to be a docile and dutiful participant in the system.

The second element which is helpful to the functioning of State policy is organizations that appear to be acting on behalf of the farmer while they actually obscure what is really happening. It also helps to have an organization that can do some of the housekeeping of the State to make it appear that there really is a role for "voluntary" organizations. How many people would regard the Federation of Agriculture as a State Organization for Farmers?



One must of course guard against confusing individuals of good will and public committment with the system for which they work. At the same time, one must ask what alternative they can pursue within the system when those for whom the system is supposed to work will not exercise their freedom to criticize or suggest? What alternatives are generated by a public that is convinced it must keep its mouth shut, except in private?

Annual meeting season is again approaching. It will be interesting to see if any of the State organizations will debate agricultural policy or discuss the causes of the present deepening crisis and the rapid disappearance of that most-hallowed insitution, the family farm. Chances are that the Federation of Agriculture will pass its usual resolution thanking the Department for its support during the past year, and a host of other resolutions calling for a pile of subsidies, the administration of which can entertain and reward a small army of mercenary "agrologists", ex-farmers, and accountants. Actual debate on issues will probably be left once again to the democratic organizations of workers, such as the Maritime Fishermen's Union, the National Farmers Union, and others.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### BLUEBERRY MARKETING

Congratulations to the blueberry growers in Cumberland County, who, faced with disastrous prices from the processors, decided to fly in the face of expert advice and tackle the local market. Working with Co-Op Atlantic, Crossroads Co-Op test-marketed 5000 pounds of fresh blueberries through the consumer co-ops at a price to the grower of about 60¢/lb. The experiment was a great success, with demand exceeding supply (which was limited by hand-cleaning equipment).

We were also pleased to see the success of our neighbour's U-Pick blueberries on his small field. He charged 60¢/lb and the response was excellent.

*Chronicle-Herald 10/8/84 quotes Roger Bacon, N.S. Agriculture & Marketing minister: "I am advised that the market outlook is good, export markets have been building for the last eight years. The European, Japan and U.S. markets are taking about 80 per cent of Nova Scotia's production and will continue to take large quantities of blueberries from Nova Scotia."*

*The Nova Scotia government provided \$316,000 in 1983-84 to help growers clear 1,558 acres of land under the government's low bush blueberry land clearing policy. The amount of land cleared is nearly double the amount cleared in the 1982-83 fiscal year.*

Producers now figure the cost of production at 40-50¢/lb; processor price this year was about 20¢/lb.



# The Mysteries of Marketing

## Never Mind Nutrition ~ Give Me My Munchies!

Despite high unemployment, a sluggish economy, an aging population and the swing to nutritional foods, Canadians spent \$66-million more on munchies last year.

That is a rise of 8 per cent, for a total of \$850-million in confectionery items sold through food, drug and variety stores, said Everett Holmes, vice-president of industrial relations at A. C. Nielsen Co. of Canada Ltd., Markham, Ont.

Yet the population grew only by about 1 per cent and had fewer discretionary dollars to spend. Sales of all grocery items rose only 5 per cent last year.

Since 1980 — and throughout the recession — confections have far outstripped the growth in grocery sales. In 1980, munchies grew by 16 per cent, while total groceries rose 12 per cent. In 1981, confections jumped 20 per cent, compared with an over-all 14 per cent for groceries. In 1982, they rose 9 per cent, in contrast to an over-all 5 per cent.

While many munchies are considered junk food by health food proponents and a large part of the public, it is ironic that cookies and biscuits — generally considered to be healthier — “were among the first to be crossed off shopping lists,” ISL says in a report prepared for Canadian Grocer magazine, which devoted a large part of a recent issue to the importance of grocery stores learning to take better advantage of this growth market.

Despite a doubling of advertising budgets by the corporate bakers, the sweet biscuit market slipped 2 per cent last year.

Canada's beef producers are scrambling to find another advertising slogan after their planned campaign, called Good for you, beef, turned up in the rival pork campaign as Good for you, pork.

“It's one of those flukes,” said Eric Chidley, executive at Doyle Dane Bernbach Advertising Ltd. of Toronto, the firm hired by the Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board. “It one of those things where great minds think alike and fools seldom differ.”

## Slimmers Shun Pork

A growing distaste for meat by diet-conscious consumers is hurting sales of Ontario's 18,000 hog producers, but a major study on the industry has not proposed any radical solution to the problem.

With 4.3 million hog marketed in 1983, Ontario ranked as Canada's No. 2 hog producer, second to Quebec at 4.5 million hogs.

“Today's consumer is concerned with health and safety, demanding leaner meats, reduced additives in processed products and clearer product labelling.

“It will be most important that the misconception of pork as unfashionable or unhealthy be overcome if pork is to make substantial gains in this market.”

The report, compiled for the Ontario Pork Producers Marketing Board by a committee of hog farmers, agriculture researchers and government officials, shied away from recommending establishment of a supply management marketing board.

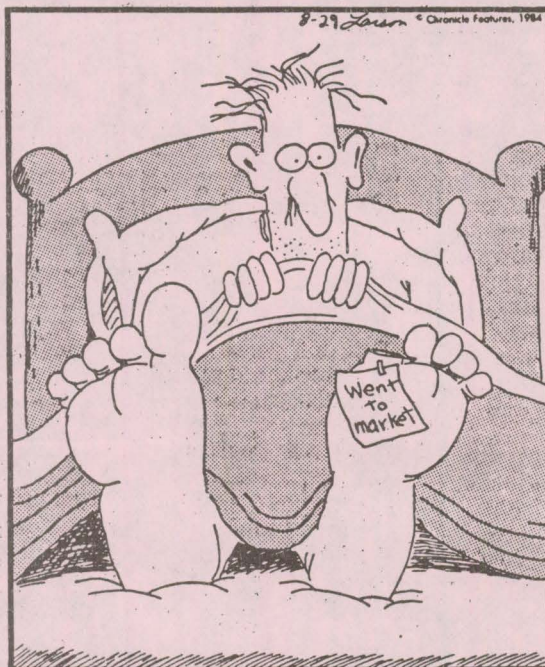
The report said conditions leading to the success of supply management do not exist.

Instead, the report called for more conservative measures to improve the efficiency of farmers, promote consumer sales and improve hog exports.

“An improved advertising campaign to dispel negative attitudes towards pork,” was one of the many recommendations in the report.

### THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Nielsen reported that the confectionery industry spent more than \$30-million on advertising last year. Yet retailers have yet to take full advantage of the growing preference for chocolate bars, shelled nuts, hard rolled candy snacks, potato chips, and chewing and bubble gum.

For example, the average grocery store sells four times

more in snack foods and potato chips than its drugstore rival, which outperforms the grocery

About 75 per cent of shoppers consider nutrition when buying food. When the product is viewed as not being nutritious, taste becomes the deciding factor. When shoppers look for a nutritionally balanced diet, they pay more attention to buying the “right” foods instead of excluding the “wrong” ones.

Globe + Mail 17/9/84 (Paul Goldstein)

At the end of June, the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Mr. Timbrell presented OCA President, Gerhard Schickedanz with a cheque for \$245,000.

The OMAF contribution is to constitute the shortfall OCA had in payment to the Beef National Advertising Program in the July 1983 to June 1984 period.

“Breeder and Feeder” (O.C.A.) July-Aug. '84

Globe + Mail 22/9/84



## Kitchen Federations Puzzle Peru Politicians

from an article by Michael Smith, *Globe + Mail* 20/9/84

LIMA — Lunchpails in hand, a line of women, children and elderly men chat on a dirt-floored back patio equipped with steaming kerosene stoves, work tables and benches. They glance at the bulletin board for the news, exchange the latest gossip or talk about the problems of Comas, a dirt-and-brick working-class neighborhood which terraces its way up a mountain slope on the northern outskirts of Lima. Cooks are distributing the day's lunch of soup and a thick stew.

For 50 families, this scene is repeated twice daily at the "union" family kitchen. Each family shares responsibility for preparing a breakfast of hot cereal and a hot lunch. At 15 cents, the main meal is the best buy in town, but for the participants it takes the bite out of hunger.

The union kitchen is the matriarch of a growing grassroots movement. Five years ago, several mothers got together to stretch their food budgets. Today more than 400 family kitchens are following their example, feeding an estimated 10,000 families in Lima's most impoverished districts.

Peru is struggling through the worst recession of the century. In shantytowns, meals of tea and bread have become common, and an inadequate diet is creeping into the middle class. A pediatrician at Lima's only children's hospital said four patients in five suffer from malnutrition.

But the kitchen movement is yielding other dividends by giving women a new self-esteem and awareness in a society dominated by Latin *machismo*. Social work-

ers say the kitchens constitute the largest women's rights organization in Peru, though its first concern is filling children's stomachs.

"We're learning that we can get by on our own," said Aide Massone, an energetic black grandmother and co-founder of the union kitchen. "We no longer have to hold out our hands for help all the time."

The first triumph for the women was getting out of their own solitary kitchens. Daily meal preparation at home, including outings to market, takes as long as eight hours, while the union kitchens take up only one day a week on average, and with the free time the women can become their families' second wage-earners. A recent survey showed that two-thirds of the participating women earn extra income from cottage industries such as washing clothes, street vending, or working in Lima's sweatshops.

The kitchens also give them a sense of community. They organize talks on nutrition, birth control, preventive health care and even women's rights and organization. Some kitchens provide day-care centres for working mothers.

"When we were isolated in our homes, problems seemed insurmountable," said Cirila Palomino, a leader of the Comas women's federation. "But side by side here in the kitchen, they are cut down to size."

The kitchens have also met resistance on other fronts. The police have harassed them for being "terrorists" because of their mysterious meetings — at which they plan menus. Political

parties have alternately courted them and tried to manipulate them as a potentially powerful political force. At a recent convention of shantytown organizations, the predominantly male leadership relegated the kitchen federations to the status of "fraternal observers" rather than giving them voting rights.

"The traditional male leaders are wary of the kitchen federations because they don't know how to control them," an organizer said.

Spurred by the economic crisis, representatives of more than 100 kitchens met this year for the first time in a city-wide conference to share recipes, experience and concerns. A co-ordinating committee was set up, and the organization has started to edit a magazine and bulletins, to stage marches against cost-of-living increases and to negotiate with municipal authorities for better public services. It has also got in touch with kitchens in other cities and consumer organizations in other countries.

The success of the movement, which is self-sustained aside from some food donated by church charities, has finally started to attract the Government's attention. Officials admit that attempts to improve nutritional standards have been ponderous and underfinanced.

The leftist municipal government of Lima is carrying out a pilot project, supplying weekly provisions to kitchens on credit and at wholesale prices. Almost all the family kitchens make daily purchases at neighborhood markets. An even more ambitious idea is to put the kitchens in direct contact with farm co-operatives.

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Peace activists protesting NATO manoeuvres in Germany have been called "anarchists and criminals" by a U.S. Army general. The West German Defense Minister added: "The American soldiers are guests here. They protect our county, our citizens, our freedom, and thus have a right to protection from violent people."

The West German state was considering charging the peace activists with disturbing the peace.

What kind of upside-down logic is it that calls peace demonstrators criminals, that wants to defend the army from the public, and that seems to regard nuclear weapons as completely non-violent?



## TECHNOLOGY: MAKING CHOICES

The following article was passed on to us by our dentist, after a vigorous discussion one evening on the choice we both seem to have to make between basic health care and technological remedies. It's from the summer issue of the Journal of the Canadian Dental Association. Talking about technology and medicine, and the staggering cost of what he calls the "health care industry", the author refers to a book by Lewis Thomas in which he categorizes three levels of technology:

The first level turns out to be "non-technology". It is expressed by the physician holding the patient's hand, calling him/her by their first name, getting to know the family and really caring about its well-being. It is the heart of humane medical and dental practice. It is essential to the emotional support of the patient. But it has not dried-up the lungs of patients with cystic fibrosis. It has not rescued patients with AIDS. It has not restored the distorted joints of patients with rheumatoid arthritis. Non-technology may be the soul of medicine, and it may be absolutely indispensable to medicine, but it bears a very high price tag.

The next level of technology is "halfway technology". It attempts to make up for disease or postpone death. It is the glamorous side of modern medicine. It makes the

newspapers and the TV soap operas, which will always keep us up to date on recent developments. It is what the general public usually takes for medical progress. Halfway technology is represented by the respirator that keeps people alive even when they can no longer perceive the world around them. It is the artificial heart that was implanted in the chest of Barney Clark. It is the dialysis unit that maintains countless patients in renal failure. But a coronary bypass does not reverse arteriosclerosis. Special nursing homes do not put things right in Alzheimer's disease and neither surgery, radiotherapy or chemotherapy actually stop us from contracting cancer. The halfway technology has indeed worked wondrous miracles, but sometimes the treatment is worse than the disease, and the price is always astronomical.

Then there's the third level of technology. It is not glamorous, but it turns out to be cost effective. It is accessible to just about everyone and most important, it prevents disease. Thomas calls this the "high technology". High technology can be achieved only when we come to understand the fundamental mechanisms of disease. It is the technology that leads to the virtual elimination of diphtheria, smallpox, polio and a host of other deadly afflictions. What is the cost of vaccination compared to the resources that must be mobilized to save the life of someone who has developed tuberculosis, aplastic anemia or leukemia? Someday we'll be able to prevent heart disease, cancer, multiple sclerosis, as well as other significant illnesses. The cost of prevention will turn out in all instances to be a pittance.

The parallels with agriculture are pretty clear. Agriculture is no more an "industry" than is health care; thinking of it as such is just an indication that we have stalled half-way through the process of technologicalization. We are stuck at the half-tech of sponges, implants and transplants, of cloning and spraying. It is ferociously expensive, and as we are beginning to realize, if the problem is feeding the world's people, the half-tech is not solving the problem. It's tempting to engage in neo-Luddite ranting against "technology"; but perhaps it will be more useful to call for the completion of the technological revolution.

**A cattle-breeding consultant dreams of a bank full of human embryos ready for sale to mothers desperate for a child**

### from MAKING A BUCK ON BABIES

by Martin Stuart-Harle : Globe + Mail 4/20/84

**L**ast month, at the Harbor-UCLA Medical Centre in Torrance, Calif., a healthy baby girl was born. Like everybody else, she started out as an egg waiting for a sperm. Unlike everybody else, she developed in the wombs of two women. She was not a test-tube baby; she was a transplanted baby.

So far there have been only two successful womb-to-womb transplants in the world, both at Harbor-UCLA.

Now, a Chicago livestock-breeding consultant, with the appropriate name of Richard Seed, is hoping to cash in on the medical procedure.

He and his brother Randolph own Fertility and Genetics Research Inc., which is financing the Harbor-UCLA embryo-transplant research. FGR has set its sights on creating a profit-making "adopt-an-embryo" network across the United States and has applied for a patent on the process.

Within the next few weeks, the application will be challenged before the U.S. Patents Office's appeal board by an organization that objects to human reproduction for money. Mr. Seed scoffs. "I see society going through three stages — shock, acceptance and demand," he says. "Our work is only one aspect of the biological revolution.

Continued next page...



Ultimately, we are looking at lengthening man's lifespan."

His critics see the potential differently. "The Seed brothers are beginning to reduce human reproduction to a consumer product, to be bought and sold in the marketplace," says Jeremy Rifkin, spokesman for the People's Business Commission, the Washington-based, non-profit watchdog group that hopes to torpedo the brothers' bid for a patent. "If we start patenting a whole form of human reproduction, it shows a marked change about how we conceptualize the sacredness of life."

Embryo transplanting has been used extensively in high-tech livestock breeding, and indeed, the Seed brothers have a background in the cattle business. "They want to stop us selling (human) embryos . . . I don't know why," Richard Seed said in an interview from Chicago.

Critics of the embryo-transplant process admit there is a long way to

go before the procedure reaches the present level of high-tech livestock breeding, where whole strains have been intensively selected. Still, cautions Prof. Dickens: "You have to be very careful if you are pursuing a conscious genetic blueprint for destiny. One can make a lot of mistakes." He is apprehensive about a new kind of Darwinism — survival of the richest.

Richard Seed likens selling embryos to selling kidneys. He is confident of a demand in the Western hemisphere.

"There has always been a shortage of humans in Western civilization," he says. Hunger "is a problem of eastern and southern cultures. There are two alternatives. They must stop breeding, or we've got to feed them. We're not going to feed them, so they're going to starve — and stop breeding."

"We're not talking about a food distribution problem; that's a myth. We're talking about the success of Western civilization and the failure of others."

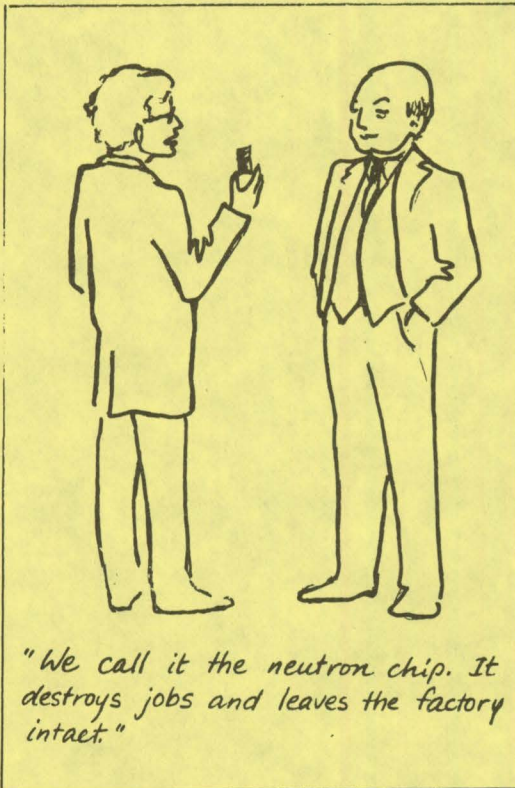
There is nothing new in selling human beings. Prof. Dickens cites

the prices blackmarket babies fetched in the United States in the mid-1970s (from research by Barbara Lovenheim, a U.S. lawyer who investigated baby trafficking): the prices for white babies ranged from \$4,000 to \$40,000, while high-demand babies, Jewish at that time, went for as much as \$60,000.

Human bio-engineering "seems to take up a heavy investment of our medical resources at a time when we are lacking in many basic fundamentals of health care," says philosophy professor Barry Brown, who has served on several University of Toronto research administration committees.

Talking about selection and eugenics, Prof. Brown says, "there might be some traits we'd like to aim for, like kindness and intelligence, but beyond that we don't know what is best. (Maybe) evolution has a built-in wisdom and we fiddle with it at our peril."

## FEDERATION POLITICS *by Brewster Kneen*



Farms are going down the drain, the N.S. Conservatives have called an election in order to ride on the Mulroney bandwagon, and the Federation of Agriculture is pleading with the candidates (Oct. 5 press release) to recognize that "there is potential for growth, expansion and development in the other half..." of the commodities which do not have supply management.

Sheep and hogs are among the commodities mentioned as being without supply management. The number of sheep farmers appears to be declining rapidly because, in spite of the best red meat marketing system in the country (NORTHUMBERLAMB) the price simply cannot be pushed up out of relation to beef and pork. Producers cannot go on year after year receiving the same price without even an increase to offset inflation and the rising cost of inputs. On the other hand the pork producers muddle along with neither producer control over the marketing system nor supply managements (regardless of their token marketing board). Contrary to the wishes of the State Agricultural Organization, I doubt if there are many hog producers eager to expand if only they could borrow the money.

*continued.....*



While hogs are still produced largely on full-time farms, beef is almost totally produced by part-timers for the simple reason that beef production must be supplemented by income from other sources. Consequently, the cow-calf herds are increasingly located, not in Cumberland County, but in Halifax and Hants Counties where there are reasonably good off-farm employment opportunities.

Expansion of blueberry production has been very heavily subsidized, and they had a smashing year at 20¢/lb for processing, with cost of production being something like 40-50¢/lb. However, the Federation complains to the candidates that "the potential for growth and development in N.S. agriculture is not being fully promoted".

Cream shippers have dropped by 20% in the past year - from 240 to 200 - while the major supply-managed commodity, fluid milk, is undergoing a continuous process of consolidation, with fewer larger farms being the result. Their finances remain a mystery even to many dairy farmers.

The Federation press release continues: "pork production has expanded through substantial borrowed capital investment, and dependent on working capital which has been subject to dramatic increases, which have not been supported by revenues from the industry", so the Federation believes that the Farm Loan Board "should provide more flexibility and provide expanded credit needs for N.S. farmers according to the credit needs of the time." In the same breath, the Federation recognizes that even the hog stabilization program "as it presently operates, is not sufficient to cure the economic stress of this industry". The market price now is about 75¢/lb, the stabilization price is 83¢, but even this is not enough, and the continued haemorrhaging of the hog producers is going to become a political liability of such magnitude that at some point a tourniquet will have to be applied. The only question will be, to whom? I doubt it will be to Canada Packers.

Finally the Federation of Agriculture states: "the adopted goal of agricultural land development for crops and livestock feed supply in N.S. to the year 2000 should be no less than an additional 300,000 acres." They call this a "mega-project" with a price tag of \$150 - \$200 million over the next 15 years. The Federation does not say who will be left farming at that time, nor does it suggest what they will be using to pay for their inputs, supplied by a very few giant corporations, since the Federation appears to regard structural issues, such as why the prices of farm commodities remain so low, as beyond its competence. Intriguing. But then, as a State organization, it is not the function of the Federation to question policy. We can probably rest assured that there will be some farms left in the year 2000 because the State agricultural apparatus will require them for its own justification.

\* \* \* \* \*

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# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
-Joshua 6:5

Published 6 times a year. Subscriptions \$6 (\$10 institutional) to:  
Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. #3, Scotsburn, Nova Scotia BOK 1R0

No. 21

August, 1984

The dry weather we are experiencing in several parts of Canada is especially discouraging for red meat producers as we face another year of prices below any reasonable cost of production. For example: (from our own records):

Sept 19/79: 34 lambs to Canada Packers @ \$1.82  
Sept 12/80: 8 lambs to Connors Meats @ \$1.95/lb  
Aug 13/84: Northumberlamb paying \$1.95/lb

## THE FARM FAMILY: A PERSONAL NOTE

We have made hay on this farm 14 summers now, and in a few weeks our two children who grew up here will be going on to university.

We thought we would have a full year to adjust. We figured we could gradually work out the changes required as the kids moved into the next phases of their lives. But as it has turned out, Jamie graduated from grade 12 and will go to McGill to study sciences this fall, while Rebecca goes from grade 11 into university at Mt. St. Vincent. All of a sudden we have to adjust accordingly, trying to decide what we, too, want to do with the next phase of our lives, because we cannot simply carry on as if nothing had happened.

This was a small farm when we came to it, and it has grown as the children have grown, also in keeping with the dominant ideology of get bigger or get out. In the first years the children were like any other stock on the farm, requiring a great deal of care and attention with little tangible return for the labour. Then gradually they began to collect the eggs, get the cow in for milking, or assist in moving a mob of sheep. Collecting firewood and rolling bales into rows gave way to using the chain saw and baling the hay. Then the older one could go to town for spare parts while we carried on. Then we got used to being able to go visiting, or to meetings, knowing that the farm was in good hands. The farm grew accordingly, on the basis of the available labour. This fall the labour will not be available. Next spring at lambing time it will not be here.

Some reorganization must take place. Will we expand and take on a hired hand? (We would have to expand in order to have the production to pay for a hired hand.) Or should we try to hold our own? Or consolidate and try to become more "efficient"? Or, in keeping with the times, should we seek off-farm employment to keep the whole thing going? We know we are not unique. In fact, I suspect that the family farm has been going through this 15-year cycle for generations.

Continued next page

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This is a sample copy of our newsletter, THE RAM'S HORN, which we publish six times a year. While the content varies from issue to issue, THE RAM'S HORN generally provides information and analysis relating to agriculture, with special attention to sheep. We are particularly concerned to document Third World issues as well as local ones.

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## THE FARM FAMILY...continued

The farm starts small with the small family, and as the family grows, so does the farm. Then the day comes when the older children either move on, or become incorporated in the farm, requiring changes either way.

Like the family, the family farm has been organic, adapting and changing to reflect the human beings who are its reason for being. But as families have become smaller, as the extended family has disappeared in the industrial society, so has the family farm. It has been replaced by a much more rigid entity, and the stability and growth of the enterprise becomes more important than the human activity that supports it. Where do we go from here?

- B.K.

Our farm publication will soon require a replacement for the retiring editor. Applicants should have the following characteristics:

- \*Familiarity with the major types of farming.
- \*Understanding of farm management and the profit motive.
- \*Ability to write in a clear, concise style.
- \*Good interpersonal skills.
- \*Ability to type
- \*Ability to learn newspaper writing and layout.
- \*Photographic skills. (Darkroom experience an asset).
- \*Well organized; an ability to plan ahead and work to deadlines.

*Getting our priorities straight!  
(from Farm Focus 27/6/84)*

## "BLUEBERRY PARADISE"

When I was a little girl, an important part of our summer was going out as a family to the barrens to pick blueberries. We used to call it "Blueberry Paradise". In recent years, the barren lands of the Maritimes, particularly Nova Scotia, have been developed far beyond what my childish mind could dream. But, as for "paradise", one has to wonder!

There has been a concerted effort in

recent years to apply the gospel of "modernization" to blueberry production. This means considerable expenditures for burning, extensive chemical applications to control "weeds", and even planting cloned blueberry plants. The production has nearly doubled since 1977, with Nova Scotia raking in 10 million pounds that year and 19.5 million lb. in 1983. Agriculture officials were jubilant, as their development programs bore fruit. Blueberries were touted as the new big export crop. After five years, a grower could be assured of a return on his investment. But it hasn't worked out quite that way.

This year, with the dry weather, we can expect a slightly reduced crop from last year. The price, however, is now just over half last year's price from the processors: 22¢ last quote, compared to 40¢/lb last year. The reason, we are told, is the number of blueberries still in storage from last year: 3795 metric tonnes compared to 1482 tonnes at the same time last year. Is this just another example of what happens in industrialized agriculture: a huge influx of money on one side of the production process, necessitating an equally huge input of money on the other side to sell the product - with little or no reference to the needs of the consumer in between? Or is there more to it?

The figures on blueberries in storage are collected by Statistics Canada from the companies that store them: processors and others. There aren't very many of them: 17 in the Maritimes, 59 reporting blueberries in storage across Canada. It is clearly in their interest to keep the price to the grower low. But StatsCan has no way of checking up on the information they receive. "We have to trust their word", the woman in the Ottawa office told us. "Some people think we might be connected to the tax department. They are understandably sensitive about having people poking into their private business."

As in other areas, perhaps the real problem is that the growers are not themselves in charge of their marketing, but are dependent on others, whether Bragg or Irving, to do it all for them. - C.K.



Every year, about this time, the notices go up in our local Co-Op inviting the young people of the community to sign up to rake blueberries. During the dog days of August, it is the last ritual of summer before the school year begins again.

Throughout the province, the scramble will be on to harvest Nova Scotia's richest export fruit. Mobs of kids in sneakers, bright coloured T-shirts and jeans will bend over in the hot sun, rake in hand, and straggle out along the lines of string on the barrens to gather the berries which contributed \$16 million to the economy last year.

If progress has its way these same kids will soon be kicking stones on street corners along with all the other students who have vainly looked for work to help pay their school bills, or augment their pocket money. This year, for the first time, 22 mechanical harvesters constructed by Bragg Lumber in Collingwood will be operating throughout the province. If they work as well as expected, there will be more and eventually hand raking will be a ritual of the past.

There are those who will argue that is good. To force youngsters to work in the heat and race to fill their buckets for minimal wages is exploitation of labour at its worst. Many growers will be relieved. Young labour is a headache - crews to be organized, picked up, taken home, paid. Some of them goof off, trample more than they rake, distract their friends, fall sick, or want the bathroom. Machines are far better.

Or, you can look at it this way: blueberries are a useful little cash crop for many farmers. The harvest is almost a family affair. The kids are mostly their own, or their neighbours'. The youngsters know each other. Most of them want to rake willingly and with enthusiasm. It is a sport as much as a job. It is a challenge, a contest of stamina, speed, dexterity. Boys and girls vie with their best friends. The girls try to outstrip the boys in adolescent, asexual competition. At the end of it, the dollars in the pocket reflect accomplishment, encourage independence and self-reliance.

The mechanical harvesters will change that. Smaller growers will not be able to afford the capital investment. They will continue to hand rake until it is no longer competitive. Then their best acreages will be sold off or leased to someone with a machine. The marginal land will revert to bush. Machines, unlike kids, can only harvest the larger, more open and flatter fields.

The use of herbicides to kill competition, and fertilizer to increase yields, will increase to make the machine more cost effective.

A larger share of the growers dollar will be spent on materials and machinery from outside the community.

The kids will put their energy into defacing the post office, or kicking in the windows of the gas station and store.



It's a shame about the blueberry festival. That string of Bragg harvesters proceeding through the village is not as pretty a sight as the parade of floats done up by the growers and their picking crews that we used to see hereabouts.

And you can't blame the womenfolk for serving up those McCain's frozen blueberry pies, but do you remember those plates of fresh homemade blueberry muffins, grunt, tarts, and the jams and preserves?

I'm not against progress. It's against me.

\* \* \* \* \*

## WOMEN AND FOOD PRODUCTION

by Cathleen Kneen

Most women living on farms in North America would not describe themselves as farmers. Our job is usually seen as supportive: we keep house, care for the children and sometimes the elderly, raise a garden, preserve and store as well as preparing food, keep small animals such as pigs and chickens, a house cow maybe, care for the young animals associated with the main enterprise (orphan lambs, young calves), run errands, usually keep the books and records of the farm, often make crafts or grow extra vegetables for sale in the local market, and help out in the fields when necessary. That's the job of the farm wife who has not also taken outside employment to support the farm and family.

But in the Third World, as I learned at the conference, Women and Food Production: Canada and the Third World, sponsored by the Canadian Council for International Co-Operation's Women's Program at Guelph in June, that job is described as "subsistence agriculture", and women who do it are called "farmers". Indeed, in many countries women are the farmers; men are forced to hire themselves out to work in the agribusiness enterprises or even to go to another country to find work. One major concern of this conference was to ensure that the aid agencies are made aware of this fact so that aid programs are designed to support rather than ignore or even destroy the role of women in agriculture. The conference also raised issues such as the difficulties of women's access to working capital, training, and health problems. But from the point of view of women who see their role as the production of food, the central problem is the rapid increase of emphasis on cash-cropping for export to the detriment of food production to feed the local people.

A woman from Zimbabwe described in detail how she works with rural women to encourage a change back to indigenous crops, to decrease dependency on imported seed, fertilizer, and technology. She has now written a cookbook using local foods, so that when a man likes his meal, his wife can tell him that he'll have to grow the crop if he wants to eat it again.

A woman from Bangladesh described a fishing village where the landlord owns the boats and appropriates the catch, giving the fishermen whatever



he figures they should get. She told how the women, who weave the nets, managed to overcome the restrictions imposed by a conservative religious leader (they are permitted to leave their homes only under cover of darkness, fully veiled and with an umbrella to cover the face) and bargain collectively with the landlord for a fair price for the nets - a first step.

A woman from St. Vincent described how her village set up a co-op to develop a sound economic base in mixed production which includes the main cash crop of the islands, bananas. They must struggle with a marketing system which is totally controlled by Geest, a giant multinational corporation. The farmers must sell their crop to the company, but the company has the right to refuse anything they deem unsuitable, and there is no alternative market. What the co-op would like to do is cut back on the bananas and grow more vegetables, but the supply of fertilizer is effectively controlled by the Banana Growers Association.

For us North American farm women, to hear and respect these stories means in practice that we have to change our understanding of ourselves: to see ourselves as farmers and our work as farming. As long as we define as "farming" only the increasingly mechanized, technologized, industrial agriculture in which we farm women play only a peripheral or supportive role, then we are stuck with it, with no alternative and with no perspective from which to seek an alternative.

*PESTICIDES DEFEAT MASKS from the Globe & Mail 12/6/84*

*Even wearing masks and protective clothing will not prevent pesticides from getting into the bodies of agricultural workers and gardeners, a new study has found. Pesticides pass right through even rubberized clothing and through the skin and enter the bloodstream, researchers from the University of California at Berkeley found. They used pesticides with a fluorescent agent that shows up in television pictures. The system showed that common pesticides pass right through clothes, boots, hats, gloves and respirators, the researchers reported at a recent meeting of the American Chemical Society.*

**"HERBICIDE TRIALS" - HIGHLY TOXIC MATERIAL! by John Mildon**

The NFB film "Herbicide Trials" by N.S. film maker Neal Livingstone has generated almost as much controversy, prior to its release for public distribution, as did its subject - the celebrated 1983 court case between 15 Cape Breton landowners and N.S. Forest Industries over the right to spray 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T on woodland in Cape Breton.

According to such august bodies as the N.S. Institute of Agrologists and the Federation of Agriculture, the film is toxic material, far more dangerous to the hearts and minds of the people of Nova Scotia than the chemicals are to our bodies. The Institute advises that the film not be shown in the school system, on the grounds that this "one-sided, uncompromising



piece of advocacy journalism" might cause "undue concern and misunderstanding, if not anxiety and confusion" to the average person, not familiar with the science of herbicide use. The Institute is to be applauded for wishing to protect our children from the emotional trauma which the film may cause.

The Federation of Agriculture described the film as "inaccurate, biased and approaching defamation in the way it attacks the judicial system". One spokesman was reported as saying that if this kind of thing spreads, the fall-out could be devastating. It is uncomfortable to feel that a film from such a venerable Canadian institution as the NFB has replaced nuclear warheads as the principal threat to our existence.

These strident, hysterical reactions from agriculturalists and public servants are illustrative of their fear that the environmental movement, funded by well-organized subversive groups and appealing to popular emotion will next turn its attention to the use of chemicals in our food production system.

The hue and cry which the trial, and now the film, has created is definitely not about the issue of the safety of herbicides, or the right to use them. It is the reaction of scientists, regulators, legislators and adjudicators to having their opinions and decisions challenged by uninformed citizens. At heart, the issue is that of the power of the technocrats and political elite to protect and further the interests of large corporate interests at the expense of primary producers and working people. What is quite clear from the film is that Dow Chemical, manufacturers of the chemical, and Stora Kopparberg (NSFI's Swedish parent company) invested huge sums of money to protect their freedom to exploit the natural resources of Cape Breton.

As the title implies, "Herbicide Trials" documents the process which took place one year ago in Sydney. It is an intelligent and graphic account of how the group of landowners fought to protect their rights under the law. The film raises important questions about the way in which large multi-nationals are allowed to operate virtually unmolested under the umbrella protection of public servants who go to extreme lengths to limit public knowledge and discussion of practices which are not in our own best interest. The concerted attempt to suppress public distribution of the film is yet another example of this conspiracy.

"Herbicide Trials" is an important statement about our constitutional right to freedom of information, and freedom to debate fully and fairly the issues which affect our lives. For no other reason, we should demand to see the film, so that we can judge its merit for ourselves.



TOM OEGEMA: From the President's Address to the  
CHRISTIAN FARMERS FEDERATION OF ONTARIO Annual Meeting

"North American agriculture is a high cost agriculture. Not high cost to North Americans, because we spend only about 14% of disposable income on food, but high cost to the millions of people in less developed parts of the world who would love to have the food we can grow, but can't afford it.

Therefore, we should temper our optimism about exporting ourselves out of our surpluses. The technology we employ on our farms is ingenious but expensive. It also makes us totally dependent on an industrial infrastructure. If we add in the 1000s of man-years spent in producing all the technology, pesticides, fuels, etc., that agriculture uses, then maybe the individual farmer in North America isn't nearly as efficient as he is cracked up to be. Maybe the Third World farmer with few technological resources is more efficient in producing food than we think. Maybe we should consider that fact when we discuss hunger or food aid."

## Guatemala: Land + Food Production

from an article by Oakland Boss : Globe + Mail 14/2/84

Here, in the coastal province of Escuintla, lies Guatemala's breadbasket, producing 80 per cent of the country's sugar, 20 per cent of its coffee, 85 per cent of its cotton, 70 per cent of its cattle — and the lion's share of its economic and political muscle.

Escuintla also boasts the most inequitable pattern of land distribution of any region in Guatemala, a country whose inequalities of land ownership are unparalleled anywhere in Latin America.

Under a complex formula considered the most accurate measurement of such inequalities, Guatemala earns a score of 85 (using a scale on which 100 represents the theoretical maximum of inequality and zero represents perfect equality, also theoretical). No other Latin American country has a higher score, not even tiny, land-starved El Salvador.

In spite of Guatemala's painfully lopsided distribution of land, however, there is no serious talk of land reform — in any guise.

"That (such talk) is communism here," said an economist ruefully, noting that in Guatemala 76 per cent of the cultivable land is controlled by 2 per cent of the population.

In Escuintla, where the land is richest and the concentration of ownership is greatest, 60 per cent of all farmland is held in properties larger than 450 hectares, compared with the national figure of 34 per cent. El Salto, for example, which produces medium-grade coffee and a little cotton in addition to sugar, covers more than 5,800 hectares — and is not exceptional.

El Salto is one of several Escuintla properties owned by Roberto Alejos Arzu, who tours his holdings by private helicopter and administers his agricultural export business from a wood-panelled, sixth-floor office opposite the Sheraton Hotel in Guatemala City. Like others of his class, Mr. Alejos Arzu lives in Guatemala but keeps an apartment in Miami.

"Guatemala is a country totally based on private initiative and free enterprise," he said in a recent interview. "I think we're on the right track."

At the other end of the scale of Guatemalan real estate lies the maze of *minifundias* — tiny plots of land, privately held, but too small to support the peasant families who own and farm them.

According to figures cited by the U.S. Agency for International Development, 78 per cent of Guatemala's farmers — most of them Indians — are huddled on 10 per cent of the available farmland, in plots smaller than 3.5 hectares, mainly in the infertile highlands.

Meanwhile, at least 310,000 Guatemalan farmers can be classified as landless peasants, scratching out a living as itinerant laborers who follow the harvests, seeking day-to-day employment, often at less than the minimum wage of \$3.20 a day.

Mr. Alejos Arzu, who rejects any Government role in the allocation of property, is categorical. "That's socialization of the land," he said of the Green Book. He recommends instead that Guatemala's Indians be taught "better farming techniques."

### Your morning smile

In another few years civilization will have reached all peoples except those with no resources worth exploiting. Globe + Mail front page 26/6/84

## Developing Dependency

from an article by Michael Valpy, G+M 24/7/84

Urban dwellers have changed their eating habits as a result of colonial transportation patterns and post-colonial aid economics. The result has been to make many African nations prisoners of economic systems that impoverish them, and subject them to dangerous political pressures.

This last point needs more explanation.

Colonial economics developed transportation systems from the nearest port inland; they did not develop transportation systems that served the internal economies of their former colonies, especially the landlocked ones.

First, the result of this was to make commercial imports cheaper — in many cases than domestic production — the imports came in over established transportation lines.

Second, when food shortages developed, it was more convenient — and in many cases more feasible — to bring in Western wheat and corn (maize) than to develop the production of indigenous, traditional cereals: cassava, millet, sorghum.

Third, the fact that African tastes — and especially urban African tastes — now have been become accustomed to Western wheat means that African governments must allocate scarce foreign exchange to import wheat.



## 'Productivity' On and Off the Farm

"Productivity climbs....Non-farm business productivity in the United States rose at a revised seasonally adjusted 0.9% annual rate..." This is how an article in the Report on Business begins. And on the next page of the same paper: "Major retailers say they are still emphasizing productivity..."

Farmers know all about productivity. We are advised by lending agencies and agricultural "experts" that to survive we must, like all other businessmen, become more productive.

Well, there is more than one way to look at this. Usually what is meant by productivity is the amount of dollar sales (product measured by value according to sales) per unit of labour input. If with a manure fork I can clean out 50 cubic feet of manure an hour, I will be ten times more "productive" if I can clean out 500 cubic feet per hour with a tractor and loader. Or my productivity will increase 50% if I can raise my lambing percentage by that amount. But in both cases there is some ambiguity about measurement. In the latter case, the increase must be measured against the cost, direct and indirect: the cost in longevity of the ewes, the cost of feed, the cost of labour for supervision, and the cost of marketing that increased production. In the case of the manure removal, the full costs must also be acknowledged: it may well be that while it took the farmer one hour to remove 50 cubic feet, to increase his "productivity" tenfold, it took him 50 hours of off-farm employment to earn enough money to pay for the loader, to say nothing of the cost of the tractor. In this case, nothing has been gained; there has simply been a transfer of energy and resources.

Productivity can be only nominally increased by substituting capital for labour.

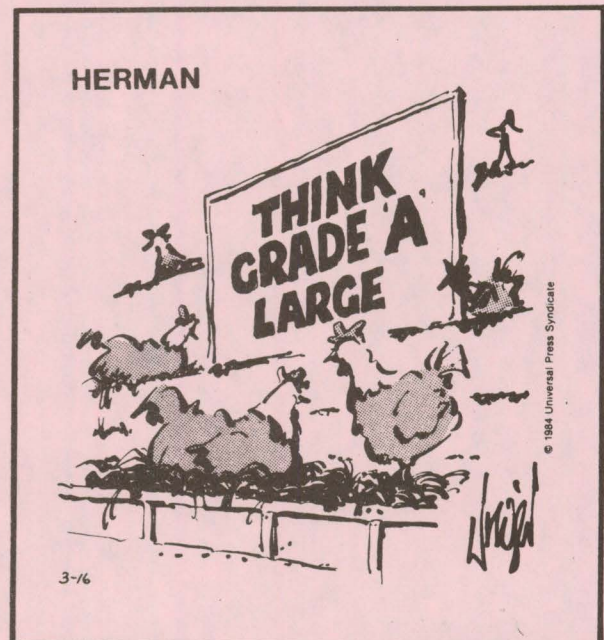
Productivity can also, of course, be increased by reducing the labour bill by breaking the union, threatening the workers with unemployment, or going to piecework or other 'incentive' programs. Try that on your livestock! - B.K.

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A reader was inspired by our report on the Community Pasture situation at Minudie (still unresolved, by the way) to send this rhyme supposedly popular in 17th century England, the time of the "Enclosures":

*We put in gaol the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the Common;  
But let the greater villain loose  
Who steals the Common from the goose!*

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# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
- Joshua 6:5

Published 6 times/year: subscriptions \$6 (\$10 institutional) to:  
Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. #3, Scotsburn, Nova Scotia BOK 1R0

No. 20

June, 1984

LATE AGAIN!...as we seem to be every spring,  
due to lambing and all the other intense  
activity associated with spring. But we'll  
make it up in the months ahead.



## More on Community Pastures

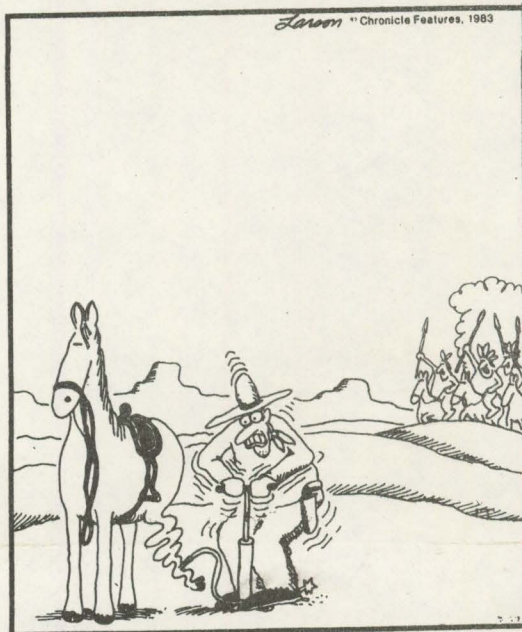
A question from one of the farmers involved in the Minudie community pasture issue prompted us to look up the movement now called the "Enclosures" which radically changed life in the countryside in Britain during the 18th and early 19th centuries. One aspect of this movement was the division of communal land for private ownership (usually among the local gentry). The Encyclopedia Britannica comments: "This move proved disastrous for smallholders ...who depended for a major part of their subsistence on the right to graze livestock, for they did not share in the division. Many ...found work in new factories."

This movement was widespread throughout Europe at the time. The Britannica notes two effects:

"...communalism declined dramatically. Each family operated independently of others.... and when 19th century reformers attempted to persuade farmers to participate in the co-operative movement, they found the farmers reluctant to commit themselves to new group arrangements. Cooperatives now are widespread in western Europe, but they were slow to come." Another effect was "a new settlement pattern. Farmers with holdings at the margins of village territory moved their homes to their fields....today, the territory between villages now commonly is scattered with individual homesteads, each isolated on its own land."

## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



from an editorial in  
NEW ZEALAND FARMER: 9/2/84

In the "good" old days, the financially crippled farmer was more likely to keep his worries to himself and the bank manager; the person who believed he or she was going barmy was less likely to seek counselling; partners in a soured marriage were more likely to withdraw into the misery of themselves while struggling along under one roof.

Nevertheless, the incidence of personal stress in farming does seem to have risen. For many, there seems to be less joy in it than there was.

When you consider that the scale of production needed to keep a family-only dairy or sheep unit in business on the land has risen three fold in a human generation, that's not surprising.

It's even less surprising when you remember that the technical advances which made the miracle of the past 30 years possible are not now



COMPETING CO-OPERATIVELY by John Mildon

Co-operatives, owned and operated by farmers to market their product, have a long and enduring history in Nova Scotia. The Scotsburn Creamery Cooperative began business in June 1900 and now controls a large share of the dairy manufacturing business in Nova Scotia. Down through the years it has absorbed other small co-ops, and has diversified its interests. It is a healthy agri-business: competitive, aggressive, expansionary. The scale of its operations today would astound the farmers who humbly aspired to found a local creamery to process their milk on a communal basis.

The successful cooperative is a commercial hybrid, an expression of our ability to cooperate competitively. Farmers have traditionally been recognized as individualistic, competitive, some would say 'greedy'.

"Cooperation among farmers has always been a hard thing for farmers to come by... farmers compete most of all with their closest neighbours"

(Mark Kramer - Three Farms).

The steady decline in the number of farming families and the increasing size of the remaining farms attests to the competitiveness of agriculture. Yet many of us hark back nostalgically to the spirit of rural cooperation which existed in the days when everything from barn raising to threshing was a communal activity. That same spirit spawned the scattered but vigorous cooperative business which were a feature of rural communities a few decades ago.

A strange contradiction indeed! In the face of economic hardship, and to ensure their own survival, farmers unified their competitive energies into the creation of cooperative processing and marketing enterprises. In many cases (and in mutated forms) these cooperatives have outlived their creators.

And so evolved the anomaly - the perfect socially democratic institution in a ruthless capitalist society. Herein lies both the great strength and the weakness of the cooperative to serve and protect the interests of its members. Its strength is its ideals, which embrace the noble principles of our democratic nature, to allow an equal voice to each member regardless of financial contribution. Its weakness is its inability to ensure the survival of its weaker members, regardless of their voice.

To survive in a harsh business world, the cooperative has to adopt the same methods as the corporate business. These are increasingly anti-human and alienating. It must concentrate capital, specialize the work of labour, technologize operations, expand and diversify.

This becomes the enduring dilemma of management - to run an increasingly impersonal business in a democratic, personal and human way. We cannot forget this fact when we laud the virtues of a cooperative to which we belong. We have to recognize that it may serve our interests well, and may further them in time. But it cannot protect us from our own inability to keep up with the sweeping transformation of agricultural production. It cannot shield us as individuals from those same forces to which it is subject as a corporation. The cooperative, in itself, is not necessarily the salvation of the smaller farmer, yet it can offer real opportunities for enrichment to those of its members who are willing or able to 'capitalize' on



the collective economic power which it commands. (It can be a means for a few people to make a lot of money.)

This cannot be otherwise in a society which prizes free enterprise, and enshrines the concentration of capital into fewer and fewer hands, as its first principle.

This becomes a personal dilemma. We cannot, at one and the same time, embrace a spirit of cooperation to serve our competitive self-interest. To be consistent in our ideology we must perforce extend our cooperativeness to encompass every aspect of our social and economic lives. To do this is to fly in the face of almost everything our culture teaches us. To recognize the inherent contradictions of our ideology is a small start. We must learn to develop from there.

\* \* \*

WHY DO CO-OPS HAVE LABOUR-MANAGEMENT CONFLICT? by Brewster Kneen

News of 'labour problems' or strikes in cooperative enterprises always seems to surprise me. It makes me realize that I have different standards for co-ops than I do for traditional capitalist enterprise. Yet co-ops do seem to have their share of strikes and labour problems, and often it seems as if the Directors or Management feel that because it is a co-op, the workers should be happy to work under poor conditions or for sub-standard wages: the co-op must be successful in capitalist terms, and this ought to be enough to please the workers, on principle. My own gut feeling is that workers in a co-op should never have to strike, and that co-ops should be models of good labour-management relations without class differences between workers, managers and owners.

In theory, if not in practice, co-ops are free of class conflict because they are established on the community of interests that exist between people. Any enterprise will have to differentiate functions, but in a co-op there should be flexibility in terms of movement between jobs, and this includes management as well as other workers.

With capitalist enterprise, one would expect conflict between labour and management. The managers represent the owners and the owners' interests are in profit, while the workers' interests are in their work and their wages. (My father, as a 'responsible industrialist', would insist that this simplification ignores the issue of the significance of meaningful work for human fulfillment and the fact that good labour relations should be an essential ingredient of a profit-making enterprise.) Profits, in the capitalist system, for any corporation, are the gap that can be created between costs and selling price, and labour is a major item of cost over which an enterprise has some control. An intimidated, individualized work force can be exploited - that is, can be the source of company profit by getting more work out of the workers than they are paid for; and if management is fully separated from the workers, then the workers will never know the full extent of their exploitation.

For example, the management of the auto companies cried and cried about their financial plight and wrung concessions out of the workers.



The companies then made big profits. Did the workers benefit? No, millions and millions of dollars were paid to the top executives on the grounds that they were the source of the companies' profits. And this happened in unionized plants!

If co-ops are organized on different principles, then why should there be labour-management conflict similar to that of capitalist enterprise? Is it bad faith on the part of management? Is it greed on the part of the workers? Is it simply a reflection of the structure of society as a whole that such behaviour is inevitable? Or is it because we labour under so much mythology about how things really work that we can never get an honest picture of our situation?

One might say that cooperatives are founded on the liberal idea that we are all equal and that our liberal democratic society is really classless; that if there is stratification, it is not because of the structures of society but because some people are more equal than others - some people have more ambition than others, some are more aggressive, some lazier, etc. Individual freedom is one of the ideological cornerstones of our society, but if this is made into a religion, then it is only logical to say that class differences are not reflections of class interests at all, but only differences attributable to personal differences. This allows the aggressive and the greedy to operate behind a smokescreen of illusion. The fact that society is organized to benefit the few at the expense of the many is hidden, and those being exploited become fatalistic about it, or convince themselves that it is really their own fault. You know, if you are not a SUCCESSFUL farmer it is not because of the way the system is organized, it is because YOU are a poor manager.

Getting back to the problem of co-ops and the fact that they seem to have the same labour-management problems as capitalist enterprise: is it not because of their inability to acknowledge and deal directly with the class structure of society? If co-ops accept the norms of society that managers are worth more than workers and that owners are entitled to a 'return on their investment' regardless of their actual contribution to the generating of the income (profit), then conflict is built in. There is no commonality of interest between labour and management insofar as management represents ownership. Capitalism, after all, prides itself on the fact that it is based on competition. Dog eat dog is the capitalist rule, without pretense - until, that is, the dogs are few enough in number, at which point they prefer to run together in packs called cartels, oligopolies or even monopolies.

Cooperatives, in theory, are based on the premise of a community of interests between managers and workers, consumers and producers. We are all equals, performing different functions within a potentially harmonious social system. That is why we must be conscious of the choice we make when we choose to form a cooperative enterprise, based on the belief that a community of interest does exist. We must then also make a conscious decision for workers' control, recognizing that the premise of capitalist enterprise is fundamentally different. Any other choice destroys the very basis of the cooperative enterprise, and makes labour-management conflict virtually inevitable.



# NORTHUMBERLAMB

NORTHUMBERLAND  
LAMB MARKETING  
CO-OP LTD.

Despite a glorious sunny day, almost half the members of Northumberland Lamb Marketing Co-Op turned out for the Annual Meeting on May 26th. Their first order of business was to admire the new refrigerated truck, brought along by Manager Michael Isenor for their inspection. The new one-ton Chevy which carries a custom-built insulated box with room to hang 140 lambs was greeted with enthusiasm. So was the annual financial report, which showed that after two years of operation the co-op has paid off one major loan and shows a substantial excess of receipts over disbursements. Assistance from the Federal Government through the Canadian Agricultural Market Development Fund has been used to engage in promotional activities which would not otherwise have been undertaken.

President Geoff Moore in his report to the members noted that the success of Northumberland is due to the cooperation of producers in delivering consistently high-quality lambs, as well as to the hard work of Michael and Brewster Kneen, Market Organizer - and remarkable cooperation from Sobeys stores. He noted that overall sales of lambs by the coop increased by more than 40% during the year, and present trends indicate another increase this year of about 20%. Pat Marshall of Meadowville and Terry Wenham of Bass River were elected to the Board of Directors.

During the inevitable cross-talk about production during the meeting, it was noted that the best gains in feeding lambs come from feeding whole grains with a supplement; feeding ground grain can result in soft fat cover on the carcass which does not harden as it should when chilled.

The Annual Report is available on request from Northumberland, R.R. #3, Scotsburn, N.S., BOK 1R0.



## From Production to Consumption: 2 Views

### "FARMERS AS EXPLOITERS":

A Conversation with Darrell McLaughlin, Potato Farmer from Aroostook, N.B.

...On the other hand, we need to also be aware of farmers as exploiters. The desperation to maintain the "lifestyle", the tradition, the family heritage, results in exploitation of: first, the wife, through overwork and isolation; then, the children, with the statement that they will receive just what the rest of the family receives (that is, food and lodging); and then of course the land and animals are exploited; and then the employees. I am aware of a tendency to pad my living at the expense of the people I employ: around me I see workers making up the difference between viable and non-viable farms; wage-labourers replace farmers; UIC and welfare payments replace subsidies to farmers. If you add up New Brunswick's total potato production and divide it by the man-hours of work of farmers and wage-labourers, you come up with the figure that at present, 60% of the potatoes produced in New Brunswick are produced by wage labour.

continued....



Darrell McLaughlin continued...

You have to remember that the Maritimes' tradition is rural; the people who settled here came themselves from a rural background. But at this time, with the change in society and the availability of work in town or country, it seems to me that the people who continue to live in the 'isolated' rural areas are casualties, victims, or refugees of our advancing society.

Growth: if you go for a 50-100 hp tractor you have to farm your neighbour's land. And it is outside forces that are designing this technology; it is not coming from the farmers, who are poorly organized and therefore unable to describe their technological needs in a powerful way. One should also recognize that, for example, the 15-bottom plow takes more, not less, time, and requires more production. It's clear that the reason for this technology is not really to make life easier for the farmer, but to change the nature of farming. It has changed the inter-dependence of rural communities to raw dependency.

Without getting romantic about it, I think we can talk about the sense of satisfaction farmers get from working. There isn't anything quite like the feeling when after pushing yourselves harder than you thought you could, the job is finally done. In the potatoes area, when the potatoes are all in the potato house ... and you say to yourself, well, we did it. I think what has given life to farmers is producing. But now some farmers are working just to be consumers, whether it's bigger cars, tractors and trucks or CBs or whatever. I see a huge change from working to produce, to working to consume.

WHAT HOLDS IT UP? by Brewster Kneen

I just came back from town - New Glasgow is what we call 'town' - and I am still wondering, where does the money come from?

Thirteen years ago when I went to Proudfoots it was a farm supply general store and Massey Ferguson dealer. There were quite a few farmers around then, and not so much industry. When you went in the door the parts department was more or less straight ahead, and to one side was some hardware - a limited selection - and to the other side was work clothing for the farmer. After a few years the parts department was pushed to the back and more room made for hardware up front. Then the parts department and machinery sales office was pushed right out into a new building downstairs from the business office, and the hardware and clothing were supplemented by household goods, as they are called. Gradually the household goods occupied a larger space in an enlarged store. Then I go in last week and find that the machinery yard has been pushed back of the building to make more room for hardware store customer parking, and the hardware department has taken over the lower floor of the building that until last year housed a chick hatchery. The feed store seems to be still located around back in the warehouse.

I guess the Home Hardware business turned out to be the real moneymaker, though they did not give up the machinery business - this is still something



of a farming county and there is NO other farm machinery dealer in the county. So they remain a Massey Ferguson dealer, for whatever that might be worth besides the gratitude of the local farmers.

The Proudfoots started with a farm in Saltsprings. The two brothers built on that, in farm machinery and chicks and eggs. They quit the hatchery business a year ago and took their hens out of half a dozen or so farms, mostly around Saltsprings. Now the barns remain empty and last year they did not even manage to find farmers enough to cut all the hay on the old farms. (These are the fields that lie on both sides of the Trans-Canada as you come down the hill from Mount Thom to Saltsprings.)

Reflecting on this transformation that has taken place sort of under my nose, I really do wonder where the money comes from to buy all that stuff that is available in the store. The goods relating to production - the means of production - have been displaced by consumer goods - the goods which are not generating but rather consuming wealth. The evolution of the Proudfoots' businesses tell the story of our society, of how we have moved from being producers of wealth to consumers of it.

Who then is creating the wealth and how does it get into the hands of people in Pictou County that they can support such a large hardware store? to say nothing of the huge mall down the road?

Leafing through yet another glossy, full-colour advertising brochure which came in the mail this week from Radio Shack, one of the inhabitants of that mall, underlines this question: here is a plethora of electronic gadgetry, of little or not practical value, aggressively marketed by a multinational American company (Tandy) and produced in those countries of the far East which have the cheapest exploited labour.

So, we produce less and less of our food, and spend more and more of our money on 'consumer goods' manufactured somewhere else. Can we become anything but poorer? And if so, who is becoming wealthy, since it is surely not the peasants and Asian workers who actually produce the goods that fill our chain stores and franchise outlets?

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As you will see in the ad (next page), Wool Growers Supplies has changed its name to BROOKLAND FARM AND FENCE SUPPLIES. "Wool Growers" no longer accurately reflected the growing emphasis on electric fencing - which seems to be the only bright spot on the production side of the livestock business, where a farmer can actually get a job done better and save money at the same time.

The German-made HORIZONT line of electric fence energizers provide the most efficient operation along with the lowest prices. BROOKLAND FARM & FENCE carries all auxiliary equipment needed to build any electric fence: permanent, 'predator-defence', or temporary. The motto continues to be "Best Quality at Lowest Price".



C.K.



And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat. - Joshua 6:5

Subscriptions and encouraging comments have gotten the Ram's Horn off to a good start. We will publish at least six times a year. Please send us your news, ads, reports, and helpful suggestions. While we are now focussing on sheep, we hope that broader issues and other farmers will expand our horizons in future issues.

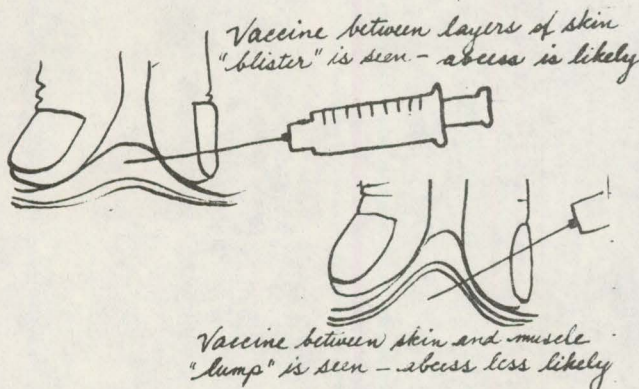
Subscriptions \$5 to Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S. BOK 1R0

## CO-OPERATIVE LAMB MARKETING

17 consignors marketed 676 lambs during the period July-November 1980, with stock paid for on a dead-weight basis at prices ranging from \$1.75 to \$2.00, less charges for butchering, trucking, and handling where applicable. B. Kneen coordinated this effort by producers in Antigonish and Pictou Counties. Lambs went to the Halifax and Montreal markets.

## SUB-CUTANEOUS VACCINATION TIP

A friendly doctor speculates that one reason for post-vaccination abscesses may be that we place the vaccine between layers of skin rather than between skin and muscle, causing damage to the skin itself and thus abscesses:



## FOR SALE

Three Black and White Border Collie pups Born Dec. 3/80 out of good working stock \$75 each. Call David Murphy 429-3281 after 7 p.m.

"SIR RAM" - virile, well grown registered N.C. Cheviot ram two years old. Reason for parting with him - we have too many of his relatives. \$75.  
Steve & Pat Marshall 485-8267

## PUREBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION MEETING

Saturday, January 17th, at 11 a.m.  
in the Boulden Building, N.S.A.C.

### agenda:

- Survey of purebred sheep stock for sale
- update of the Nova Scotia Directory of Agriculture
- Organization of the Sheep Fair ram sale
- Appointment of delegates to the Live-stock Council and the Canada Sheep Breeders
- Field Day 1981
- Lambing Competition 1981

Anyone wishing further information please contact Bill Mathewson, 895-1571.

## NORTHUMBERLAND SHEEP PRODUCERS MEETING

Saturday, January 17th, at 8 p.m.  
at Mel & Sandy Loughheed's home in River John (call 351-2119 for directions)

This association will promote co-operative activities among sheep farmers with particular emphasis on marketing.

Travellers are invited to join a pot-luck supper at Kneens' on January 17th.

## PUREBRED SHEEP BREEDERS

Thanks to those two readers who took me to task for the comments about the Purebred Sheep Breeders Assoc. that is taking shape. Both felt I went too far. One writer put it this way: "When viewed objectively there is no conflict and certainly no aim to destroy SPANS. It has

- continued -



PUREBRED SHEEP BREEDERS continued

been the aim of the Purebred Breeders to supplement, not supplant, the activities of SPANS, to serve the additional interests of purebred breeders.... We need SPANS and can supplement its work while promoting our specialties."

The writer also said: "You may be right or you may be wrong, about the whole issue. You have changed this back-bencher (by necessity) into someone who will be watching and keeping note of the Directors in SPANS and PBBANS to try to see that at least she won't be used to suit other people's power plays - yours, theirs, whoever's."

And Edith Zillig wrote: "May I ask, would it be asking too much of both of you to be a little tolerant and wait and see how this new association will perform? Small in numbers it will not be a big troublemaker and always has to act in friendly co-operation with SPANS."

- B.K.

During the ten-month period Jan-Oct. 1980, the New England states produced 57% more lamb and mutton than during the same period the year before. Average liveweight at 92 lbs was up 13% from the previous year. The United States production for the period was 8% more than for the corresponding period in 1979.  
(New England Crop and Livestock Reporting Service)

from Clearing, by Wendell Berry

...I have arrived here  
many times. I have come  
on foot, on horseback, by boat,  
and by machine - by earth,  
water, air, and fire.  
I came with a sharp eye  
and the price of land. I came  
in bondage, and I came  
in freedom unworth the name.  
From the high outlook  
of that first day I have come  
down two hundred years

across the worked and wasted  
slopes, by eroding tracks  
of the joyless horsepower of greed.  
Through my history's despite  
and ruin, I have come  
to its remainder, and here  
have made the beginning  
of a farm intended to become  
my art of being here.  
By it I would instruct  
my wants: they should belong  
to each other and to this place....

\* \* \* \* \*

FILM SHOWING FOR PICTOU COUNTY FARMERS

Friday evening, Jan. 30, at 8:00 p.m., in the I.O.O.F. Hall, Scotsburn, there will be a showing of the 40-minute colour film

CONTROLLING INTEREST: THE WORLD OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

This is a dynamic and powerful presentation of just how multinational corporations function, especially in the food industry.

Refreshments and discussion will follow the film. Admission \$1.50. Come and bring a friend or two.

\* \* \* \* \*



# WOOL GROWERS SUPPLIES

R.R. 3, SCOTSBURN, N.S. BOKIRO      PHONE 925-2768

*Now in stock - \$600*  
**AUSTRALIAN SUNBEAM  
 OVERHEAD SHEARING  
 MACHINE**

*for fixed installation or as  
 a hanging unit - complete  
 with handpiece  
 combs: \$14.50 - 15.95  
 cutters: \$4.50*

*for those orphans:*

**LAMB NIPPLES**  
*fit on beer/pop  
 bottles*

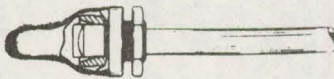
*75¢ each*



**NURS-ETTE CHECK VALVE  
 + TUBE ASSEMBLY**

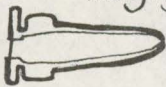
*tube draws milk from  
 bottom to top of bucket  
 \$5.49 each*

*replacement nipples are  
 available - we use these  
 with Co-Op Lamb Milk  
 Replacer + they're great.*

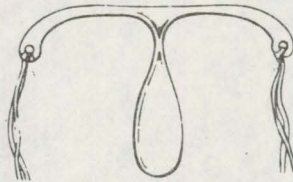


**LAMBLUX NIPPLES**

*to install at the bottom of a  
 hanging or standing  
 container  
 \$1.95 each*



**ewe BEARING RETAINERS**  
*for replacing prolapses*



*pkg. of 3 - \$7.00*

**BABY LAMB TAGS**

*numbers 1-600 in sets of 100  
 100 tags - \$9.95  
 sealing pliers - \$3.50*

**ELASTRATOR**



*\$29.50*

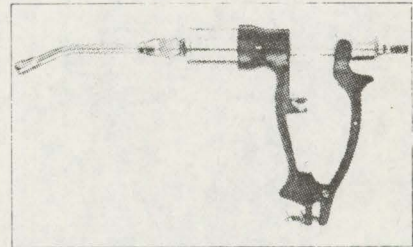
*pkg. of 100 rubber rings for  
 elasticator \$3.50*

**SUL-DYO-STREP**

*treats scours in lambs - esp.  
 when coccidiosis may be the  
 cause. 8-dose squeeze  
 bottle - \$4.95*

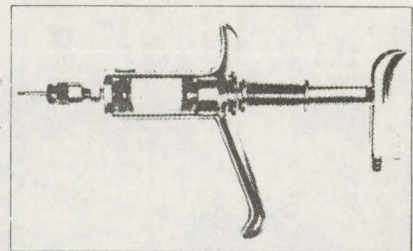
*We also carry stomach  
 tubes, ear tags, foot shears +  
 knives, tattoo outfits... etc....*

**PHILLIPS  
 AUTOMATIC DOSE  
 SYRINGES**



**PHILLIPS 30 ml mklII  
 automatic  
 drencher**

*complete with 5-litre durable  
 container (backpack) \$98.00*



**PHILLIPS 5 ml  
 automatic  
 vaccinator  
 model 74**

*complete with draw-off tube  
 and needle \$42.00*

*These look like a lot of money  
 but we have found they  
 are well worth it - in terms  
 of vaccine, time, and temper  
 saved! They are very well  
 made and will last for years.*

**MAIL AND PHONE ORDERS  
 PROMPTLY FILLED ~  
 YOU PAY POSTAGE**



## Keeping the Books

Was 1980 a success for your farm: Did the farm make a profit? Did the farm pay its bills? Did the farm deplete or improve its working capital? These are the questions we all ask ourselves at year end and tax time. Let's look at them more carefully.

First of all, the term "profit" does not belong in the language of the family farm, as technically it can only refer to a business in which all expenses and income items can be set against each other, including fixed wages, salaries, etc. In capitalist accounting, "profit" refers to a surplus of income over expenditures after everything, including the directors' fees, has been paid. On the family farm, you can only come up with a "profit" if the farm family's wages are taken out at a fixed rate and there remains a surplus.

Unfortunately, farmers are being encouraged to use a language that is incorrect, for we use the term "profit" to cover our wages! That is, we say our farm made a profit if we had a living wage after paying all our other bills. For example: If, in doing our books for 1980, we find that we had a difference of \$6000 between our bills and our receipts, then that becomes our annual income. That is not a "profit". If, on the other hand, the farm is incorporated and it pays us a salary of \$12,000, then the farm might be said to have made a profit if this item is included in expenses and there was still a surplus of income over expenditure.

A farm is not a "business" as that term is generally used. But regardless of that, a business does not need to make a "profit" to be successful, unless one starts from the premise that the point of business is not to manufacture a product or provide a service, but to engage in some activity for the sake of making a profit. It would not be unreasonable to take the example of Massey-Ferguson which once was a farm machinery manufacturer, and as such was successful. But it got into trouble when it forgot its business and tried to make bigger and bigger profits by buying other businesses. For a time it was successful at this, but only for a time. Now Massey has neither the business nor the profits, but it has a huge debt with massive interest payments.

A business does not have to expand to be successful, even though capitalist ideology insists that it does. The world is finite, and not everything can grow indefinitely. Usually, if one business is growing, another is shrinking or being bought out. Sobey's as a corporation, may be growing in good capitalist fashion, but the retail food business is not. So Sobey's is growing at the expense of other companies, namely the independent grocer and the smaller chains, or even bigger ones because it is clever at the game. (In fact, Sobey's is able to expand not because it has big profits, but because you pay cash for your groceries and Sobey's pays its suppliers at 30 days. So Sobey's has your money for 30 days without interest.)

Another question: How honest is our bookkeeping when it comes to accounting for our working capital? Does the condition of our farm and wood land enter into our reckoning? Is our soil in better or worse condition than a year ago? Did we plant as many trees as we cut? Will our children inherit land that is more productive or less productive than that land is today? Present-day methods of farm accounting are not able to take these questions into consideration.



A small farm may be highly successful in terms of providing a decent living to the farm family, taking care of its resources, and providing nutritious food to the market, while neither expanding nor making a profit. On the other hand, an incorporated farm might be expanding and making a profit while it is depleting its resources, underpaying its hired help, eliminating the family farm, and providing a product of dubious nutritional value. To put it another way, the highly self-sufficient family farm with a very small "cash flow" will not be considered a success and probably will have a low credit rating, and it will be Federal policy to eliminate such "uneconomic" units. On the other hand, the larger farm that purchases all its inputs and has a high cash flow as a result will have a good credit rating and will be encouraged to borrow more money in order to become more "efficient" and to expand.

I am not trying to condemn the large farm or to say that one type of operation is inherently better than another. But I am saying that our accounting practices are not objective. They encourage certain attitudes and practices and discourage others. The more I think about it, the more it appears that modern accounting discourages good farming and encourages bad business. It conditions us to think in terms of "profit" as success while ignoring many very real costs in one way or another, such as the costs of soil depletion and erosion, the cost to peasant farmers in other countries of our cheap imports, the costs of health hazards due to the use and abuse of chemicals in food manufacturing and farming, the costs to society of disappearing rural communities and increasing urban populations, the costs of unemployment due to mechanization, and so on.

So, when you do your accounting for 1980, and for 1981, think about the real costs and the real successes, about future generations and what they will inherit for lands and forests, about the peasants in El Salvador and Brazil and Guatemala who are being displaced to make way to multinational agricultural "business" which will give you cheap beef out of their starvation, and sugar out of their malnutrition.

May your books balance in 1981!

Brewster Kneen  
January, 1981

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The Prince Edward Island Sheep Breeders first Production Sale will be held on August 22, 1981, at York, PEI. This is an elite sale with very stringent sale rules. Approximately 100 purebred yearling ewes, some ewe lambs, 34 rams with breed quotas, and about 100 commercial yearling ewes will be sold. Sale managed by Russell Dow.

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#### NEWS FROM THE SHEEP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

The Directors met briefly prior to the meeting on health Dec. 6th. In the absence of the new secretary, Roy Evans, Guy Sanders volunteered to take minutes.

Minutes of the Annual meeting as recorded by Sally Ross were reviewed and it was agreed that these minutes should be sent to all members with some minor corrections.

Lamb marketing was also discussed and it was agreed that a questionnaire should go out to all sheep producers to ascertain how and where lambs are being marketed.



John Milton and Alex Forbes agreed to look after this in conjunction with the Marketing Branch.

A letter of resignation was received from Director Dan Alex MacLeod, to be effective as of Dec. 6th. Cited as the main reason for his resignation was the attitude of the past President conveyed in his Report to the Annual Meeting. Mr. MacLeod said he felt that the past-president owed the Directors an apology for the way he treated them in his report, and suggested that such an apology should be sent to all members of the association. The Directors requested that the President write to Dan Alex asking him to reconsider.

The portion of Roy Evans' report referred to, read as follows: "The organizational efforts of SPANS fared little better. Bickering and outright hostility between directors turned most executive meetings into ordeals. The ill conceived and poorly executed farmers market experiment in direct marketing was a financial disaster...."

\* \* \* \* \*

In case you were wondering ...

Several directors wanted Michael Isenor, past chairman of the Sales Committee and organizer of the Halifax Farmers Market project, to stand for Director again at the Nov. 80 annual meeting. Michael refused to stand, saying that he would not go through another term with Roy Evans as Director because of Roy's behaviour as President. In a letter to several Directors, Michael commented that he had really enjoyed his term as Director and had enjoyed working with a lot of very good people in the association, but felt he could not stand for a second term. He pointed to the President's Report cited above, and noted that only two weeks before, the President had written a letter to him thanking him for his hard work and for all he had done for the Association.

\* \* \* \* \*

We are very pleased to announce that we are now Maritime Agents for POLDENVALE livestock handling equipment. By spring we should have in stock a full selection of this superb line of sheep handling equipment, including sorting race with 2 or 3-way sorting gates, footbath, etc. We will also stock their Commodore turning crate for sheep. This equipment is extremely well designed for effectiveness and ease of handling. The hurdles are 9' long - the various pieces are simply joined by connecting links in whatever size or combination suits you. Details on request from Wool Growers Supplies.

PLEASE NOTE! Despite generous support of the Ram's Horn from sheep producers and others, we cannot afford to send this paper to people who are not interested. This will therefore be the last issue of the Ram's Horn that we will send you, unless your \$5 subscription fee has been received.

In the next issue: Edith Zillig on Wool Marketing; "Husbanding Soil the Natural Way on a Sheep Farm" from New Zealand Farmer; plus reports, reflections, etc. ...



And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
- Joshua 6:5

Subscriptions \$5 to Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S. BOK 1R0

## New Zealand Lamb

The N.Z. government marketing agency reports a record 2.1 million lambs sold in the year ended last October. Of these 72% were light grade (13-16 kg) and 14.6% heavy grade (16.5-19.5 kg: 36-43 lb) - the carcass presenting the best scope for spreading high N.Z. labour costs in the cutting operation necessary for the N. American market.

Stability of N.Z. lamb prices in North America was one of the noteworthy achievements in the face of serious pricing competition. At times the company was not able to compete on price but did so with good customer servicing and improved presentation of its products. -

The Canadian subsidiary lifted sales from \$20.9 m in 1979 to \$27.1 million in 1980 maintaining a considerable market presence when other protein options were at lower prices.

## FABLES



© Paul Kantorek 1981 4-29

"It was raining. They all shrunk."

## More on Commodity Group Organizing:

"Cattle fellows are a strange breed. They'll work for nothing for a while. There will be a few who will be squeezed out, but the vast majority will sell off a piece of land or get a mortgage."  
- Glen Ells, vice-president of Beef Producers Assoc. of N.S. and executive member of Canadian Cattlemen's Assoc., quoted in Halifax Chronicle-Herald, April 21/81

WOULDN'T YOU RATHER SELL THE FRUITS OF YOUR LABOUR AT A FAIR PRICE? To participate in the co-op marketing project of Northumberland Sheep Producers, see the article inside and contact B. Kneen ...

from the Union Farmer, February, 1981:

(Richard Taves of the Ontario Farmers Union has written to the Ontario Minister of Agriculture protesting the imposition of a beef cattle check-off in that province without being authorized by a vote of cattle producers):

Taves charges that the Ontario Cattlemen's Association and its parent body, the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, receive the entire check-off simply because government has decided that this type of commodity organization, rather than others, should be encouraged.

## Wool Prices: No Change

The Wool Marketing Board has announced that this year's prices at the mills will be the same as last year: 95¢/lb from Stanfield's and Irish Cove.

The Board has therefore decided to work on alternate markets and will try to develop greater interest in pure wool in

continued ...



## Vertebrate Pest Control Committee

This joint committee of the Depts of Lands & Forests, Agriculture, and the Sheep Producers Assoc. met April 28 with Art Patton, L & F, Stuart Allaby, Ag, Brewster Kneen, SPANS, and Richard Whitman, Secretary-Chairman. The meeting discussed problems caused, primarily to sheep, by bears and coyotes. Art Patton reported that Lands & Forests had only five recorded complaints concerning bears and sheep in 1980. It was agreed by the meeting that a full report should be sent to all sheep producers concerning bear activity.

It was also agreed that a brochure describing coyote kills and measures that can be taken to reduce risk of coyote problems should be prepared and sent to all sheep producers.

There was extensive discussion about the use of electric fence to keep predators out and sheep in. Lands & Forests reports considerable success in keeping bears from hives, deer out of vegetable plots, and similar uses, and feels strongly that electric fence can be one of the best deterrents to predator problems in sheep, including dogs. The meeting agreed with the suggestion of Art Patton and Stuart Allaby that electric fencing, as of April 1, 1981, be included in the fencing assistance policy. To be eligible for 50% subsidy on basic components, including energizer, wire, insulators, springs ratchets, and treated posts, the fence should consist of at least three live wires and be powered by a high power, low impedance energiser.

In being part of this committee, and agreeing to this recommendation, I must confess to being a bit embarrassed by the fact that we also sell this equipment. However, I should point out that we have not raised our prices as a result, nor do we intend to. Our retail prices are set to cover the cost of the borrowed money we operate on, plus a modest return to labour.

- B.K.

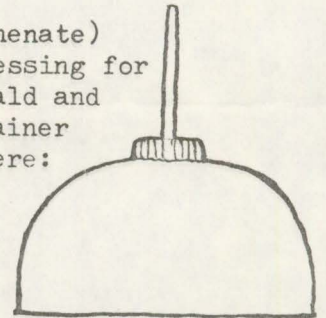
wool prices continued...

the growing handcraft area. Promotional activities will be paid for out of the 2¢ per pound levy paid by the mills to the Board, after the Sheep Producers Assoc. dues to the Federation of Agriculture have been paid.

### MALOCCLUSION

This is the vets' fancy word for teeth not meeting properly. We all check the front teeth of our sheep, but have you looked at the molars lately? We have found that on a number of ours, the lower jaw is substantially narrower than the upper jaw, so that the molars can't meet properly. The outer edge of the upper molars grows down and becomes very sharp - you can cut yourself on them if you run your finger inside the cheek along the closed molars. The sheep lose condition, of course, since they can't chew properly, and when we killed one we found the gut full of unchewed food.

KOPERTOX (Copper Naphthenate) is a very effective dressing for feet afflicted with scald and footrot. But the container leaks all over everywhere: so put it in a \$1.29 plastic oil can. It stands securely and gives only what you need.



### SELENIUM DEFICIENCY

Nova Scotian soils are known to be selenium deficient, but for whatever reason this year seems to have been particularly bad. Lack of selenium in lambs leads, of course, to white muscle disease; lack of selenium in ewes has been blamed for infertility, reabsorption of fetuses, odd-sized twins, etc. Some farmers have increased the Vitamin E/Selenium injection given to the lambs at birth: we increased our dose from ¼ ml (.75 mg) to ½ ml (1.5 mg). A trace-mineralized salt containing selenium for the sheep flock is also available.

MARITIME  
SHEEP  
SERVICES

Offering complete custom care for  
sheep - goats foot-trimmed too -

Jean MacLean / Jim Sutton  
R.R. 3, Belle River, P.E.I.  
962-2235



The following excerpts are taken from an article entitled:

**HOW TO DEFORM AGRICULTURE IN THE NAME OF DEVELOPMENT; THE CASE OF JAPAN** by Murata Goro

Up to the end of WW II, Japan was basically self-sufficient in food. But recently this situation has changed radically. While still self-sufficient in rice, the staple grain, Japan now imports the majority of its food. On a caloric input basis, self-sufficiency has dropped from 80% in 1960 to below 30% in 1978. This article examines some of the reasons and proposed solutions to this situation.

**"Modernization" of Agriculture in Post-war Japan**

In the immediate aftermath of Japan's defeat in the war, the "land reform" carried out at the order of the Occupation Forces turned millions of former tenant farmers into owner-cultivators. Their long suppressed desire to eat rice and the devastating food shortage spurred them on to all sorts of innovations and improvements. Never before or since have they shown such vigor and spirit. For the first time in Japanese history, Japanese farmers seemed to be ready to show initiative, become their own masters, and make the best possible use of the favorable and far-from exhausted potential for agricultural production in Japan.

But the happy days of innovative progress, brought about not by the farmers themselves but by the land reform from above, were shortlived. Beginning as early as the mid 1950s, when Japan's economy began its two decades-long, hyper-growth coaster ride, Japanese agriculture began its rapid decline. In the mid 1950s, inexpensive wheat began to flow into Japan in massive quantities from the United States Mutual Security Agency, as part of the aid provided under the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. The aid was followed by an ever-rising imports of wheat. The school-lunch system was introduced to accustom children to the taste of bread, which became much cheaper than in the United States. This inflow of inexpensive wheat wiped out cultivation of winter wheat in the paddy fields.

Along with cheap wheat came cheap oil, the new life blood of the resurrected Japanese phoenix. In a phenomenon called the "Fuel Revolution," oil rapidly replaced coal and firewood. Many farm households had once been able to maintain self-sufficiency in fuel by using firewood, and many mountain villagers had been used to earning extra income during the winter by producing firewood and charcoal or by making straw and bamboo articles. All these activities were driven out by fuel oil, or by synthetic products made from petroleum. The revived machinery industry began to intensively promote sales of agricultural machines, driving out cows and horses which had been used for plowing. Farmers were thus deprived of compost materials, and became heavily dependent on fertilizer and agricultural chemicals, also produced from petroleum. With the extra expenses and a reduced income, many farmers found that agriculture alone could not sustain them, so that an increasing number began to hold part-time or seasonal jobs outside of agriculture.

This whole process by which Japanese agriculture was crippled has often been misnamed the "modernization of agriculture" because of the increased dependence on machinery and petrochemical products.

Factory work so exhausts the farmer that it is close to impossible for him to do the mental work so vital to agriculture: the careful planning for the coming season's seeding, manure application, plowing, etc. Inevitably, he just blindly follows the recipes prepared by the agricultural coop, the seed breeders or the fertilizer manufacturers. The long years of experience and wisdom accumulated by the old farmers are no use in "modernized" agriculture; it is the salesman from a machine manufacturer who teaches him how to grow rice, with glittering machines. Not so long ago, village children would learn farming from an early age by watching their parents work the land, and doing whatever work they could do to help. Today, however, village school teachers complain that even among kids of farming families there are very few who can tell in the correct order, the procedures by which rice is grown.

The farmer who is supposed to be able to control his own labor by himself far better than an industrial worker has ceased to be the subject of his own destiny acting in harmony with nature. His personality has been divided into two incomplete halves, semi-farmer and unskilled worker. He has been reduced to a consumer not only of manufactured goods, but also of the logic of efficiency and profitability that dominates industry.

One way of increasing Japan's food supply has been to promote programs of "agricultural development assistance" towards countries of Southeast Asia and other 3rd World countries, ostensibly to help these countries become self-sufficient, but also

... permitting Japan to purchase a large portion of the food entering the international market. In both cases, agriculture of the third world countries is to be "developed" by the same gigantic Japanese agribusiness firms which have so successfully monoculturalized agriculture in their own country which was once self-sustaining. Agriculture of many Third World countries has already suffered from a monocultural structure for centuries and such development programs can only reinforce this structure.

One bitter aspect of this thrust by Japanese agribusiness firms into agriculture of the Third World is that the farmers of Japan, who have been virtually uprooted from their own land, are now assisting in the expulsion from the land of their Third World counterparts by means of the same process since they are assisting directly or indirectly as full-time, part-time and seasonal industrial workers in the production of such "modern" agricultural inputs as machines, fertilizer and chemicals.

from AMPO, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1979



NORTHUMBERLAND SHEEP PRODUCERS PLAN MARKETING PROJECT FOR 1981

The weather was agreeably bad on May 3rd when the Northumberland Sheep Producers met at the Diamond Farm of Rowlands/Weber/Ridley. Farmers representing 12 flocks discussed at length the plans for lamb marketing this year. Brewster Kneen reported that both Sobey's and the Co-Op will be buying lambs on a regular basis this year with an initial target of 50 lambs per week for Sobey's. Assembly will begin when we are assured of an adequate, continuous supply of lambs. Weight and quality were discussed and it was agreed that shippers should weigh their lambs at the farm and evaluate them by hand at the same time. Then when they get the carcass weight back with the tag number they will be able to fully evaluate their flock and acquire the skill of knowing when a lamb is ready to go. The Association agreed to buy a set of used scales to be used by the members in the River John area. Anyone desiring assistance in evaluating their lambs is to ask the marketing agent in their area. These agents will be announced prior to the start of the selling season. The market committee consists of Jake Ridley, Mel Lougheed, and Brewster Kneen.

Mel Lougheed also reported on his discussion with the Marketing Branch so far on the subject of promotional materials. After some discussion it was agreed that Mel should work on getting posters and price cards through the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia.

Pricing on lambs was discussed, but there is nothing firm yet because no heavy lambs have reached the market. Plans call for a pricing formula to be based on the Monday lamb sale weighted average price in Toronto, translated into a dead-weight basis.

Any sheep producer interested in participating in this marketing program, regardless of where you live, should get in touch with Brewster Kneen (925-2768) as soon as you can provide an approximate idea of how many lambs you will want to market and when they should be ready. Lambs should be of highest quality, lean but well finished, with a weight of 80-90 lb: you should expect a dressing percent of 43-45% to provide a carcass of 33-45 lb. Knowing that lambs will be shipped every week at a steady price means that lambs can be shipped at their prime, rather than when you think the market might be best.

\* \* \*

FOR SALE:

Approximately 100 ewes with 150 March-born lambs - mostly Suffolk and Suffolk crosses.  
Also 10-15 veal calves.  
Cyril Tarrant, R.R. 5, Antigonish  
phone 963-4345

WANTED TO BUY:

Rams grade or pure bred.  
Bob & Sharon Hamilton, R.R. 1, Bras D'Or  
phone 736-9826

FOR SALE:

Border Collie pups born 1/20/81 out of excellent working parents. Female imported from U.K. Puppies received shots and wormed. Training by arrangement. Note these pups will only be sold to sheep producers with sufficient stock to warrant having a working dog.  
Jim Sutton, R.R. #3, Belle River, P.E.I.  
phone (902) 962-2235

WANTED:

A virile, easy-keep ram suitable for vasectomizing as a teaser.  
B & C Kneen, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S.



## MARKETING YOUR WOOL by Edith Zillig

Since in the past wool prices were low, a number of sheepfarmers used to look at wool as a kind of nuisance. With the energy crisis upon us and with woolen garments coming more and more into fashion, we can expect the demand for wool to increase and wool prices to rise. If we sheepfarmers take more care in the handling and marketing of our wool, we can get a good return from the sale of our wool clip.

However, if we are to go beyond simply shipping our wool to a mill or to Canadian Co-Op Woolgrowers, we must take care to understand the particular needs and demands of each market.

### Special Fleeces

The sale of fleeces to spinners and weavers sounds quite attractive. However, in my view it is only a limited market, which will take only "special fleeces". The fleeces for this market have to be taken off the sheep with care (no second cuts) and they have to be skirted pretty good. No spinner will enjoy working with a dirty fleece, or with short belly wool, or try to get hayseed out. Mostly for a sheepfarmer this special care is too much effort in comparison with the money received.

Also, some spinners are quite specific in their demands. Nearly every spinner has his or her own ideas about a fleece. Some prefer Suffolk, some prefer Cheviot, Dorset, etc. The most in favour, especially for a beginner, is a Leicester fleece.

### Limited Market

Most of our customers for fleeces spin and weave for a hobby. One whole fleece is more than they want to do in one year. They want to try different fleeces. There are very few spinners around who spin and weave to earn money. These customers buy a larger amount of wool and come back - if satisfied - every year for their supply.

A lot of the spinners and weavers want to try working with fleece from the start to the finished product. When they have tried it, they have found out that it was a little dirty, a time and work consuming project, and they prefer to weave with already spun yarn in different colours; only very, very few spinners and weavers fall in love with the natural coloured fleeces and continue to work with them.

### Prices

In 1980 we got per lb. selected white fleece \$2.00  
per lb. selected natural coloured fleece \$2.50

The prices for New Zealand or British fleeces are far higher. They have different breeds of sheep, providing fibres which are much longer and very clean, since most of their sheep never have to be kept in a barn. We here in Nova Scotia cannot expect the same money for our fleeces.

### Selling the Processed Product

We got parts of our wool clip custom spun or custom carded and I sell this wool at the farm to individuals. Briggs and Little and MacAuslands do custom work. MacAuslands also weaves blankets in custom work. (This I wish to try out next season.)

continued...



marketing your wool continued...

Over the years we have built up a nice little market for yarn and hand-crafts and I hope to increase my "business". With this method of marketing your wool you get the best returns, however there is a limit what yarn you can sell directly from the farm. Consequently we sell the bulk of our wool clip to Stanfields, around 20 fleeces go as "selected fleeces" to spinners and weavers (mostly coloured fleeces). I myself use quite a bit for my different handcraft projects. It is very enjoyable to work with wool and also enjoyable when people like my work and buy it. I see my handcrafts and my "woolbusiness" as a side-line of our farm.

\* \* \*

### SELECTING FLEECES FOR HANDSPINNING

According to Delia Burge, sheep producer and spinner, the first step in selecting fleece for handspinning is to breed the appropriate type of sheep. Meat breeds simply do not yield the best wool for handspinning; you need a Romney, Lincoln, Jacob or Leicester or their crosses for the best type of wool.

A spinner will look for lustre, length, and crimp. Look for a fleece which is long but also relatively fine. (Scottish Blackface wool which is long and coarse is a separate consideration, and is in demand for certain particular applications, particularly rugs.) The different size crimps of various breeds are used for different purposes, i.e. if a soft, light wool is needed for a baby blanket then a light wool with a very close crimp is used as the crimp allows the wool to trap more air in the fibre and so make the yarn lighter and softer.

An open fleece collects chaff easily, so it is important to breed for a closed, long fleece - the Romney and Jacob fleeces seem to be some of the best fleeces for that, but fleeces can be kept clean by good winter care. Never throw hay down onto the sheep's backs or use V-shaped feeders where the hay can fall down on their backs.

A final consideration in fleece selection is colour: the natural browns and greys which sheep produce cannot be reproduced by dyes and will always be in demand by the spinner. However, a short, coarse, dirty fleece will simply turn the spinner off local wool, whatever the colour.

It is important, if we are to nurture a market among local spinners for our local fleeces, that we do our best to provide them with a comparable product to the imported fleeces: clean, long, lustrous wool. Only then can we begin to ask comparable prices.

\* \* \*

### WOOL RECEIPTS 1980

Stanfields	...	91,266 lb.
Irish Cove	...	22,250 lb.
Briggs & Little		11,736 lb.
Woolgrowers Co-Op		2,000 estimated
Condons	...	2,000 lb.
Weavers, spinners		4,000 lb.

total: 133,000 lbs.

@ 5 lb/head = 26,600 sheep shorn

### FLEECE

#### COMPETITION '81

A new event at this year's Sheep Fair will be a fleece competition. Each farmer may enter one fleece for judging. Select your best one now when you shear don't wait until they are already picked over!



It's a tricky business for a farmer to get involved in marketing. Nurtured by the kind of life we lead, we tend to be unaware of how language and ideas get used by different people for different reasons. Take the word "marketing" itself: to us it means quite simply taking our produce to market, or selling our milk, or shipping our hogs. Marketing is a simple operation of selling to another party. But what did "marketing" mean to the Upper Canada ad man who dreamed up the kiddie-porn sales pitch for SUPER 2? What does marketing mean to the produce manager at Dominion, or the meat manager at Sobey's? Or what does marketing mean to Nestlé's when it comes to selling infant formula in the Third World? In other words, to some people "marketing" describes their efforts to sell something to somebody, not because they need it or it would be good for them or would improve their health, but simply in order to make a profit, to squeeze a little extra gravy out of "product" for the benefit of the party doing the marketing.

Look at another aspect of marketing: as a sheep producer, I would like to have everyone looking for lamb so that the price would go up and I would make a decent living on the basis of a reasonable work week. But if I am also raising beef, as a beef producer I have the same goal. It does not then make sense for me as a beef producer to be competing against myself as a lamb producer, yet this is exactly what happens when the Canada Sheep Council pushes - markets - lamb, and the Beef Centre, paid for by the Canadian Cattlemen's Association, pushes beef. A person is going to eat only so much meat, so as farmers it is not to our advantage to push commodities competitively, but rather to work on joint marketing. We must also insist on the limitation of imports, with a national meat policy that permits imports only when local meat production cannot meet existing market needs. In other words, our national marketing policy on meat should be based on a national agricultural policy calling for self-sufficiency to the extent possible, with imports acting as supplementary. In this context, marketing policy would call for the promotion of what is local, what is seasonally available, what is nutritious.

Our meat marketing policy ought to encourage people in this part of the world to eat meat for protein, not brown rice and nuts from California, just as we should eat locally grown tomatoes, not tomatoes manufactured in Mexico or somewhere else where labour is cheap. (It is no accident that our traditional diet is meat, milk, and potatoes. Like native diets around the world, it makes best use of available resources and climate.)

Did you ever sit in a manager's office and listen to one half of a phone conversation on marketing certain items? The aim of the wholesaler and retailers is to make a profit, that is, to provide a return to the corporation in excess of what is paid out in costs of purchases, labour and salaries, maintenance, etc. On top of the transfer of funds achieved in this way, the food retailer has another very distinct advantage over the farmer in that the farmer has to pay for his inputs long before he gets paid for his product. Very frequently he has to pay interest on this operating cash at high bank rates. The food retailer, on the other hand, buys on 30-60 days payment period, but is paid in cash, so that the company has 30-60 days use of your money which could well go into the bank - thus earning the retailer interest on the money which is loaned out to the farmer. It is this situation which gives the retailer the



kind of power he has over the farmer, through no fault of the farmer. What is the only sensible answer to this situation? An adequate return to the farmer so that it is not necessary to go to the bank for operating capital; control of imports to encourage and enhance local production; joint marketing of all meats through a national meat commission or marketing agency; and control over the food distribution system so that it plays the part of a service industry.

About inflation: inflation does not just happen, as we are led to believe. Inflation is a deliberate policy of individuals, chosen because it gives them greater wealth and control individually and through corporate power. It is the banks who set the interest rates, and the banks who benefit. For example:

After-tax profits by publicly owned companies for the first quarter of 1981 showed an increase over the first quarter of 1980 for banks of 62%  
trust and loan companies - 90%, and  
real estate companies - 161%  
- Globe & Mail, May 2/81

Who pays for inflation then? Working people, the poor, and those on fixed incomes. So it should come as no surprise to farmers that we are the ones losing out now, or that we are being exhorted to become speculators in order to "protect" our interests.

\* \* \*

from the Globe & Mail Report on Business, April 2, 1981

The entry of John Labatt Ltd. of London, Ont., into the fluid milk business, through its acquisition of Dominion Dairies Ltd. of Toronto, puts it more firmly into two important phases of its business - agriproducts and consumer goods.

Labatt is no stranger to milk in other forms. Through its subsidiary, Ault Foods Ltd., it is the largest cheese manufacturer and industrial milk producer in Ontario, and the second largest in Canada. It produces ice cream, frozen novelties, butter, skim milk powder, cheddar cheese and whey powder.

The acquisition of Dominion Dairies, which had 1980 sales of \$263 million,

makes Labatt the most diversified beverage producer in Canada, with wine, milk, and beer products.

Dominion Dairies produces milk, cottage cheese, frozen desserts and yogurt, marketing them under the Sealtest and Light 'N' Lively labels.

The dairy business is not generally regarded as being highly profitable, but Mr. Peter Widdrington, president of Labatt, said there are other considerations. Dominion Dairies had a profit of \$5.8 million in 1980, and "it's a good cash flow generator. In these days of high interest rates, that's an important aspect of any business."

\* \* \*



And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
- Joshua 6:5

Subscriptions \$5 to Brewster and Cathleen Kneen, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S. BOK 1R0

## W. S. McNeil

Along with many others in the community of Nova Scotian sheep producers, we mourn the passing this summer of Bill McNeil, a breeder, showman, and sheep judge of wide reputation. His Suffolk and Shropshire breeding stock have formed a solid cornerstone for many a growing flock in this area, and his show stock have set the pace at exhibitions for more than 50 years.

Murray Harvie, a long-time friend, comments: "I'm going to miss him at the shows more than anything else. Every show I've ever been to he's been there, helping watch my sheep and so on. I couldn't say anything that isn't nice about Bill."

FARM GATE PRICES FOR LAMB AND MUTTON REMAIN AS SUGGESTED BY THE SHEEP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION:

LAMB: \$2.40/lb. dressed carcass weight  
MUTTON: \$1.30/lb. and up depending on age

## Northumberland Lamb Market

From June 4 through August 13, 25 farms have consigned 376 lambs for sale through the Northumberland Lamb Market. Prices have ranged from a high of \$2.51/lb. dressed weight to consignors in June, to the most recent price of \$2.00. The total received by farmers in this period was about \$28,500.

While initially pricing was to be set by a formula based on the Special Lamb Sale held each Monday at the Toronto Stock Yards, this price has fallen so low in recent weeks as to make this impossible. (73¢ liveweight Aug. 10.) After considerable discussion by Northumberland Sheep Producers about costs of production and minimum return required in the present national lamb market situation, and discussion with our principal buyer, Sobey's, we have agreed to hold the price paid to farmers at \$2. While this is just where we were in dollar terms last year, we do have the benefit of an assured and stable market. It also means that we are getting a fairer price than most other lamb producers.

Farmers interested in selling high quality finished lambs through this market should contact Brewster (925-2768) with number, and type of lambs and date available.

## Bill C-46

"A Bill to Control the Import of Meat"

This bill has passed second reading in the House of Commons with the backing of Eugene Whelan and farm organizations other than the National Farmers Union. But don't be fooled by the name! This is really a bill to license the import of fresh, chilled, and frozen meat, goats and lamb excluded, without any restriction on live imports. The import quotas are based on

... continued

FABLES



© Paul Kantorek 1981 5-13

"Last year the sheep farm was much bigger."



BILL C-46 continued from page 1

past import levels plus an allowance for increasing Canadian population. In other words, it is a bill to protect the packinghouse industry at the expense of farmers in Canada.

Contact your M.P. for further information and ask what his position is on this bill. Our feeling is that it is simply a bad thing for Canadian livestock producers who are already in serious trouble, and we must do what we can to defeat it.

- - - - -

BACK TO SCHOOL ...

This is a short excerpt from a brief presented to the PEI Ministerial Advisory Committee on Curriculum by the PEI National Farmers Union. The complete paper is available on request.

... there is basic opposition between the Philosophy of Education for PEI (as expressed in A Style for Every Child) and the Statement of Purpose of the NFU (Farm Policies for the '80s). We have an educational system in which the stated goal is "to prepare an individual to function happily and successfully in the society in which he lives". At the same time the NFU comments on that very society: "We are learning that the society in which we live and toil is exploitive in nature and the power of abundance we possess is widely subjected to economic exploitation to our disadvantage". An education of children which does not take into account the exploitive nature of our society promotes passive acceptance by preparing "an individual to function happily and successfully in the society ...". We interpret the stated basic goal of our schools as being the formation of people who will cope with the organization of society, but not challenge the very foundations of its exploitive nature. ...

The Philosophy of Education for PEI places extreme emphasis on the individual child and his needs. The word "individual" is used constantly throughout the statement. The NFU is convinced of the worth of each individual person. Our whole movement is based on understanding among people. However, we recognize that excessive individualism militates against people coming together to work for the good of all. Our Statement of Purpose says, "We are learning that the pursuit of only individual self-interest leads inevitably to self-destruction". A system of education which begins with the individual and ends with the individual, seeing the world only as it relates to the individual, will make it increasingly difficult for people to unite in a common hope and aspiration. As farmers we see that it is essential to our present well-being and our future existence that more and more young people be trained to be farmers with the capacity to organize and unite for the good of the total group of agricultural primary producers. We profess that "The common hope and aspiration of us all is that the creative power farmers possess may be a blessing to all mankind and not a curse. It is our hope and aspiration that our families may live in dignity and prosperity - that we may, as farmers, live in harmony with one another and that all the world's people may live in peace and brotherhood." We, therefore, require that our young people be educated in such a way as to be oriented toward the good of all peoples rather than oriented toward "self-fulfillment" and "self-realization". We do not deny the importance of these personal qualities, but we know by experience that these will be acquired as people become involved in creating a world of justice for all people.

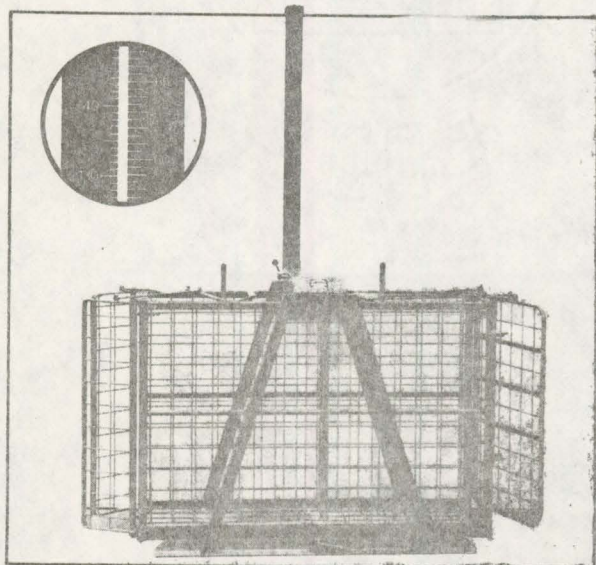


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(blue, yellow, green, red)

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## Flock Health Pilot Programme

The flock health programme agreed upon by the Northumberland Sheep Producers Association, Dr. Wm. Motz, and the Dept. of Agriculture, represents a new approach to the problems of preventive health care in sheep. The programme, designed by the Association and agreed to by the Department after lengthy discussion, is a group arrangement between the farmers and the vet.

It calls for one annual visit by the vet to each of the dozen farms enrolled, to familiarize him with the layout and management system of that farm. Subsequent farm visits will take the form of seminars or workshops on the specific problems and challenges of the season at hand. There will be several of these in each season to ensure that each enrolled farm can attend at least one, no matter on which farm it is held.

Clearly, the programme depends on the ability of the farmers involved to be open with one another about the problems

they encounter; and on their ability to observe their own animals and relate their observations to the vet in the course of a session at another farm.

On the other hand, many more farmers can be involved than would be possible on an individual basis, given the limitations of time and funds; and it is hoped that a considerable body of knowledge will be built up about sheep management and preventive health measures which will be available to other sheep farmers as well. Some of these insights will be presented on a regular basis through the vet's page which starts in this issue of the Ram's Horn.

Although it is billed as a flock health programme, it is understood that we are working in the context of commercial sheep production with high quality market lambs as the end product, so not only disease prevention but also different management systems, breeding, feeding, etc. will all be part of our discussions.

Details of the programme are available to any other group of farmers.



ENZOOTIC MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY (Stiff Lamb Disease)

by Dr. William Motz

Most people are aware of the typical clinical picture of this disease, that of a lamb, usually in the 1st month of life, exhibiting a stiff, straddling gait and having difficulty rising from a recumbent position. This condition is caused by an inadequacy of Vitamin E which results in degeneration and destruction of muscle fibers - in the above described condition, skeletal muscle. The muscle tissue of the heart may also be affected resulting in signs easily mistaken for pneumonia; i.e. accelerated respiration (thumps). Death may occur without the development of the usual characteristic symptoms.

Inadequacy of Vitamin E, when marginal, may cause other problems which may be thought to be caused by other factors. It may exhibit itself as unthriftiness, slow weight gain, impotence, higher percentage of single lambs as opposed to multiple births, abortions - and as mentioned earlier, pneumonia. The pasturella bacterium, responsible for a high percentage of lamb pneumonia, is a normal resident of the respiratory tract and an opportunist, often causing disease secondary to another weakening factor.

The trace mineral, selenium, is necessary for the body to utilize Vit. E. As the soil along the eastern seaboard is deficient in this element, forage grown in it is also deficient. This deficiency is the cause of most cases of Enzootic Muscular Dystrophy seen here.

A recommended preventive program for this area - as follows:

- 1) 4 - 5 mg selenium per 100 lbs to ewes & rams at tugging time intramuscularly or subcutaneously
- 2) 4 - 5 mg per 100 lbs to ewes 2 - 4 weeks prior to lambing
- 3) 1½ mg to lambs at birth
- 4) 4 - 5 mg per 100 lbs to lambs monthly till weaned.

Treatment if necessary would be twice the preventive dosage.

Most commercially available products contain selenium as well as d-alpha-Tolopheryl acetate which is Vitamin E.

**WORMER:** The wormer Oxfendazole (trade name Benzelmin) is now available in soluble powder form from the New Glasgow Veterinary Clinic. The price is \$2.90 for enough to do 1000 lbs. of animal. This medication is claimed to be effective against tapeworms and immature larvae as well as the common stomach worms etc. and although it is in the same "family" as Thibenzole, mixes readily with water, enabling a large amount of wormer to be administered in a small amount of water.



# BRAZIL'S DRIVE TO REPLACE GASOLINE WITH ALCOHOL

by Bjorn Kumm

from the *Globe + Mail*, May 19, 1981

Brazil, as a result of the international oil crisis, is in the forefront of a massive attempt to replace gasoline with alcohol and other non-petroleum fuels. In the future, a major portion of Brazil's engine fuel will come from sugar cane, palm oil, peanuts, sunflowers or even garbage, all of which can be obtained within the country, circumventing a reliance on troublesome OPEC countries. The social dislocations that will inevitably result will be a problem to be dealt with later, if at all, should they become crisis situations.

The Brazilian Government's program (known as Proalcool) aims at a production of 10.7 billion litres of ethanol, 100 per cent alcohol, from sugar cane by 1985. To reach this target, Proalcool subsidizes cane growers and sugar manufacturers through cheap loans, far below Brazil's nearly confiscatory bank interest rates of 180-200 per cent.

The most potential damage of the Brazilian alcohol program will be on agriculture. In order to keep 2.5 million cars running at the present rate — with no gasoline rationing, except for closed gas stations on weekends and stiff penalties for hoarding — the Brazilian alcohol promoters will have to provide six hectares of sugar cane per car-year.

Sugar cane demands high-quality soil and the present trend is for large sugar cane plantations to further encroach on land which has till now been used by small farmers to produce rice, beans and mandioca, the basic crops that feed the average Brazilian.

In 1980, sugar cane production took up a fifth of arable land in the state of Sao Paulo, which not only has the biggest concentration of Brazilian industries but is also the leading agricultural producer. If Sao Paulo is to meet its share of the Proalcool target for 1985, the state would have to double the acreage now

under sugar cane and will in the process push out other crops.

The alcohol program thus further accelerates Brazil's growing dependence on food imports. It also further upsets the economic conditions of Brazil's small farmers, the most productive force in the countryside.

Due to past coffee crop failures, the Government's support for soya and growing farm mechanization, an increasingly large proportion of Brazil's rural population is becoming a sub-proletariat in the major cities or a half-starved work force for the big plantations. If they try to brave it in the new territory of Rondonia, they have to fight malaria, snakes and Indians, while trying to burn down the rain forest. The result everywhere is disastrous.

In the best of cases, Brazil will only manage to reduce a small portion of its oil needs with its gigantic alcohol program. "Why all this effort to save the automobile?" asks Jose Goldemberg, a nuclear physicist who is also a major critic of the Brazilian Government's energy policies.

The point is that the automobile industry, subsidized and protected from its inception in the 1950s, has been the cornerstone of Brazil's so-called economic wonder. From then on, the dream of Brazil's planners was to develop this huge Third World country into an industrialized power, centred around the automobile industry. The existing railways were deliberately run down or scrapped. The infant trucking industry, with vehicles made in Brazil even though by foreign companies, got a near monopoly on transport.

But transporting 70 per cent of all Brazilian cargo by truck may have been a paying proposition in the Fifties and Sixties when oil was cheap. In the 1980s, it becomes an extremely expensive option. Even though Brazil's rulers keep blaming increased oil prices for all the country's economic woes, the fact remains that Brazil's trouble is largely self-imposed.



In 1967 a group of people involved in agriculture - agriculturalists, not farmers - were asked by the Federal Government to look at the future of agriculture in Canada. In 1969 they presented their report entitled Canadian Agriculture in the Seventies. When read in 1981, this paper makes it quite clear that much of what appears as accidental, unplanned, or irrational, is in fact the working out of the policy and program outlined in 1969, without regard for social costs or social consequences. The 1969 policy has now been given new strength and clarity in a "discussion paper" just released by the Federal Minister of Agriculture, entitled "Challenge for Growth: An Agri-Food Strategy for Canada" (July, 1981). The reason for coining a new term, "agri-food" comes clear in reading through this brief but frightening document: the writers are mainly interested in the industrialization of agriculture and the processing sector. To them, agriculture means industry, so they must add the term "food" to indicate that the raw material of this industry is what we call food. "The agri-food sector includes input suppliers, farmers, processors, distributors and retailers, and governments."

Together with the emphasis on food processing because its "value added" can be easily calculated, is the belief that agriculture's major contribution in the future will be to Canada's international trade and its balance of payments. That there are hungry people to be fed is of course important, but only because there must be a market for this processed food before there can be a marketing strategy. Having recognized that there are and, under current economic and social policies will be, hungry people, the authors of this discussion paper, like those before them who wrote the 1969 paper, then make it quite clear that the food to be processed and marketed will be produced by capital intensive, corporate agriculture.

The first chapter of the 1969 policy paper is entitled: Canadian Agriculture in Perspective, and it contains some devastating expressions of what was to become Federal agricultural policy. In describing the 1969 situation, the paper states: "Families operating one-third of Canadian farms are classified as below the poverty line. Lacking the opportunity, ability, training and resources to become viable farmers, they constitute a substantial brake on progress." (p. 7) Two pages later, describing their 1990 model for Canadian agriculture, the policy makers state that "there will be a substantial reduction in number of commercial farms. Some will be family farms but all will be rationally managed, profit oriented businesses. Farm mergers and consolidation will result in much larger units, not primarily for increased production efficiency, but to structure units that are large enough to afford better management." (That is, management that will produce better profits, not better or more food.) Again, in the 1990 model: "Management, survival and cost-price realities will force a more effective rationalization of the relationships of production and sales; sales, costs and profits; and return on investment in agriculture from the smallest farm to the largest corporation. (p. 9) What the writers mean, behind this garbage language, is that agriculture is to become like any other corporate enterprise to produce profits and corporate growth through vertical and horizontal integration.

In the judgement of the writers of the 1981 "discussion paper": The (agri-food) sector is basically sound, both technically and economically.



Its present soundness is closely related to past government action, both domestic and international." In other words, the policies outlined in 1969 are fact in 1981 thanks to government action. However, the writers do recognize that there are improvements still to be made in this "sound" situation that we find ourselves in today, with criminal interest rates and lowering commodity prices. Therefore, "the strategy for strengthening the supply base" (farms, that is) "must ensure an adequate flow of advancing technology resulting from accelerated research and technology transfer combined with incentives to motivate productive investments." This depends upon "the development of management systems and restructuring of many farms in both technical and business aspects to assure continuence of viable family farms."

This is virtually the only mention of the family farm. But what they are referring to is not what you and I might picture as a family farm. This becomes clear when they express "...the need for educational facilities to train future farm managers in technology and business management". Also essential will be "programs to ensure the supply of seasonal and full-time workers in the agri-food sector".

In other words, the family farm will be similar to the Irving family farm, "Cavendish Farms", with its professional managers, hired labour, and absentee owners. This will be the completion of the industrialization of agriculture and the divorce between labour and management. Farmers will no longer be any different than anyone else - they will be workers or bosses. Recognizing the consequences of their recommended policies, the writers also point out that their strategy "has to take account of the need to assist small producers who face difficulties in adjusting to changing input costs, market opportunities and technology." (p. 16) In other words, assisting the small farmers to get out!

There aren't many illusions left for farmers in 1981. We are being relentlessly squeezed so that we either get out, get much bigger and accept the role of managers with "investors" owning the farms, or get smaller and subsidize our food production with off-farm labour, as has been the case for years. It is this privately subsidized farming that has been, of course, one of the mainstays of Canada's cheap food policy.

It would be comforting to think this situation is accidental, not deliberate policy, and that we can survive with harder work and better management. But what is the reality? In 1981, new five year agricultural development programs were supposed to be in place for both Nova Scotia and PEI. The provincial governments had completed their preparatory work almost a year ago. But in both cases the Federal Government has not said NO - it has simply said nothing. Why? Look at the strategy laid out in 1969: "Because of a drastic reduction in farm population (probably to about 3% to 4% of population), the balance of power among farmers, consumers, and taxpayers will change substantially. The government will become less involved in agriculture. Farm subsidies will be cut and the entire private sector of the agricultural system will be required to accept a much greater degree of independence." (p/ 9)

A few of the other points in the 1969 description of farming in 1990 must be noted: "As governments encourage agriculture to rationalize its management processes and organizational structure, a clear-cut separation of welfare and commercial farm policy programs will emerge. ... As the size of units increases, financial requirements multiply and operating problems increase in complexity, ease of entry into commercial farming will be drastically cut allowing much greater rationalization of supply-demand relationships." (p. 9) This sounds very like a description of McCain's - vertical integration, monopoly control, and intimate relations with government and the public purse. There is only



room for a few of these "commercial" farms - the rest of us involved in "welfare" farming will be disposed of.

From such an attitude of contempt for the majority of farmers in Canada, and indeed in the world, it is but a short step into the 1981 strategy with its emphasis on food processing and international trade based not on self-reliance, but on the notion of "comparative advantage", which in Canada's case would mean that we import almost all of our food while exporting grain to earn the dollars to import our food. This is expressed in the "Agri-Food Strategy" as having agriculture "maximize its contribution to the growth and development of the Canadian economy ... " (p.4) "If the Canadian agri-food sector is to achieve its potential share it must develop new commercial markets and maintain existing ones for the commodities in which Canada has or can develop a comparative advantage". The tone of this implies that we should regard comparative advantage as some kind of natural law, rather than the result of a combination of climate, natural resources, and political and economic choices.

Of course, the more of the economy the public can be persuaded to accept as being beyond our control - unemployment, interest rates, inflation, what have you - the easier it is for the policy makers to operate without public interference. The question that remains is, in whose interests do these policies operate, and the question is answered in the 1981 paper. It is the processors and traders who are to benefit, with farmers reduced to the roles of managers or laborers in an industrial system.

If this is not the role we farmers want, then we had better prepare ourselves to fight back - now.

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FOR SALE:

Border Collie pups ready to go  
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CORPORATE NEWS: Have you noticed those newly painted trailers on the road saying "Willett ... The Fruit Family"? Well, this is not a family-owned, local produce company. It is Dominion Stores masking the true identity of their wholly owned subsidiary. It has been farmers' experience that Dominion is not seriously interested in local meat or produce of any sort.

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WOOL: Because of production requirements (volume) Stanfields have announced they will not receive small amounts of wool beyond Sept. 1st. If you plan a fall shearing, please contact them before shipping. Other buyers listed by the Wool Board are continuing to receive wool.



# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat. -Joshua 6:5

SUBSCRIPTIONS \$6 for 6 ISSUES TO: BREWSTER AND CATHLEEN KNEEN  
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NO. 17

November, 1983

1503 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES FOR SALE

## INVESTOR . . . PART TIME FARMER

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IT'S A long way from Saskatoon to the presidency of the 31,000-member Canadian Bar Association. But for ROBERT MCKERCHER, 53, it's one more step in a career that has included leadership roles in the Saskatchewan branch of the CBA and in the governing body of that province's bar.

A civil litigation lawyer, McKercher also operates a 2,400-acre cattle and grain farm. He and his family live on the farm, which is four miles from his law office.

Financial Post 10/9/83

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We haven't obtained the benefits of agriculture without paying for them, and some have paid more dearly than others. It seems a general rule that, as soon as our species settles down, some of its members will try to obtain their food supply without working, by controlling the land and the people who cultivate it. Those in positions of power are thus guaranteed their dinners, even in lean years. Farming also means the beginning of unequal distribution of wealth (land and food are wealth) and the division of society into dominated and dominating classes. The latter, understandably from their point of view, soon find it expedient to establish police forces and bureaucracies to help keep food producers "in their place". There are no historical instances where the peasants have been their own rulers for more than very short periods.

”  
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## The Farm Financial Crisis... Misenor provides an opinion

This is an excerpt from an article in the Financial Post (Oct 8/83) discussing the activities of the Royal Bank in Saskatchewan and its increased role in farm financing. Much of the credit is given to the manager, Boyd Robertson, and his innovative tactics:

Royal set up booths at country fairs, initiated meet-the-manager days in its rural branches and is conducting a draw for two half-ton trucks among farm depositors. The bank is sponsoring financial management seminars for farmers that so far have drawn 5,000 and has brought computers right into farm kitchens to teach cash flow planning.

"This is a pretty significant departure," says Wayne Gamble, president of Farm

West Management Ltd. "I mean this is aggressive marketing."

In September, 1981, Royal held farm loans in Saskatchewan worth \$475 million. Two years later, it says the portfolio stands at more than \$700 million. If Royal's Saskatchewan division were included on a recent list of the 100 largest agricultural lending banks in the U.S., it would place second after Bank of America.

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Often, generations of  
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## NOVA SCOTIA FARMERS UNION FORMED

After many years of study and debate, a small group of Nova Scotia farmers joined together on Sept. 20 to form the Nova Scotia Farmers Union. The NSFU is based on the principles of the National Farmers Union as laid out in the Statement of Purpose (quoted in the last issue of the Ram's Horn), and it is the intention of the new group to apply to become a local of the NFU as soon as numbers warrant.

In the meantime, the NSFU has its plate full. It is pledged to two parallel approaches: to study the situation of farmers in depth and propose viable long-term solutions on a principled basis; and to take action to defend farmers in the crisis situation in which many now find ourselves.

One particular concern is the problems of red meat producers, which neatly combines the two emphases, as the surest defence seems to be a viable long-term strategy, based on the principles of support for the family-sized farm and the long-term economic viability of a marketing system.

Membership in the fledgling Union is open to all farmers and farm workers on the same family basis as the NFU (all family members over age 14 are included) and the initial dues have been set at \$25/year to allow some funds for necessary organizing work. Already the group has held two farmers information meetings and made a presentation to the MacDonalld Commission on the economy.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Union can contact Brewster Kneen at 925-2768, David Butlin at 657-2771, or John Vissers at 447-2551.

\* \* \*

\* the quote on the front page comes from FOOD FOR BEGINNERS, by Susan George (author of HOW THE OTHER HALF DIES) and Nigel Paige. In a very accessible, cartoon-filled format, the book explains clearly the complex relationship between development and world hunger.

## SHEEP PRODUCERS ANNUAL MEETING NOV. 19

The major item on the agenda is a resolution from the Directors that SPANS be recognized as the commodity group for sheep, with the right to impose check-off on wool, via the Wool Board, to pay for its activities. But this year the Board was unable to collect check-off from one buyer outside the province (including wool from two of the largest N.S. producers); and producers still have the right to a refund of check-off. These hurdles must be overcome before there is financial security for SPANS.

It should also be noted that becoming a commodity group does not necessarily tie SPANS to any other farm organization.

Also on the agenda is election of three Directors as the terms of Jim Gough, John Mildon, and Guy Sanders expire.

\* \* \*

## BEEF CHECK-OFF REMOVED

The Globe & Mail, Nov. 2/83, reports that the \$2.6-million national advertising campaign of the Beef Information Centre may be in jeopardy after mid-1984. The contribution from the Ontario Cattlemen's Association will be cut in half as a result of a vote by the provincial association to reject non-refundable check-off fees. The Manitoba government has also abolished an existing check-off.

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IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN...

"I always will remember,  
'Twas a year ago November  
I went out to hunt some deer  
On a morning bright and clear  
I went and shot the maximum  
The game laws would allow:  
Two game wardens, seven hunters, and  
a cow...." The Hunting Song  
by Tom Lehrner



## ROBOTS: THE PRODUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT

There is a refreshing candor about some writing that appears in the public press. For example, this article from the Globe & Mail, Oct. 14/83, lucidly explains the drive toward ever more sophisticated mechanization of agriculture. It all comes down to the cost of labour - but the accounting is inadequate. The drive toward short-term viability and profit obscures the real costs both socially and economically. If mechanization, or even the introduction of robots, means greater unemployment, that is viewed as a social, not an economic problem; thus not the concern of those causing the unemployment. Of course it is these same people who denounce the high cost of welfare and unemployment benefits, while not accepting responsibility for creating the situation. Such has been their schooling.

### TAMPA

New York Times Service

**I**N AN AGE WHEN standing still means falling behind, scientists are straining to develop sturdy, cost-saving robots to replace humans as agricultural laborers.

The driving force behind developing agricultural robots, as an industry, is the need to remain competitive in the world market.

Agricultural engineers in Florida are looking at building robots equipped with a crude form of vision that could spot ripe oranges on citrus trees and gently pick them. The engineers say they need to develop such a machine because the cost of agricultural labor could someday make produce less competitive with foreign produce.

"As low as agricultural labor is, it's even lower in other countries," said David Shoup, a University of Florida specialist in agricultural machinery systems. "Brazil now supplies 35 to 40 per cent of processed citrus in the United States. Part of their success is due to cheaper labor."

Dr. Shoup made his remarks at the world's first international conference on robotics and intelligence machines in agriculture, which ended here late last week.

The Florida citrus industry is not the only one looking forward to using robotic fruit pickers. Dr. Shoup reports that Israel, a major citrus producer, is a leader in robotic citrus harvesting.

"If we didn't need to develop these machines, we wouldn't do it," he said. "Other countries and states are doing this and we can't afford not to change."

Another factor pushing research in robots is the fact that, despite an otherwise plentiful labor supply, growers have a hard time getting enough workers at the peak of the season, Dr. Shoup said.

With the possibility of robot-harvesting within a decade, Dr. Shoup said, two University of Florida graduate students are assessing how many jobs would disappear and for how long.

"Agricultural robots could make a deep impression on society," he said. "But I don't know what the answer is for the people who will be displaced by them."

One scientist who drew attention at the conference was Stewart Key of the University of Western Australia in Perth. Mr. Key and fellow researchers have been developing a robot to shear sheep.

Shearing sheep is hard work, requiring shearers to bend over the animals while they clip the wool. People who have done this for years are plagued with back problems and other ailments.

This has brought a shortage of shearers, and the Australian Wool Corp. in Sydney commissioned Mr. Key and other researchers to develop a robot shearer.

Wool is Australia's largest export commodity and earned \$1.7-billion in 1980, according to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization.

So far, this robot is shearing only in the laboratory. Under development since 1976, the computer-directed machine takes about 15 minutes to shear 88 per cent of the wool from a sheep. The average human shearer needs only three to four minutes to do the task.

But humans ordinarily cut a sheep 17 to 25 times in the process. Mr. Key said the robot never cuts a sheep.

In Japan, private industry has developed driverless combines to harvest rice and wheat. Nobutaka Ito of Mie University in Tsu showed a film of one of these computer-controlled combines harvesting a rice field.

Dr. Ito said these combines were designed specifically for Japanese farmers, who frequently have small farms and work in other jobs. Driverless combines would allow the farmers to work in a factory while the robot completed the harvest.

While development of the machines is complete, he said, it is difficult for Japanese farmers to accept them. But, he said, Japanese manufacturers "can export this kind of technology to advanced countries like the United States."



## NEW LIFE FOR SLAUGHTERHOUSES

"This is a very positive move on the part of government on behalf of both consumers and producers", was how Stuart Allaby, Director of Livestock Services for the N.S. Dept. of Agriculture, summed up the proposed new Meat Inspection Act.

The new Act is designed to tackle two problems which have become apparent in the marketing and production of red meats in Nova Scotia. One is the problem of consumer protection: the provisions of the Act will assure consumers that all meat they buy in retail stores has been inspected by government meat inspectors and has been killed and handled in a proper fashion. On the producer side, the Act will provide access to the retail markets in the Province for local producers who have been hampered by the severe difficulty of achieving inspected premises under the current system.

The basic problem lies in the fact that Federal standards for abattoirs are written with the export trade in mind, and include many provisions which are totally unnecessary for local trade, but which have to be adhered to because they are in the regulations. The result is that many small abattoirs which would like to operate under inspection simply cannot afford it, and producers who would like to sell meat into markets where inspection is required do not have access to those markets. Mr. Allaby is confident that once the Act is in place and the regulations worked out (in consultation with producer groups and with experts from Ontario, where a similar system is working well) local red meat producers will find their marketing opportunities greatly increased. He sees it as a positive step towards a more viable livestock industry in this province.

For many livestock producers the "freezer trade" - selling meat directly to the consumer - is a very important aspect of their total farm business. The new regulations will not touch that, according to Mr. Allaby. Under the proposed Act, only meat that is offered for resale will have to be inspected; the regulations will not deal with personal use. In other words, if a farmer wishes to kill a lamb for a customer in his own barn, that's fine, as long as the customer does not offer the lamb for sale to anyone else. In the same way, farmers can take animals to their local small slaughterhouse for custom killing, as long as the meat is then sold directly to the consumer by the farmer. Of course, the development of more realistic regulations will very likely increase the number of inspected plants in the province and therefore the possibility of even custom killing operations having inspection available.

Right now the Livestock Services Branch is just waiting for the legislation to be proposed and approved by the Legislature so they can get to work on finalizing the Regulations and get on with developing the kind of meat inspection system they are convinced Nova Scotia needs.



## EUROPE: THE MONEY RUNS OUT

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We do not hear much about it - our own problems are sufficient - but the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Economic Community is in serious difficulty, as this article from the Financial Post (Sept. 17/83) points out. Of course, the problem is political, and we are indoctrinated to treat such problems as only technical or economic. So the fact that the fund which pays the subsidies to the farmers of Europe is virtually bankrupt is regarded as a problem of financial management.

The politics of the situation is that the Common Market is committed not only to self-sufficiency in agriculture, but also to export earnings through food sales. Since farming involves a much higher percentage of the population than it does in North America, there are too many votes and too much political strength involved for farming to be "rationalized" as it is being in Canada and the USA. The "technical" solution to the European dilemma would be to greatly reduce the number of farmers and increase the size of agricultural enterprises, while at the same time making them more capital intensive. This would be appropriate to the Agri-Food Strategy. That it would also create massive unemployment and social dislocation is a problem that need not concern the economic technicians, but it does concern the politicians who want to remain in power, and the peasant-farmer organizations.

There are about 25 million cows in the EC, and the current estimate is that the Community's supply of milk products exceeds internal and export needs by about 15%. That means there are probably three million-four million producing animals too many. In fact, on the supply side, the problem is not that the number of cows is increasing, it's that they are producing more milk.

Production was running consistently ahead of consumption throughout the 1970s, with the gap especially wide in the latter part of the decade. Now something has to give. Either the producers cut back, or the EC cuts the incentives to farmers or pours more money into price supports, further swelling the milk lake.

Overproduction of milk, wheat, some meats, oil fruits and wine is proving too costly. The warnings that the Community could run short of money next year are not idle speculations, and the major cause of the current budget crisis is agricultural spending.

The CAP can be viewed as both the major achievement of the European Community and its greatest weakness. It remains the only common policy, and is remarkable for the way it has been adapted. Instigated to cover the six, mainly north European members of the original EC, it now covers 10 with widely varied agricultural bases.

At the same time, the structure of European agriculture has changed radically. In 1960, in the Community of Six, more than 15 million people worked on the land, vs closer to eight million in today's 10-nation Community. At the same time, however, agricultural productivity has risen

considerably, about 7% a year in nominal terms as measured by the increase in value-added.

The CAP has undoubtedly played a part in this, though not entirely for the right reasons. As one Community agricultural specialist postulates his first law of agricultural economics: "If you guarantee the price of everything, the intelligent farmer is going to raise everything."

CAP's purpose is straightforward enough, it's the implementation that's arcane and intricately bewildering. The goals are set out in article 39 of the Treaty of Rome: to increase productivity; to ensure a fair standard of living for the farmer; to stabilize markets; to guarantee food supplies; to provide food for consumers at reasonable prices.

It's a laudatory objective, but the cost is high. Last year, expenditures through the European Agricultural Guidance & Guarantee Fund, which covers all public spending arising from the common agricultural market, were about \$13 billion, vs \$7 billion in 1978 and less than \$4 billion in 1975.

Yet, even though the numbers are high, agricultural support still represents less than 0.5% of members' gross national product, and about 2.5% of consumer spending on food.

Entering the world according to CAP is a matter of mastering its vocabulary - the talk of *target prices*, *threshold prices*, *sluice-gate prices*, *intervention prices* and *monetary compensatory amounts*. Its complexity is such that even the bureaucrats find it intimidating, and it can only worsen when the community is enlarged to 12.

Currently, there are four major elements of market control.

- About 70% of production, including the problematic cereals and dairy products, carry guarantees of price and sale. Authorities may, for example, buy produce from farmers when market prices fall below certain levels and store it for later resale.

- About 25% of production, for example, eggs and some cereals, is protected from low-priced imports from outside the Community.

- Direct subsidies apply to only 2.5% of production, including tobacco and olive oil.

- Flat-rate aid by area farmed or quantity produced applies to less than 1% of production. It covers such less intensively produced items as hops, silkworms, flax and hemp.

The EC heads of state emerged from their summit in Stuttgart in June on a crusade to cut costs. The commission has already produced proposals to trim agricultural spending by almost \$10 billion over the next three years, as well as complex measures to rein in overproduction in the particularly sensitive areas.

The first hurdle is gaining the agreement of Agricultural ministers, who held a round of talks in Athens last week, but it won't be easy. The CAP may be an economic policy, but changing the rules requires an act of political will. There's a strong agricultural lobby in Brussels, and in member countries. It is almost inevitable some farmers will suffer from the changes, or at least not benefit as much as they do at present.

The imperative to change the CAP for the sake of the Community is urgent; the question is whether national interests can be contained sufficiently to attain the goal.



A recent issue of Farm Focus has brought us a report on a group calling itself "Truth in Forestry". From the report, this is a group committed to telling us the truth about not only the benefits, but the absolute necessity of spraying the forests. The scare tactic they use to give themselves the moral superiority their name implies is to say that if chemical spraying of forests is banned, next will be the banning of chemical sprays in agriculture and millions of people will then die of starvation. The point is clear: if the chemical companies and their corporate allies in the forest industry don't get their way, millions will starve due to diminished food production.

Is spraying really the issue, however? What the "truth in forestry" people are demanding is a particular type of forest and forest industry. In fact, what they want is capital intensive, highly mechanized forest exploitation, similar to industrialized agriculture and industrialized fishing.

The characteristics of industrialization as we have experienced it in agriculture are vastly increased capitalization, with an accompanying decrease in labour at the primary level of production, and a rising level of unemployment, increasing dependence on imports, whether regional or national, concentration of ownership and consolidation of holdings. All this has brought with it vast cultural changes, both in agricultural practices, from mixed farming to monoculture, and in rural society, which has practically ceased to exist.

The greater the degree of specialization in an "industry", the further the benefits are removed from the primary producer. Thus in agriculture the packer, wholesaler and retailer benefit from cheap food while the farmer goes broke. But it is not just the farmers who go broke in this process. It is also the land which suffers degradation and exhaustion from the demands placed on it by monoculture and the destruction of the soils themselves through chemicals. On top of that, monoculture and hybridization leave agriculture increasingly vulnerable to the whims of multinational corporations and to devastation from disease or climatic variations. In forestry, this is illustrated by the devastation wrought by the budworm. We are told that the budworm is not a real problem in a mixed forest, but where monoculture has been practiced, it is. Is the solution then to become even more dependent, not on sound cultural practices and ecological sensitivity, but on purchased inputs and the illusion of control?

One of the most puzzling characteristics of industrialization as we have known it in what we call the "free world" is that of fatalism. We are constantly bombarded with the jargon of freedom, yet we are also told that we can't stop the relentless march of industrialization, the increasing size of production units, the concentration of ownership and control, the displacement of labour by technology and mechanization, and the exploitation of human and natural resources.

An article in the daily newspaper entitled "Industry Gone Sour" about the dairy industry in Nova Scotia concludes: "With herds of up to 3000 milking



cows on one farm in the United States, we can hardly expect to maintain the under-40-cow herd in Nova Scotia even though it hurts a great deal to see it go". In other words, the proponents of technology and industrialization have persuaded us that we don't have any choice about our future; "even though it hurts a great deal" we must go along with the tides of time.

The effect of this ideology of determinism is to disenfranchise the general public, including the workers directly involved, thus making it easier for the corporate managers to make decisions without having to consider public concerns and social consequences. On the issue of forest spraying, no-one raises the question as to who made the decision that monoculture was best, and instead we focus on trying to deal with the consequences of that decision, - like financing the expansion of the hog industry because it lends itself to industrial production, even though there is no market for the product and the producers will obviously go broke, and then debating stabilization plans to keep the producers operating.

The forest companies made the decision about spraying before the trees were planted or had a start as seedlings. They made this decision on the basis of their own short-term profit-oriented expediency. The public, believing itself free to make some choices, is then confined to battling the consequences of decisions already made. It is assumed - and this assumption is deliberately fostered by a massive propaganda campaign - that "development" is a mechanistic process and that our job is to adapt to what is "best" for us.

\* \* \* \* \*

REASONS WHY WE CAN OVERCOME HELPLESSNESS

by Dorothee Sölle

We can hold out longer  
we need a better future  
there are people with worse wounds among us  
victims of capitalism  
bread enough for everyone  
has been passed out among us before

We can hold out longer  
we are building the city of man  
the disenfranchised behind walls are our allies  
and the disinherited in the cities  
the dead of the second world war belong to us  
they want something to eat at last and justice  
one who is of us has risen  
from the dead before

from REVOLUTIONARY PATIENCE



# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
-Joshua 6:5

SUBSCRIPTIONS \$6 TO BREWSTER AND CATHLEEN KNEEN, R.R. #3, SCOTSBURN, N.S. BOK 1R0

No. 16

August 1983

from the  
Statement  
of Purpose



National  
Farmers  
Union

Our movement is based on a foundation of understanding. It is an understanding that highlights the positive concepts and needs that will unite us as farmers; for understanding follows learning, and we are learning that as farmers we hold a common stake in the welfare of one another and our nation. We are learning that the pursuit of only individual self-interest leads inevitably to self-destruction. We are learning that the society in which we live and toil is exploitive in nature and the power of abundance we possess is widely subjected to economic exploitation to our disadvantage.

The common hope and aspiration of us all is that the creative power farmers possess may be a blessing to all mankind and not a curse. It is our hope and aspiration that our families may live in dignity and prosperity — that we may, as farmers, live in harmony with one another and that all the world's people may live in peace and brotherhood.

## FUELWOOD FAMINE

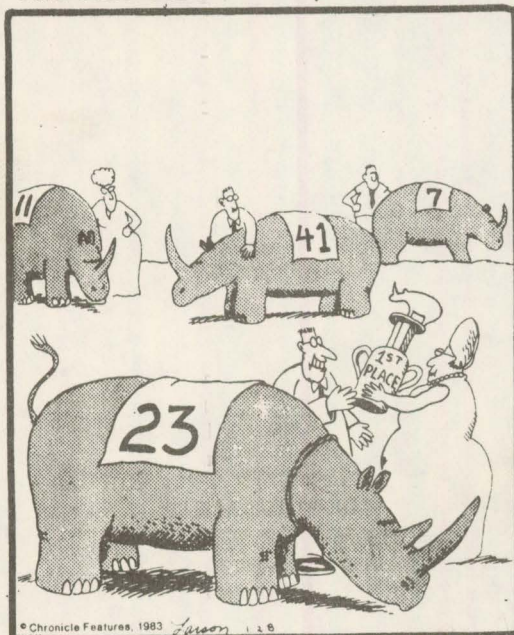
Added to the problems of many people in the Third World trying to obtain an adequate diet is the problem of cooking it properly with an ever-decreasing supply of firewood for fuel. As the forests shrink, transporting fuelwood uses precious gasoline and time needed for growing food crops is used up in the search for fuel. In its attempt to combat the growing problem of deforestation, the U.N. environmental program is searching out new species of trees which are fast-growing, and can provide fod for cattle and goats as well. The scientists say they are looking for trees "which will grow quickly, even on poor soil, need as little care as possible, resist pests and disease, and be able to survive drought and similar crises".

In Nairobi, researchers are working with a thorny variety named *Prosopis Juliflora*: within three years it can provide fruit, vegetables, firewood — and nectar for honey. However, the U.N. program against desertification is desperately underfunded: with an estimated \$2.4 billion required annually, the allocation is only \$500 million.

Alternatives to wood are being researched as well, but there are problems. Solar technology is expensive, and although many poor countries are rich in sunshine, food is usually cooked after the sun goes down — and by women who have spent their day out in the fields.

### THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Exhibition Time!

### Less spent on food in 1982

According to figures released by Statistics Canada, Canadians spent only 16.4% of their income on food and non-alcoholic beverages at home and away from home in 1982. The comparable figure for 1981 was 16.9%, and in 1971 18.3%. Food purchased at stores accounted for 12.4% of income store accounted for 12.4% of income in 1982, 12.6% in 1981, and 14.3% in 1971.



# Wood Shortage Caused by Tobacco

Meanwhile, at the Fifth World Conference on Smoking and Health, John Madely told delegates that a major cause of deforestation is tobacco, grown in about 90% of Third World Countries. First, land is cleared to grow the crop, then more trees are cut down to cure it: it's the "hidden scandal of the tobacco industry".

He said at the most conservative estimate, at least 2½ acres of trees are cut down to cure one metric ton of tobacco. Thus, at a conservative estimate of 7.5-million acres to cure 2.5 million tons of tobacco, tree cutting for this purpose alone accounts for 12 per cent of the total in the Report to the President — "one tree out of every eight cut down is used to dry tobacco."

Mr. Madely gave several examples of damage he had observed on travels in the Third World. In Nepal, he noted a village lying between two rivers at the foot of the

Himalayas. The lower slopes of the mountains have become seriously denuded of trees in the past 10 years, many of them cut down to cure tobacco in a cigaret factory, leading to flash flooding of the rivers and destruction of the river banks, which now threatens the village's survival.

In Africa, a Government minister estimated that more wood is chopped down for tobacco curing than for any other purpose except to cook food.

"Africa in particular has become a disaster area. For example, in Kenya, whole communities are threatened. Food production is

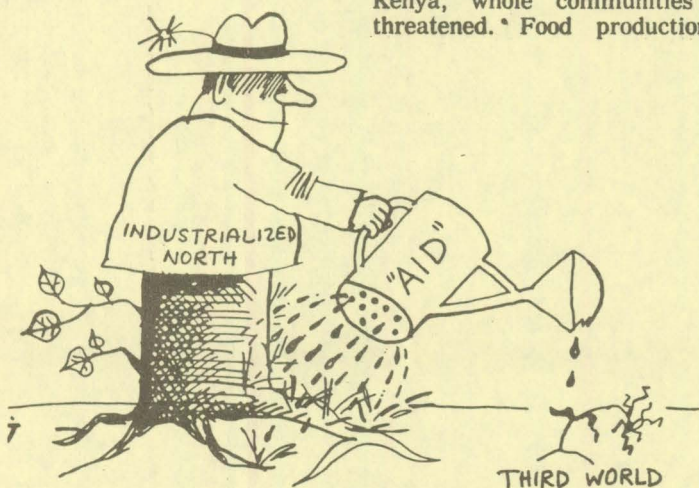
threatened, land is at risk and yet the (tobacco) companies are getting away with it simply because the damage they cause has remained largely unknown," Mr. Madely said.

He said that in Sri Lanka, a Government official told him he feared that flooding from heavy rainfall onto hills stripped of trees will threaten a dam project. The most recent cause of the destruction was that a tobacco company had encouraged people to clear an acre of land on the hillside to plant tobacco. More wood was then cut to cure the crop.

Another hazard to Third World peasants growing tobacco is the use of dangerous insecticides. Often they cannot read the instructions, they have no idea of the dangers and even if they were, they could not afford protective clothing. Mr. Madely said that when the trees go, the tobacco goes as well — the company drops the farmer and moves to a new area.

Uma Ram Nath, author of Smoking Third World Alert, a study commissioned by the World Health Organization to be published soon, put this succinctly in the words of a 72-year-old Indian farmer who has been growing leaf tobacco for 50 years. "Tobacco growers, like cigaret butts, are throw-aways," he told her.

(G+M, 14 July 1983)



## TOBACCO, ALCOHOL LINK FOR GLOBAL POWER

by Joan Hollobon, Globe+Mail 14 July 83

WINNIPEG — Pressure from international business conglomerates forced the World Health Organization to suppress the report of a commissioned economic study on alcohol earlier this year for reasons of "political expediency," a Canadian who works for the United Nations in Geneva says.

Frederick Clairmonte told the fifth World Conference on Smoking and Health that the "increasing totalitarianism" of international corporations is becoming more conspicuous.

"When you talk tobacco, you are talking politics — cancer is an offshoot — you are talking power," Mr. Clairmonte, a senior economic affairs officer with the UN Conference on Trade and Development, said.

"In fact, tobacco companies as independent organizations have not existed for years. Now they are closely interlinked with one another and with alcohol, food, shipping and oil interests."

Mr. Clairmonte said the WHO, the Food and Agriculture Organization and

the United Nations itself "are not impervious" to the power of the conglomerates.

He said that tobacco and alcohol interests have worked to suppress research "which they consider anathema to their interests," such as his work on the study.

Later, he said that suppression of the economic report this year effectively "castrated" probing economic studies. He predicted that attempts to combat smoking and drinking will go back to nineteenth-century temperance appeals that offer no threat to the economic power structure.

Mr. Clairmonte told the conference that between 1960 and 1980, transnational corporations had increased their share of the world's gross domestic product (excluding socialist countries) from 18 per cent to 30 per cent.

Conspicuous among the powerful conglomerates are the "seven smoking sisters," which include the British

American Tobacco Co., Imperial Tobacco Co., R. J. Reynolds, Philip Morris, and Rothman/Rembrandt.

In the four years since the last world smoking and health conference, the tobacco companies have diversified and strengthened their links with other interests, particularly alcohol producers.

"You are looking at one addictive commodity being married to another addictive commodity," he said. Mr. Clairmonte said that in the past four years in the United States, the anti-trust structure "is being dismantled by the Reagan Administration."

Mr. Clairmonte said that an estimated \$7-billion goes into the advertising worldwide of tobacco and alcohol. He said the power of the international conglomerates gives them an increasing capacity to blackmail countries large and small and not only those in the developing world.



## MARKET CONDITIONS FOR LAMBS, AUGUST 1983

Both live and dressed lamb imports show a dramatic increase over 1982, even though dressed lamb imports from both Australia and the United States have remained relatively stable. The increase is due to the fact that while whole carcasses coming into Canada from New Zealand have dropped 30%, there has been a 75% increase in the imports of bone-in cuts and a 284% increase in boneless lamb. Total dressed lamb imports so far in 1983 (to end of July) are more than double those of 1982.

At the same time, to Aug. 6, 1983, live lambs imported from the United States total 34,279 (9918 into Alberta, 24,361 into Ontario) compared to a total of 34,143 for all of 1982! (preliminary figures)  
Agriculture Canada, Marketing & Economics Branch

Not only have lamb imports increased, so has the kill of lambs in Federally and Provincially inspected plants. There has been an 18.7% increase nationally (1983 over 1982 to August 11) and an increase of more than 100% in the Atlantic Provinces, which means Canada Packers Charlottetown (which ceased killing lambs altogether in July), Antigonish Poultry, Brookside Abattoir in Truro, and Armstrongs in Kingston, N.S.

Another aspect of the meat trade that must be considered is the wholesale dressed selling price. The weekly Canada Livestock and Meat Trade report gives the following prices for the week of August 11 (Toronto):

Veal 63-78¢ live, dressed 45-90 kg. \$3.18  
Lamb 60-70¢ live, dressed 15-25 kg. \$4.66  
Beef 75-78½¢ live, dressed A1 side \$2.97/kg.

while at Omaha (USA) Aug. 6th: Slaughter steers 61.25 (1982, 64.80)  
Lambs 46.50 (1982, 55.80)

It has been reported from Manitoba that Canada Packers is paying \$1.20 dressed weight for lambs they are selling for \$2.10. One of the larger drovers is buying lambs for 55¢ live and selling in Montreal for 67¢.



cold,  
beautiful



The National Dairy Council is calling for an immediate halt to imports of a new imitation milk produced in the USA and sold in Canada with an AMWAY-type pyramid in which distributors make their money, not so much on product sold, but rather on the basis of the number of other

dealers they can set up. Even without AMWAY's religious zeal for marketing, the new product, called Pure D'Light, is making inroads into the market, particularly in Western Canada, mainly because it costs about 4¢/glass less than milk.

However, according to Health and Welfare Canada, the product, composed essentially of whey and vegetable oils, has failed the basic nutritional tests in comparison with milk. The fake milk is advertised as a substitute, yet it is considerably inferior to real milk, particularly in terms of such essential elements as protein and calcium.

The Globe & Mail reports (Aug. 4/83):

"They're making verbal claims that it has all the nutritional benefits of milk, as an infant's formula or a milk substitute for nursing homes and day-care centres," Jean Sattar, spokesman for the health protection branch of Health and Welfare said yesterday. "That's disgraceful because there are children and elderly people who need the nutritional benefits of milk and will not get it from this product."

The sales by Pure D'Lite Ltd. of Florida and Country Fresh of Colorado, also appear to contravene provincial dairy regulations everywhere except Saskatchewan. The provinces each have laws which prohibit the sales of any products which combine dairy products with other components to produce cheaper imitation foods.

Despite the ban on the importation of the imitation milk, the de-

partment acknowledges that it is still being smuggled into the country and sold door to door by distributors.

The firms, particularly Pure D'Light, have been particularly active in Western Canada where they held large rallies to attract distributors and used advertisements which showed a pitcher of milk and the imitation milk captioned: "You have a choice."

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In a spirit of "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em", one of Canada's largest breweries has bought its way into 50% of the milk market in Ontario. This report from the Globe & Mail of August 6th:

For \$41-million cash, John Labatt Ltd. of London, Ont., has added the Silverwood name to its dairy lines and taken close to 50 per cent of the Ontario dairy market, says George Taylor, vice-president of finance of the growing brewing and food empire.

Labatt, with \$2.2-billion in sales for the year ended April 30, is 42 per cent owned by Brascan Ltd. of Toronto, controlled by Edward and Peter Bronfman. Trevor Eyton, Brascan president, said earlier that Brascan plans to increase its holdings in Labatt to 50 per cent this year.

Labatt's Ault Foods division — which bought money-losing Silverwood Dairies, a unit of Silverwood Industries Ltd. of London, Ont. — acquired in 1981 Toronto-based Dominion Dairies Ltd. and its Sealtest brands and Copper Cliff Dairies of Sudbury, Ont. and Balderson Cheese Ltd. of Balderson, Ont. A year later, it acquired the New Dundee Creamery Ltd. of New

Dundee, Ont.

Silverwood Industries, which in 1980 bought the Toronto-based Borden Co. of Canada's dairy division, will change its name within a year and is holding on to one dairy plant to supply its Baskin-Robbins Ice Cream franchise chain of stores.

Also not included in the sale is the Mac's Milk Convenience Stores unit and other holdings. Mac's will be supplied by Labatt for at least three years as long as it is competitive in price and service, Mr. Taylor said.

The sale accounts for about one-third of Silverwood Industries assets.

The Labatt executive was non-committal on closings and layoffs, except that one of two Ottawa plants will have to go. Labatt's knowledge and good track record in the dairy business is expected to enhance the productivity of Silverwood's dairy assets.

George Nutter, assistant director

of board-industry relations for the Ontario Milk Marketing Board, said Labatt will control a significant portion of the market, but would not have the power to affect prices.

He said milk processors have been squeezed between the provincial farm marketing boards and five national retail volume buying groups. The merger is expected to shift more power to the processors, Mr. Nutter said.

The acquisition shrinks the number of major dairy processors in Ontario to three, including a unit of Beatrice Foods Co. of Chicago, and the William Neilson division of George Weston Ltd. of Toronto.

Taking a smaller share of Canada's biggest market are Canada Safeway Ltd. of Winnipeg, through its Lucerne label and Becker Milk Co. Ltd. of Toronto, which processes milk for its convenience chain and for several small chains.

Silverwood dairy plants are in Winnipeg, North Bay, Ottawa and two each in Toronto and London.



## MANAGING THE SUPPLY: THE MEAT TRADE

By Brewster Kneen

As a percentage of total food sales, sales of red meats are down and declining, and this appears to be an established trend. People are simply eating less meat, while fresh produce consumption is increasing rapidly. In addition, poultry is displacing the red meats in the Canadian diet. At the same time, the returns to the producers of red meats are also declining, at least throughout North America, and imports are increasing.

So what should the red meat producers do in such a situation? Some would have us seek some form of stabilization for all red meats, that is, some form of "stop loss" payment. Since stabilization has proved so far to be nothing other than a "slow death" guarantee, it is hardly worth considering; but just to keep the record clear: stabilization as it is practiced is not intended to return an adequate living to the producer of pork or anything else. It is intended to ensure recovery of cash costs of production but not to provide for labour or a return on the investment. The effect of stabilization seems to be to ensure continued surplus production which in turn ensures a low price for the commodity to the benefit of the packer and the consumer: the cheap food policy! How does the farmer survive? By off-farm employment, of course: the Agri-Food Strategy!

Why is there an oversupply of red meats in Canada at all? Is this because we are producing too much? No, it is because we are importing too much. Why are we importing so much? Price! The packers can buy cheaper elsewhere. Lamb can come from New Zealand cheaply not so much because New Zealand farmers want to receive a low price, but because New Zealand has underdeveloped its economy and is now dependent on the cash returns of its lamb exports to keep the country afloat internationally. So the government subsidizes the sheep farmers very heavily to keep on producing, while it dumps lamb wherever it can in the world. As a result of this underdevelopment, the New Zealand dollar has fallen from a value of \$1.20 Canadian two years ago to 80¢ today, and we are being flooded with New Zealand lamb.

While New Zealand may have chosen its own course of development, Nicaragua did not. The Nicaraguan people, struggling for a just social and economic situation in their country, find themselves forced by U.S. military and economic pressure into the very patterns they have been trying to avoid. What could be more ironic than Nicaragua setting up an office in Canada to sell beef! And the current price for boneless beef is \$1 a pound! When told this by the Nicaraguan Deputy Minister of Agriculture, I responded that we could not produce beef for that.

He said, neither can we! But like New Zealand, Nicaragua needs the foreign currency to pay the debts incurred by the Somoza dictatorship. (The same man also pointed out that the U.S.A. was never upset by the fact that for the 40 years of the Somoza dictatorship there were never any elections.)

But we should go back a few steps. There are indeed millions of hungry and mal-nourished people in the world. But they have no money with which to buy the food that they need. It is virtually only the industrialized countries of the North who can afford to import food. So the needs of the Third World



countries for foreign currency requires them to sell food (or other raw materials) cheaply on the world market and this food then competes directly with the food being produced by the importing country, driving the price down for all producers unless there is very strict control over imports and pricing.

Now, closer to home, let's look at the lamb market because there are a number of questions being raised by our global situation that we must take seriously.

In the Maritimes, there has been a substantial and rapid shift away from producing light or unfinished lambs for the ethnic trade in Montreal to producing heavy or finished lambs for the retail market within the region. The main reason for this shift is price. And the reason that the price has been relatively attractive has been the dominant presence in the market place of a producer-managed co-operative. But while farmers have responded quickly to substantial price advantages, managers of meat departments in the supermarkets and consumers are less quick to change their purchasing and eating habits. The net effect has been a shift in two years from a situation of undersupply of local lamb in the local market to one of oversupply of the market as it now stands. So within the region we have an oversupply of local lamb while frozen New Zealand lamb continues to flood the market. At current prices, it is not really a question of price at the retail level, but rather the fact that the mark-up on New Zealand lamb is substantial and the product is already cut and wrapped when it reaches the store. This makes it a very attractive product for the harried meat manager.

To those who claim that we don't really have an oversupply, it's just that the price of lamb is too high, I would respond that the price of pork and beef is too low, and it is unreasonable to make a comparison with products which are being sold at a loss.

In this situation a producer-run lamb marketing co-op has a difficult problem to solve: whose lamb should sell at what price? There are several possible solutions to the problem:

1. The co-op could simply operate on a first come first served basis, selling all the lamb it could at a price that gave the producer an adequate return and letting the others sell where they could at whatever price they could get. Or
2. The co-op could reduce the price (to a level comparable to or below that of beef and pork) until all the lamb available is sold on the local market regardless of return to the producer (which would mean direct competition with other red meats and often competition with the other products of a single farmer). A third alternative would be
3. The co-op could decide to give priority to lamb produced by full-time farmers or part-time farmers trying to achieve a commercial level of production. In other words, giving priority on the basis of need in terms of overall income and occupation. Obviously under present circumstances, this would give priority to the relatively few large producers and discriminate against the larger number of part-time farmers and particularly against those who make a substantial living from their professional or business activities quite apart from their farm activity.

But regardless of which direction might be taken, the co-op would be engaged in supply management as soon as any choice was made between suppliers or even if it chose to sell all lamb at whatever price necessary. This last course would be supply management just as much as choosing in favour of the commercial farmer



because it would be a choice in favour of the part-time or hobby farmers whose need is more to get rid of their lambs than to earn a living wage from them.

The point I want to make is that the decision in favour of supply management was made by the producers consciously at the point when they chose to take a hand in the marketing of their produce.

What they were doing, in fact, was simply choosing to take a deliberate part in the management of the supply of their product in a situation in which they were already subject to supply management. For example, when Canada Packers or Schneiders chooses to buy lambs in Virginia for 46¢ it is Canada Packers or Schneiders who is managing the supply and, in fact, deliberately oversupplying the market. At the same time, when New Zealand sets about selling a certain quantity of lamb in Canada, and doing whatever is necessary to sell that quantity, then it too is engaged in the management of the supply of lamb in Canada.

In other words, WE ARE ALREADY SUBJECT TO SUPPLY MANAGEMENT in lamb, and as a matter of fact, the same thing holds true for beef (regardless of what the Cattlemen's Association says); but the interest of New Zealand is to sell lamb wherever it can, and the interest of the packers is to make a profit by buying cheap and selling dear, which means getting your raw material wherever you can get it cheapest.

So we have over-supply management. What are we going to do about it? I said earlier that stabilization is no solution, it is simply a reaction to over-supply. Now we come to the real issue: supply limitation, the issue no one wants to discuss because there is probably, in our finite wisdom, no happy solution and we hate to face divisive issues. We also wish to continue to live with the illusion that we have freedoms that in fact do not exist. We are free to produce as much or as little lamb as we want only if we are not farming commercially and we receive the majority of our income from non-farm sources. Otherwise we operate within very strict confines, confines which by and large, as I have tried to point out, are beyond our control even if we know what they are.

Until we make a decision to work for global justice in the production and distribution of food, we will have to live with the more unjust problem of supply limitation. This will require a very different attitude on the part of many farmers and those non-farmers engaged in food production. It will mean making some hard choices, hopefully in a climate of mutual understanding and a common desire for justice. It will mean militant farmer organization and political activity, and a great deal of public education. I see no choice. It will also mean, for a beginning, all red meat producers working together to form a national meat marketing authority with the ability and mandate to tackle the problem of import controls. Either the initiative will come from the farmers who can see the truth of the situation, or we will go quietly down the drain, leaving behind some token hobby farmers to provide scenic relief and to maintain the public illusion about the attractiveness of farming.



## BACK TO SCHOOL AGAIN

What a change this week as we send the children off to school once again! Of course we will miss their company, but for the farm family it's a more profound change than that. The whole roster of daily jobs has to be reapportioned, as schooling takes up such a large part of the day - it's hard to get a great deal done on the farm when you leave at 8 a.m. and don't get back until 4 or later. In the winter it means you're never home during the daylight hours except on weekends. As Wendell Berry has pointed out, between the school day and the school bussing, it's not education we're looking at, but a form of incarceration.... At the least, it does make one realize the extent to which the farm is really a family venture.

Another problem which surfaces when some members of the family are away from the farm for extended periods, whether it's the children away at school or a parent away at work, is that it becomes increasingly difficult to involve them in the process of making management decisions on the farm. This can lead to a loss of enthusiasm for the family farm, as the "absentee" members see themselves as unpaid labour rather than as an organic part of the team.

Another aspect of the return to school which tends to divorce farm kids from their farm homes is the fact that in the schooling system, manual labour in general and agriculture in particular are accorded little respect. It is painful to realize that your kids are learning in school to look down their noses at your life-work. One response on a personal basis is of course to use the hours of the day left to us to ensure that the kids do not lose the skills and management abilities acquired with such hard work over the summer. But on a community level it is also essential for us to get more involved than we have been in the schools themselves.

We tend to undervalue the contributions we can make to the schooling system, and think that maybe the best we can do is help supervise kids in lunch hour or maybe run a farm tour for kindergartners at lambing time. But a high-school chemistry class could learn a lot from most milk-houses; many a livestock producer can teach a biology class a great deal of practical value; and there are few economics classes which would not benefit from a discussion of farm management, marketing boards, farm co-ops, etc. We are, after all, highly skilled professionals, and if that fact is not recognized by society in general, perhaps the schools are a good place to start with the general education process. C.K.

\* \* \* \* \*

MOUSSAKASSEROLE: being a Greek Moussaka with sliced potatoes instead of eggplant

1. Place in a 9x12 greased pan a layer of 1½lb. potatoes, cooked and sliced. Cover with sauce:  
a pinch cinnamon, ½ t each pepper, basil,  
¼ t thyme, 1 t salt, 2 T dried parsley
2. Sauté 2 chopped onions in some butter with  
1 clove garlic, crushed;  
Add: 1 lb ground lamb or mutton; brown;  
Add: 1 can tomato paste, ½ C water, ¼ C  
red wine;
3. Cover with custard:  
Mix 3 eggs with ¼ C flour, 2 C milk,  
½ C grated Parnesan cheese;
4. Sprinkle with grated Parnesan and bake  
in 400 degree oven for 20 minutes.



THE RAM'S HORN  
R.R. #3, Scotsburn  
Nova Scotia BOK LRO

John

I'll collect -  
net as many lambs around Antig as  
I thought - checked them all  
out though Tim - a lot of colling  
of your lambs + poor obsers - please  
observe carefully today - I want  
to be elsewhere



# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
- Joshua 6:5

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No. 14

February, 1983

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## Des éleveurs sacrifiés (Disposable farmers)

by Denis Gaboriau

The author is a dairy farmer who, with his partner, milks 45 cows. He used to milk 55, but discovered he could do better with fewer. He is also an animateur working with peasant farmers in France. The report appeared in the September 1982 issue of Le Travailleur Paysan.

From north to south, in the mountains of or the plains, in intensive or extensive, housed or range flocks, everywhere the sheep business is dying - except for a handful of favoured ones who think that "the harder the summer (for their colleagues) the better next spring will be".

In all regions the death throes are beginning: for a year, or two or three, pastures are not renewed, young sheep are not fed grain, ewes are culled; costs, even reduced to the lowest possible level, are not covered by a price for lamb of 22-24 F/kg net.

The crisis is hitting farmers unequally:

- young farmers who have been set up for less than 5-6 years and whose sole production is sheep. There are two options; bankruptcy (which is the case for several hundred young farmers in the West) or a slackening of production with the support of wages from an outside source and an accumulation of debts which can reach more than 10 million centimes for 150 ewes.

continued next page...

## MacEachen's Barn...

There is a magnificent new barn near Mabou, Cape Breton. It is for sheep - a "demonstration barn". The official estimate given us was \$80,000. The contractor figured it was at least \$100,000. According to the 1981 census, there are 506 farms in Nova Scotia with 23,219 sheep. That works out to \$200 per farm for the DEVCO barn, or \$4 per sheep!



## and Smokehouse...

"Antigonish Poultry Limited has accepted a Department of Regional Economic Expansion offer totalling \$100,392 to expand its operation. Deputy Prime Minister Allen MacEachen on behalf of DREE and Industry Minister Ed Lumley made the announcement .... The expansion will add a building to contain a curing room, smokehouse, and sausage kitchen."

(Chronicle-Herald, Feb 16/82)



- those for whom raising sheep is not their only enterprise. The deficit caused by the sheep is then absorbed by the other production. If there are no important debts, there will still be no return to labour and the search for a new balance within the farm (even a new orientation) will be made at the cost of worry and extra strain.

- finally, one category of producers has increased returns. They have often been capitalized for a long time, have become highly competitive or have speculated on reproduction by the sale of ewe lambs and rams to young flocks. These breeders number 30-40 in each "department", they are the heads of all the organizations which are understood to represent breeders: sheep associations, groups, AI centres. They drain all the assistance and technical support in their "departments".

\* \* \*

A handful of butchers controls the market:

- 157,000 tonnes are killed each year in France
- 10 private abattoirs handle more than 22,000 tonnes and 30 public abattoirs more than 62,000 tonnes
- the 10 most important wholesalers dominate 25% of the market.

The outlook is even more disturbing: Construction of two new private abattoirs which could handle 20-26,000 tonnes a year (the highest capacity abattoir is currently 5000 tonnes a year...).

The market, then, does not fluctuate, but on the contrary is well controlled. One could conclude that a small handful of wholesalers and butchers can lay down the law on supplies and prices. And at the same time, the illusion is kept before the farmers that there is effective market management by a group of producers. Does this sound familiar? ...

\* \* \*

The EEC (European Economic Community) regime is unfortunately ineffective. In force since Oct 20, 1980, this regime authorizes all importations, at every level, with a harmonizing of prices between all countries, but with the lowest prices raised to come into line (in this instance England's, where producers are assured by other means of direct assistance amounting to 7F/kg.).

The EEC fixes a base price with intervention when the market price drops to 85% of the base price. In practice, the intervention price has never functioned, the base price being too low (25.40 F/kg).

Up to 1984 the countries of the EEC have made a pact on self-limitation of imports to 320,000 tonnes (while the actual EEC deficit is only 270,000 tonnes). This particularly high "quota" has never been reached and remains totally ineffective.

\* \* \*

As for the "Sheep Support Plan", it is conceived essentially on a productivist model (Produce more to come out ahead - you know the line) in providing:

- important technical supports
- inducements to expansion
- aids to mechanization
- genetic and sanitary improvements ...

This plan essentially boosts the "most efficient".

(translated by C. Kneen; original available on request)



This article, from New Zealand Farmer, Oct 8/82, comments on both the E.E.C. price-equalization subsidy and the UK subsidies, which are administered via wool and other indirect routes.

## BRITAIN'S FEATHERBEDDED SHEEPMEN by Barry Wilson

Britain's sheep industry is booming. Flock numbers are increasing faster than ever and breeding prices are at record levels.

The reason is not hard to find; the British sheep producer is without doubt the most feather-bedded in the entire world.

For a start many farm in marginal or less favoured country. They get tax and grant advantages. In addition they get special livestock grants if they farm in designated hill areas, amounting annually to \$10 a ewe or \$14.80 if of an approved breed. The total of this grant aid, together with the hill suckler cow grant of \$106, comes to \$239 million this year.

The British sheep industry had languished in the doldrums, or worse, for years before the country joined the EEC. Accession brought unexpected benefits from large scale exports to the Continent, especially to France.

The French applied heavy import duties

on British lamb — with their market prices often double those in Britain — but the trade was still very profitable for British exporters.

Then four years ago, after years of negotiation, the EEC agreed on a Community sheepmeat regime.

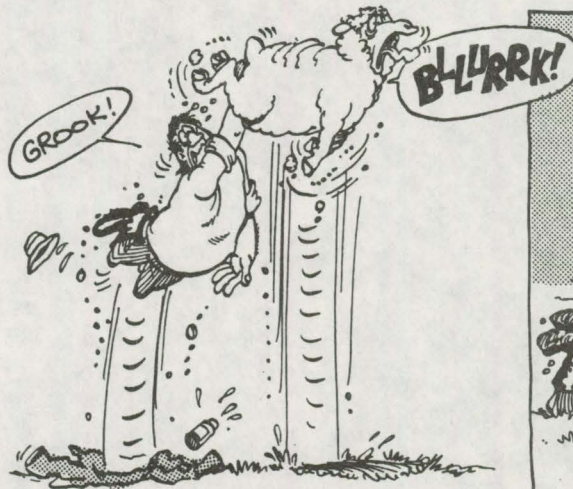
The crucial element of this was that British lamb producers should gradually have their returns pushed up to those ruling in France (often double those in Britain), but the British consumer should not have to pay the price. The difference was made up by a direct EEC subsidy to UK sheep producers.

So each year since then UK sheepmeat guarantees have increased, and so has the guaranteed price for all EEC lamb producers. The result has been that UK sheep prices, to farmers, have gone up by around 15% a year for the past three years. But shop prices have only increased marginally.

At the time of writing UK sheep producers are guaranteed a price of just over \$4.70 kg dressed weight. But the market price is only about \$2.85, so producers are getting a subsidy of about \$1.85 for every kg of lamb they sell.



"Footrot Flats" by Murray Ball is a New Zealand institution



*"The rural community - that is, the land and the people - is being degraded... by the 'specialists' tendency to regard the land as a factory and the people as spare parts... by the fashionable premise that the exclusive function of the farmer is production and that his major discipline is economics.*

WENDELL BERRY : A CONTINUOUS HARMONY ESSAYS CULTURAL AND AGRICULTURAL  
(a Harvestbook paperback)



## FAMILIAR "PACIFICATION" TACTICS IN THE PHILLIPINES

During the Vietnam war, "strategic hamlets" were a military strategy to isolate guerrillas from their rural peasant support base by herding the farmers into enclosed village centres. Church workers report from Mindanao that in the Phillipines hamletting is also used to remove farmers from choice lands which the government is now giving to corporations as rubber, pulp and paper, and palm oil concessions. Many of these companies have American financial backing.

The first hamletting began in October 1981 in the province of Davao del Norte. Farmers were ordered to dismantle their courses and move to already over-crowded barrio (village) centres. It was the rainy season and many children became sick. A measles epidemic in the congested village with no adequate safe water supply resulted in the death of children every day in the space of a few months. A curfew from sunset to sunrise meant that farmers had to walk half the day to their fields so they could only till the soil under the noon-day heat of the tropical sun. Many fields lay unattended because not only did the farmers have to rebuild their houses in the village centres, they also had to build barracks for the new army battalions who had arrived to "protect the people".

As a result of international concern and documentation by a team of Phillipine lawyers of the existence and illegality of the hamlets, the Defense Minister ordered them dismantles last April. However, by November church researchers were able to document an estimated 300,000 victims crowded into 200 centres in 8 provinces. At the same time as the hamlet program intensifies, officials deny the existence of the hamlets. They have been renamed "live-ins", "clustered barangay", or "zoning".

This situation is among the human rights abuses which Prime Minister Trudeau chose to ignore on his recent friendly trip to the Phillipines. It is widely believed that it is this sort of official international blindness, coupled with the unequivocal support President Reagan has given President Ferdinand Marcos and his wife Ismelda, which has encouraged the Marcos regime to continue the repression.

Two of the largest US military bases in the world are in the Phillipines. This country, where unions and even assemblies of workers are outlawed, where civil rights and opposition leaders are routinely jailed and assassinated, received \$100 million in direct military and economic aid from the US last year, and has recently demanded rent of \$2 billion for the American bases in 1984. Protests within the country, despite the repression, continue, and include the demand by the dominant Roman Catholic Church for Marcos to step down to allow democratic leadership.

Most commentators believe, however, that this is not likely unless American and international support for the Marcos regime is withdrawn.

(from reports by church workers Cris Bolinan in the newsletter Synapses and Linda Jones of Bi-National Service in the Chicago Tribune.)



## Letter from Blindman Valley Sheep Producers

Alberta producers read with interest (as well as dismay and sadness) of the problems that Nova Scotia producers have in marketing their lambs. We had just finished organizing some province-wide meetings with government and Lambco to try to remedy some appallingly unfair business practices in the lamb buying done in Alberta. (Lambco is the only outlet for lamb in Alberta, owned and operated by the provincial government.)

We had the impression that other sheep producers in Canada didn't suffer from our local problems of being small, poorly organized and sometimes exploited. At the same time as we received your newsletter, Sheep Canada carried an excerpt from an Ontario paper about the plight of Ontario sheep farmers in the marketplace. Do we have a Canadian sheep organization that can work for better sheep marketing situations? Or are we better off to each work for improvements in our own locality? So far our group has only looked at the latter possibility, as being within our resources. Our meetings have produced some results: Lambco conceded that there is a market for heavier carcasses and will now accept lambs that dress out up to 58 pounds; some of the problems producers had, being turned away with liner loads of lambs, are being worked out. But it was depressing to learn how far away we are from being an industry where communications from producer to packer to consumer are good enough that consumers get a product they want at a price that will keep farmers producing that product.

We wish you all well with this year's lambing and even more so with this year's marketing.

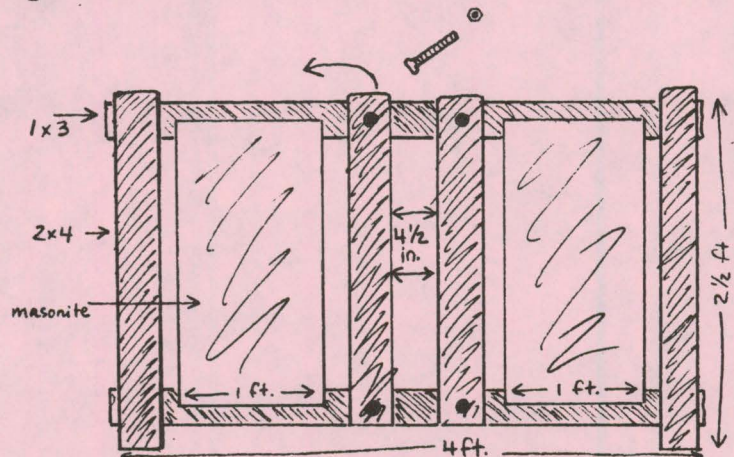
*Jennifer Oak*

## SHEEP STANCHION : an aid in fostering lambs

If the moment of birthing has passed, a ewe can often still be persuaded to accept an orphan lamb by restraining her in a stanchion for two to six days.

We find a simple stanchion built of 2x4s, 1x3s, and a couple of pieces of masonite or light plywood, works quite well. We use it as one wall of our standard 4x4 ft lambing pen. The vertical pieces which hold the ewe's neck in place are held top and bottom by bolts. One bolt can be loosened from its hole to allow the 2x4 to swing aside to let the sheep's head in. The ewe can eat, drink, and get up and down, but can only vaguely see or smell the lamb(s). We find two days is usually long enough for the ewe to no longer kick at the lamb when it tries to nurse.

- C.K.



To open stanchion, unscrew nut from carriage bolt and slip bolt out of hole in top 2x4, allowing vertical neck support to open to let sheep's head between. A second hole can be drilled 1 inch over to accommodate very big sheep.



"Free Enterprise" and the "market economy" are two slogans of individualism. According to the theory of Free Enterprise, all problems arise only through the restriction of individual freedom.

Practically, however, the story is a bit different, because those acting freely as individual entrepreneurs do encounter problems such as cartels, monopolies, and various other forms of capitalist activity designed to take the risk out of business and to provide security and profit for investment. Another problem is the imperfect working of the "law of supply and demand" and the consequent misbehaviour of the so-called "price discovery mechanism". (Sounds like discovering a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, doesn't it?) There are a wide variety of reasons why the law of supply and demand may not work, such as poverty, excessive advertising, price-fixing, or simply the fact that you are not going to buy ten pounds of butter a day no matter how low the price is. (Or consider the pricing of oil, automobiles, or meat!) The law of supply and demand may also be distorted by the fact that some corporation has tapped a new and cheaper source of labour and gained a "comparative advantage" while you pay a fair wage to your unionized employees. Or some other farmer may figure he can put you out of business and then have free rein in the marketplace, so he lowers his price below the cost of production and subsidizes his production, for as long as it takes, with his wife's wages.

In any case, for a variety of reasons, problems do arise for the true believer in free enterprise and the market economy. But since these problems cannot, for ideological reasons, be allowed to exist as real or structural problems, they can only be treated as extraordinary, as aberrations or "Acts of God". These problems cannot be recognized as being either a part or a consequence of the system in which they occur.

Given this state of affairs, farmers have resorted to two mechanisms to try to protect themselves from the consequences of their commitment to the "market economy" of "free enterprise": insurance and stabilization.

Insurance is an interesting matter in itself, because it is so utterly individualistic - the epitome, of course, being life insurance, which, like nuclear defense, is an absurd contradiction. In order to collect on life insurance you have to be dead (unless you use it as a pension fund). Nuclear war/defense is an extreme example of the insurance syndrome: the utter destruction of that which is to be insured.

But there are less absurd, if just as individualistic, forms of insurance, like crop insurance, which is designed not to provide an adequate return to the producer but rather to compensate for the extraordinary - the acts of God. Stabilization is also form of insurance, where the farmer pays into a pot in order to protect himself against future losses. The government also pays into the pot - a recognition that stabilization is required because of some problem in the public domain. Stabilization, however, like insurance in general, deals with only the consequence, without dealing with the cause. And if the problem which requires redress through stabilization is structural, then chances are that it will recur, since stabilization will diminish the immediate necessity of tackling the real problem.



The purpose of the "Pork Price Stabilization Program" is "To bring greater stability to the production of hogs so that producers will not have to limit or curtail production during periods of below cost of production returns by assuring at least direct operating costs through the program. ... It does not include depreciation, owner's labour, and management, or return to his equity capital or to his unpaid family labour." There is nothing in this for the farm family to live on!

The stabilization price comes into play when the Market Price falls below the stabilization price. The Market Price is set according to what the market will bear, i.e., "the law of supply and demand". In other words, while the Pork Producers Marketing Board nominally sets the price, it is a "free market" price. The money for the stabilization program comes half from the producers, half from the Provincial Government. Producers pay into the fund when the market price is \$5/cwt above the stabilization price. "The Government shall reimburse the Fund by one-half of the amount paid to the producers from the stabilization Fund when the weekly base price (market price) is less than the Stabilization Price."

With their stabilization plan, pork producers, i.e. pig farmers, share the free enterprise ideology of the Cattlemen's Association. Neither wants to deal with the structural problems of which they are the victims.

There is an alternative that generally goes under the name "orderly marketing". This position recognizes the cheap food policy of the Federal Government, some of the problems in the economic system, and the need for some justice in the production and marketing of primary products. Adherents of this position tend to feel that the end users of a product should pay a fair price, which includes the full cost of production, including a living wage to the producer. If the resultant price is more than some groups in the society can afford, this is a social problem with which the whole society must deal.

Stabilization is a panacea which leaves the illness of the economy unexamined and undiagnosed. It is designed to keep the farmer producing cheap food and subsidizing production out of equity or off-farm labour. Surely we can do better than this!

The U.S. government is spending a minimum of \$4,500 million a year on a rapid deployment force to protect its vital interests in Middle East oil, vs. \$400 million for research on renewable energy sources as alternatives to oil.

from World Military and Social Expenditures 1982 by Ruth Leger Sivard



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# THE RAM'S HORN

And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.  
-Joshua 6:5

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December, 1982

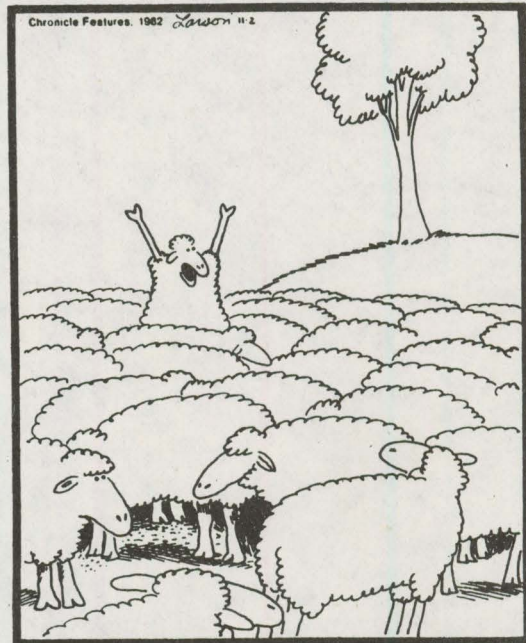
## SHEEP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR A REFERENDUM ON A LAMB MARKETING BOARD

Sheep producers who attended the annual meeting of SPANS on November 20th must have been heartened to see the large turnout and vigorous debate in what looked, a year ago, like a moribund organization. A lot of the excitement was due to the proposal by the Northumberland Lamb Marketing Co-Op that the Association call for a referendum on a marketing board with power to set prices for lamb and institute single-desk selling on the wholesale market in this province. Before the motion was passed by a respectable two-thirds majority, a number of salient points were raised concerning the details of the proposed marketing structure. It was left to the new Board of Directors to work out a marketing plan which will deal with the problem areas, including distribution to remote parts of the province and pooling of prices when some lambs must be sold outside of the province.

The new Board, including some of the more experienced and respected producers in Nova Scotia, has a full plate to work through before the next general meeting in the spring. In addition to developing a marketing plan in consultation with producers around the province, the Board must also deal with the continuing problem of coyotes preying on sheep flocks. The Dept. of Lands & Forests managed to get a bounty declared on coyotes in time for this meeting; the ticklish question of compensation has, however, not been adequately dealt with.

### THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON

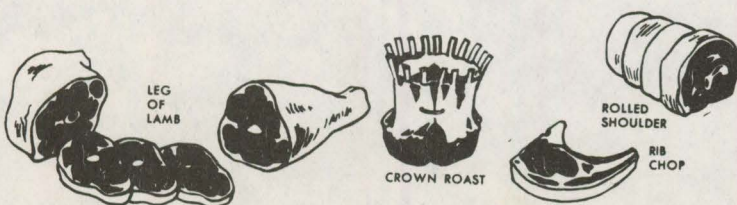


"Wait! Wait! Listen to me! ... We don't HAVE to be just sheep!"

## SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE MARKETPLACE? by Brewster Kneen

It is not customary - or, some would say, proper - for the Grocery Products Manufacturers Association, or the Federation of Agriculture, or the Chamber of Commerce, to concern themselves with questions of social justice. Such concerns, many would claim, belong in the pulpit, not in business or agriculture. In fact, we seem no longer able - or willing - to speak about Good and Evil, ethics, or morality. It is all a bit embarrassing to the "scientific" outlook. (How can a computer "sin"?)

... continued next page





Morality, in retrospect, seems to have been associated with sex, and now we have this "new morality" which means a different view of sexual morality and no apparent consideration of morality anywhere else. There used to be a phrase, "living in sin". Where does one encounter the word "sin" today?

Nor is there any longer a debate about Evil. We do not even describe nuclear weapons as evil, we simply worry that they will destroy us! But what is evil, if not that which is aimed at our destruction?

From the beginning, the Bible is clear about all this: in Deuteronomy we find this familiar statement: "Today I offer you the choice of life and good, or death and evil ... I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life and then you and your descendants will live ..." Each of us is responsible for what we do, for that choice. We can claim extenuating circumstances and social conditions, but, before God, we have no defense. At the beginning of the Christian year it is good to remember how Jesus fit in this prophetic tradition: he, too, demanded an unconditional response. There was no time to bury the dead or to lock the shop door. The response was to be immediate, one was to choose between life and death, good and evil. This was deeply related to forgiveness, but forgiveness was not to encourage or condone irresponsibility. Jesus did not expect his disciples to be perfect, but he expected them to try.

How different our morality today, where, in response to inadequate returns on their labour (price for product), the farmer is advised to buy Futures, to hedge, to speculate - in short, to pursue injustice for compensation rather than to fight for justice. At the same time the corporate model is suggested wherein, if you go bankrupt, you are not held personally liable (responsible). This is structural irresponsibility, or immorality. I have always had difficulty with the idea of alienating oneself in this way, and I doubt that it would be stretching the point to suggest that the beginning of our public economic immorality was the development of the idea of the limited liability corporation which made it possible to legally disclaim responsibility for what we do in the realm of commerce. On the other hand, the corporate form was essential to the development of capitalism. Decide for yourself whether that is a good thing or a bad thing!

It seems to be taken for granted that injustice - inequity - is not only reasonable, but even "fair" in the marketplace. If someone profits at another's expense, this seems to be quite okay if they are observing the rules of the game. In other words, we have settled for definitions of acceptable behaviour which are purely relative. Someone who buys control of a company, skims off the cream, and then dumps it on the market, claiming a tax loss, is not regarded as a crook. He is called a financier! This same person may be scrupulously honest in personal dealings, but is not such profiteering evil? After all, it is a deliberate action undertaken not for social good, but for personal gain at public expense.

Isn't injustice something to get angry about? Isn't robbery unethical, and exploitation of others immoral? Must we be defensive about our present social structures and spend our time rationalizing our immorality? Would it not be better to give up this dehumanizing attitude and, instead, seek to build just social structures and commercial institutions based on equity and community welfare?

For example, look at agriculture. The public has been persuaded that it has a right to cheap food, regardless of the cost to the farmer of producing that food. Yet at the same time the farmer, as a buyer, has to pay the prices



demanded for the goods he needs for his production, whether these prices are fair or not. The law of supply and demand, as it is called, is supposed to operate in place of morality and justice in arranging prices. However, does the price a farmer pays for drugs, chemicals, and fertilizer bear much relationship to the costs of producing these commodities? We have all seen sudden price increases, and even decreases, that can have little connection to costs. A frost in the citrus groves of Florida will cause a rise in the price of oranges the very next day, but I doubt that oranges can travel that fast! When the cost of baler twine went from \$7 to \$25 in one year, did that mean that the farmers growing the sisal were all of a sudden being paid four times as much for their labour or their product? Did the doubling of the cost of the herbicide Roundup result from a doubling of the costs of production, or a doubling of advertising "costs"? And when the price of lamb sold at auction is lower than it was four years ago, it is obvious that this price bears absolutely no relation to the costs of producing that commodity.

What farmers seek, through marketing structures such as marketing boards, is justice in the market place. It is not enough to politely ask for a fair price when the only "morality" is success, and to succeed is to make money, and money is made by selling above cost. Short of constructing a completely different economic system which is based on equity and social justice, the farmer has to seek more limited justice. This is why farmers organize so that the buyer of their products is forced to pay a fair price for the farm product, a price which covers all the costs of producing that product. At the same time, the public is entitled to pay a fair price for food, a price which is just, meaning that the price does not provide unearned income for some middle-men, as a result of market manipulation, control, or speculation.

\* \* \*

#### QUEBEC LAMB MARKETING BOARD REFERENDUM: CORRECTION

In our last issue we noted that the sheep producers in Québec had voted 89% in favour of a marketing board for lamb (with 80% of producers voting). The question posed in the referendum was simply whether or not the voter was in favour of a "joint marketing board". But while the question was simple, the background was well prepared; in addition to a wealth of material mailed to producers and many meetings and discussions on the local level, the ballot was accompanied by a four-page outline of the proposed marketing plan.

Still to be solved are some of the specific problems of marketing not covered in the plan. For example, as a letter from the president of the sheep producers federation notes, what happens when a butcher, having built up a trade advertising Québec lamb, drops the word Québec from his shop-window and goes on selling Canadian or US lamb to his expanded clientele?

Producers in the Maritimes should be aware that while Québec producers debate this sort of question, their intention is clearly to develop - and keep - the Québec market for themselves.

We should also note that the provincial organization of sheep producers in Ontario, at its annual meeting Nov. 27th, established a committee to look into the feasibility of a marketing board and to call for a referendum if that seemed the best course of action.



# Farm Bankruptcies and Federal Strategy

FROM THE UNION FARMER, NOV. 82

....However, as many farm leaders are quick to point out, the formal bankruptcy rate represents only the tip of the iceberg. The actual number of farmers forced out of production is much greater, but because they sell out before they go broke, these producers aren't counted among the statistics.

The long-term effects of this trend aren't difficult to determine. Every time a productive farm unit goes under, the assets of that farm don't just disappear; they are either sold through auction or seized by creditors. In either case, they become additions to the property of a larger farm or corporation. The assets of these larger units continue to grow, resulting in a gradual but steady concentration of land, machinery and buildings in fewer and fewer hands.

This trend isn't accidental. Consolidation within agriculture is in fact one of the main goals of the federal government's agricultural strategy.

In 1969, a federal task force looking into the future of agriculture in Canada recommended the government place increasing emphasis on building the food processing and retail industry at the expense of small and medium-size family farms. "Marginal farmers", or those with average or below-average incomes, were to be persuaded to leave the land and seek employment in urban centres. This policy has been updated several times since 1969, but the underlying premise has always remained the same. The most recent document, the federal government's "Agri-Food Strategy", was released last year and like its predecessors, it is quite blatant about the perceived need to eliminate family farms and strengthen the industrial sector.

The failure of the federal government to implement programs designed to stem the flood of farm bankruptcies represents a political decision. In the overall context of the Agri-Food Strategy, the loss of several thousand farmers over the coming decade is seen simply as an unavoidable part of modernizing the "Agri-Food" sector to meet the needs of corporate agribusiness. As the number of farmers declines, so too does their collective ability to influence prices in the marketplace. Orderly marketing systems designed to offset wide price fluctuations for farm commodities are eventually dismantled as farmers's political power is eroded and class divisions between farmers themselves become more pronounced. ...

## The Solution: Play the Market

FROM THE GLOBE + MAIL, NOV 17/82

In today's volatile markets, farmers should use commodities hedging to stabilize their returns, says broker Robert Burck.

A commodities specialist for McLeod Young Weir Ltd. of Toronto, Mr. Burck said hedging protects farmers from the ups and downs of the grain and livestock markets by guaranteeing a known price for their products.

By hedging months in advance, the farmer knows exactly how much he will receive for his crop when the harvest comes in. He will not benefit from

any dramatic upswing in prices but, on the other hand, he will not lose if the market plummets.

The usefulness of hedging was shown by the market trends this summer. A corn grower who hedged his crop in June received \$3.45 a bushel; a farmer who did not received \$2.65.

Hedging is a useful tool for reducing risk, but commodities brokers warn farmers not to speculate — unless they know exactly what they are doing.

"If they try to out-guess the market, they can lose their shirt," Mr. Burck said.

Few farmers understand hedging — or the futures commodities markets. They usually confuse them with the industrial stock markets, where investors buy shares of a company, hoping to sell for a profit when the value rises.

Commodities markets are used to reduce risk rather than make money. They are used by farmers to guarantee the price they receive for their crop and by processors who want a ready supply of raw materials at a known cost.

The middleman is the speculator, who is

## THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



Historic note: Until his life's destiny was further clarified, Robin Hood spent several years robbing from the rich and giving to the porcupines.

prepared to gamble on the market trends and make a lot of money if he is right.

In hedging, the farmer performs two separate transactions. He sells an imaginary load of corn in the spring, buying it back in the fall. He sells the real stuff, his crop, at harvest-time. If everything works as planned, the loss he makes on one transaction equals the gain he makes on the other.

To illustrate hedging, Mr. Burck used two examples. In one, the commodity price fell over the summer; in the other, the price rose.

In June, a farmer sells an imaginary contract on the futures market, receiving \$3.45 a bushel. In early November, he buys the contract back, paying \$2.65 a bushel, giving him a profit on paper of 80 cents a bushel.

In November, the farmer also sells his

real crop on the open market, receiving \$2.65 a bushel. Add the two prices together and the farmer earned \$3.45 a bushel, just as he planned.

In the other case, the price of corn rose from \$3.45 to \$4.35 over the summer. On paper, the farmer sold a contract for \$3.45 a bushel in June and bought it back at \$4.35, giving him a paper loss of 90 cents. But, the farmer sold his real crop for \$4.35, giving him a net return of \$3.45 — the price he wanted back in the early summer.

Hedging is not limited to big farmers or traditional crops. Corn growers can hedge quantities as small as 1,000 bushels or hedge their feeder cattle, steers, hogs, wheat, oats, soybeans, flax, rapeseed, barley or rye.

All they need is \$5,000 (U.S.) to open an account and a telephone line to the nearest broker.



## CHILEAN FARMERS OPPOSE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC POLICY

excerpts from an article by E. Schumacher, NY Times News Service

When the bank foreclosed on Emilio Naulin and called an auction to sell his wheat farm in November, a group of angry farmers from this key agricultural region in southern Chile showed up to discourage bids. Regional banks called off any more foreclosures. One factor in the farmers' anger is a \$1.6 billion agricultural-sector debt that many say they cannot even begin to repay. It is part of the country's severe recession and what Government officials acknowledge is a crushing private-sector debt.

The farmers and businessmen have been hard hit this year. First, most of their loans were in dollars, but they earn their money in pesos, which have been devalued by nearly half since June. That means they have to earn almost twice as many pesos to meet their payments. Second, the repayment schedule is indexed to inflation, and inflation has jumped from 9.5% in consumer prices last year to more than 20% this year. That means the repayments are much larger today than many borrowers thought they would be when they took out their loans. Mr. Naulin, for example, signed a loan for 1.3 Million pesos two years ago to improve his 750-acre farm. But his repayment schedule has gone up so much that he now owes 5 million pesos on the loan.

To make matters worse, cheap imports under the Government's free-market policies have undercut demand for local products. Carlos Podlech, president of the National Association of Wheat and Cereal Producers, said in an interview that farmers had been forced to cut their wheat production from a high of 1.3 billion tons in the 1960s to 350 million tons today. Meanwhile Chile imports Irish butter and bread is made from U.S. wheat.

Government officials blame the worldwide recession, along with over-borrowing and an overvalued exchange rate that collapsed under speculative pressure in June, causing the devaluations and inflation. The Government's remedy has been to help bail out the banks and then let them decide which loans to refinance or foreclose.

This approach has angered farmers and businessmen in the south, where unemployment is said to have reached 50%. In October, ten agricultural, fishing, lumbering and business associations met in the southern city of Valdivia, and issued the Declaration of Valdivia, demanding a Government bailout equal to that offered to the banks. The protest led to other meetings; the demands grew to nationalization of the banks and a 10-year moratorium on debt repayment. Auctions of foreclosed land and equipment were blocked.

As the rebels seek to make it clear that they are not leftists or even political opponents of the regime, they have adopted the slogan, Not Chicago Not Moscow, referring to the monetarist theories of the University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman, on which the Chilean regime has based its economic policy. Nevertheless, they have met with little sympathy from the Government. General Pinochet recently shrugged off the demand for a debt moratorium ( or "perdonazo") with the comment: "There will be no perdonazo here. No one took the farmers by the hand to sign the loan documents."



NOTES from the ANNUAL MEETING OF THE N.S. FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE

by Geoff Moore

... It is remarkable that, of some 55 resolutions which the delegates were asked to consider, at least 30 requested more money from government - that is, new programs or additions to existing ones. To a newcomer, this is pretty startling. Many, perhaps most farmers like to think of themselves as individualistic and self-reliant. Many profess a belief in the virtues, not to say the existence, of free enterprise. Yet here was a congregation of these same people begging for more government intervention in their affairs, seeking to become more, not less, dependent on the whims of politicians and the goodwill of a bureaucracy answerable to none but itself.

The logical extension of this is to deed our land to the government and ask for a wage. (This would at least save us the trouble of running around to find out what programs we are eligible for and worrying about whether we get our money before this year's funding runs out.) ...

Of course, as one delegate pointed out, if the government has all that money to spend, we should try to steer it where we want it. Fair enough. But perhaps it's time to start thinking in terms of asking for a fair price for what we produce, so that we won't have to break out the tin cups for the NSFA meeting every year. Then farmers could set their own spending priorities instead of trying to manoeuvre the government around.

\* \* \*

Although there is no standing policy in the NSFA on safety of nuclear power plants or on disposal of radioactive wastes, the following resolution was passed at the annual meeting this year;

Whereas Point Lepreau is now in operation, and  
whereas there is always the possibility of a serious nuclear accident, and  
whereas the Annapolis Valley is directly downwind from this nuclear reactor, and  
whereas the livestock population in the Valley is of critical economic importance, and  
whereas there is no set down procedure for the protection of this vital resource, therefore be it resolved that the provincial federation contact the proper authorities to have a procedure developed for this area.

The motion passed despite opposition which feared it could be interpreted to be "anti-nuclear". The following resolution was, however, defeated:

Whereas we as farmers understand our task to be the care and stewardship of what has been given us in trust, to preserve and enhance it for future generations, and  
whereas preparations for nuclear war threaten the destruction of our life-work, and  
whereas nuclear weapons are not capable of protecting or defending, their sole aim being destruction, a reality which cannot be masked by the language of "defence", and  
whereas we as farmers oppose all nuclear arms, all preparations for nuclear war, ~~all~~ nuclear delivery systems, such as the Cruise missile system, and  
whereas we are convinced that only mutually negotiated disarmament can ensure a peaceful future for ourselves and the whole world, therefore  
be it resolved that the NSFA declare itself in favour of immediate, negotiated verifiable global nuclear disarmament and call upon our Government to proceed in this direction with all means at its disposal.



## McCain's Acquires Cheese Maker

CHRONICLE-HERALD, DEC. 16/82

FLORENCEVILLE, New Brunswick — McCain Foods Limited has announced the acquisition of Darigold Products Limited, a manufacturer of hard and soft cheese based in Oakville, Ont.

In an announcement Wednesday, McCain Foods Limited chairman of the board Harrison McCain said that McCain Foods has purchased all shares of Darigold Products from the Harrison family. Carl Harrison and Lawrence Harrison, as well as other principal officers, will remain with the company, he said.

The Harrison family, the third generation in the cheese business, recently completed a modern new facility in Oakville with a capacity of 17 million pounds of cheese a year. Darigold products are distributed throughout Ontario.

One of the largest Canadian food manufacturers, McCain Foods produces frozen french fries and potato specialties, vegetables, pizzas and desserts, as well as a complete line of both frozen concentrated fruit juices and non-frozen, single-strength "drinkin' box" juices.

McCain Foods has continued to expand its operations in Canada. A new \$7.5 million juice plant is presently under construction in Grand Falls, N.B., and will begin commercial production early in 1983.

A major multinational food processor, McCain Foods also has manufacturing operations in England, The Netherlands, Spain, France, Australia and The United States.

## Weston to Concentrate on Processing, Wholesale

Galen Weston speaks of his "strong belief in the efficiency of the owner-operator" when he refers to his plans for cutting George Weston Ltd. of Toronto loose from its unprofitable fishing operations and reorganizing its grocery business.

Mr. Weston, who is chairman, president, chief executive officer and 60 per cent owner of the food and resources company — the fourth largest in Canada, with sales of \$7.4-billion last year — does not expect much profit improvement before 1984.

But he is acting to pull the company out of one depressed sector — fishing — within 18 months while holding on to and upgrading more viable fish packing businesses.

At the same time, he is expanding grocery wholesaling operations, in which profit margins are more protected than in the retail sector. And he is making progress in selling off traditional supermar-

kets to independents while supplying them from wholesale divisions.

In the case of the disposal of both the fishing and supermarket interests, the sales are being made to independent owner-operators.

Food distribution operations come under 78.5 per cent owned Loblaw Cos. Ltd. and its subsidiaries.

In Canada, these include Zehrmart Ltd., Loblaws Ontario, Kelly Douglas and Co. Ltd., Atlantic Wholesalers and National Grocers Co. Ltd. In the United States, where sales are worth \$500-million (U.S.) a year, operations include National Tea Co. of Chicago and Peter J. Schmitt Co. Inc. of Buffalo, N.Y.

In Canada, Loblaw retail operations in British Columbia were entirely franchised last year.

Elsewhere, traditional supermarkets of 15,000 to 20,000 square feet —

## Highland Mall: Whodunnit?

Those who have noted the devious ways of real estate operators, particularly the recent Greymac deal where millions of dollars were made overnight through a sale of Toronto apartments to Saudi Arabians, will be interested to learn that, though the stakes are smaller, the same players are at the same game here in the Maritimes.

From the day the Highland Mall in New Glasgow was first proposed it was clear that the beneficiaries of this venture would not be the local people. What was not so clear was just who would benefit.

A Dec. 2 article in the Chronicle-Herald has shed some light: apparently, behind Burnac Leaseholds which manages the mall are three developers: Patrick Rocca, Travis Smith, and the Burnett brothers. The mortgage is held by Greymac, who don't seem to hold a grudge against the Burnetts for their recent unsuccessful attempt to beat Greymac for control of the Crown Trust Co. One really needs a map to work through the maze of corporate names, subsidiaries and relationships.

What does emerge is the clear impression that while the Highland Mall may be going broke, the interests behind it are well sheltered from financial hurt.

which generate 80 per cent of grocery sales across Canada — will be sold to independents and supplied by wholesale divisions. Alternatively, they may be changed to more cost-efficient warehouse outlets or the smaller no-frills stores.

On capital invested, food processing is returning 22 per cent and food distribution 18 per cent, which Mr. Weston regards as reasonable in the middle of a recession.

The northern fishing fleet was sold in August for \$10-million, mainly to West Coast Indians, who will continue to supply Weston-owned British

Columbia Packers Ltd. with salmon for the Clover Leaf label. The southern fleet of larger boats is expected to be sold within 18 months.

The plan is to pump capital freed from fishing and related services into fish processing and into an \$8-million processing plant in Prince Rupert, B.C., which started up in August.

Another fish processing subsidiary, Connors Bros. Ltd. on the East Coast, is a supplier to Europe. But this has turned into "a dismal market" because of the dollar's rise against most European currencies.

From the Globe & Mail, 18 Oct 82



DOMINION TO INCREASE WAREHOUSE SUPERMARKETS, EMPHASIZE WHOLESALE OPERATIONS

excerpts from a Globe & Mail article, Dec. 23/82

In the next 12 months, Dominion will close some stores, upgrade and convert others, and sub-lease or franchise some of its properties. And the company will place new emphasis on food wholesaling and real estate.

Dominion will continue converting some of its supermarkets into the larger warehouse operations that specialize in bulk products. Between 10 and 20 stores across Canada will be changed next year.

The food wholesaling operations, which currently are not significant, should account for 25% of sales in 5 years' time through selling to independent retailers, franchises, institutions and restaurants. Recently the company's New Brunswick-based wholesaling unit expanded into Halifax, Ottawa and London, Ont.

Dominion has decided either to expand or close its small retail outlets. ... Meanwhile, the real estate division will become increasingly important to Dominion, possibly slowing down the expansion rate of the food operations. ...

\* \* \* \* \*

The December/January issue of THIS MAGAZINE carries an article by Ronald Labonté entitled Of Cockroaches and Berry Blight, an amusingly written and informative look at some aspects of our dependence on agricultural chemicals. One excerpt:

The revolution in El Salvador continues, albeit bumped from the front pages of the newspaper by a succession of curses the world over. A basic oppression that the FDR/FMLN seeks to overthrow is chronic malnutrition. Caloric intake is twenty-six percent below the international minimum with protein consumption almost fifty percent deficient, producing an infant mortality rate ten times greater than Canada's and an average life expectancy thirty years less. The trouble rests with the fact that two percent of the population owns sixty percent of the land, using almost all of it to produce coffee and cotton for export.

Both crops tend to be exempted from basic pesticide regulation even in First World countries and in the Third World, increasingly the repository of chemicals, pharmaceuticals and manufacturing processes banished from the former as too hazardous, it's no holds barred. One and a quarter tons of insecticide blanket each square mile of El Salvadorean cotton fields. The most popular chemical elixir is parathion, eighty times more lethal than DDT and responsible for more poisonings than any other pesticide in existence. Fully twenty percent of all the parathion used in the world is dumped on the cotton campos of El Salvador, contributing heavily to the World Health Organization's estimate that one Third World resident is poisoned by pesticides every three minutes. ...



# THE RAM'S HORN

*And when they make a long blast on the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout:  
and the wall of the city will fall down flat.*  
-Joshua 6:5

The Ram's Horn is published six times a year; annual subscription is \$6 to:  
Brewster & Cathleen Kneen, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S. BOK 1R0, phone 925-2768

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## SPECIAL ISSUE ON LAMB MARKETING

No. 12

November 1982

A year that got off to a promising start has turned into something of a nightmare, with vicious price-cutting and market robbery as butchers, drovers, and even producers try to cut in on the best market in the country to take advantage of the work done by others.

Now it is clear to all that producers must act decisively to protect ourselves and to assure our survival, not at the expense of each other, but together. The time has come for sheep producers to insist on some degree of justice and to create a producer controlled marketing system not open to abuse and exploitation.

*If for wherever the corpse is, there  
will the vultures gather: Matt. 24:28*

### MEETING NOTICE

SHEEP PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION OF NOVA  
SCOTIA ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 20th

in the Riverview Room of Jenkins  
Hall, NSAC, beginning at 11 a.m.

Discussion of marketing to begin  
at 2 p.m.

ALL PRODUCERS ARE URGED TO ATTEND!

### QUEBEC REFERENDUM

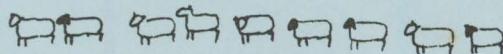
In mid-October, a referendum was held in Quebec to determine whether sheep producers wanted a marketing board. Any producer with one or more sheep was eligible to vote, and the voters list was posted in the district ag-rep's office 21 days before the vote to allow producers time to add names or have retired producers removed.

The question was simple: "Are you in favour of a 'joint marketing board' for the sheep industry of Quebec?" yes/no. ("Joint marketing board" is the French expression for "joining of producers to collectively market their product".)

Some of the objections voiced had to do with the vagueness of the question: producers did not want to "sign a blank cheque". Others felt that a board would mean producers paying for more bureaucrats. And some producers whose sales are all at the farm gate said they were doing just fine, thanks.

But despite these objections, with 80% of the producers voting, the referendum passed with a vote of 89% in favour.

Details of the marketing plan will be worked out in the last week of November.





LAMB MARKETING DURING THE LAST DECADE: A PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW by Brewster Kneen

Sheep farming is in a state of crisis. The existing market seems to be over-supplied, prices have tumbled, and costs of production continue to rise - this after ten years of optimism, expansion, and confusion. In the early 70s we were told that we were destined to become the breeding stock supplier to the rest of North America. That dream has gone, and so has the prime mover behind it. A lot of other producers have also come and gone - small-scale producers who found there was no utopia back on the land, or hobby farmers who have found out how much work is really involved in raising good lambs.

Selling lambs seemed to be easy ten years ago. There was short supply of breeding stock and market lambs, and fuelled by the apparently insatiable demand of the Montreal market, the auction market provided an easy and at times adequate return. By the end of the decade, however, the market had become weaker and more erratic as the Quebec and Ontario sheep flocks increased. Among the sadder episodes of the 70s was the rise and fall of the abattoir in River John. Organized by farmers as a co-op and undermined, among other things, by the tactics of those who made money buying and selling other people's lambs (who made sure that the price paid at the Truro auction was high enough to attract lambs away from the abattoir), the abattoir failed. I had my own part in that demise, which left me sadder and wiser.

By 1978 it was becoming apparent that new efforts would have to be made if there was to be an adequate market for lamb produced in the Maritimes. No producer could hope to make a living, or to manage a commercial flock, by gambling week by week on the auction sale as the primary outlet for their product. Yet, at the same time, anyone who publicly said anything about an inadequate market was "put down" and made to feel that it was their own fault if they did not get a fair price. Whenever marketing was discussed at a meeting, one of the major drovers (also a producer) would ask: "Who has trouble selling their lambs?" The inference was clear, and the question of price was never allowed. So there was no discussion of marketing, except around the sale of greatly overpriced and over-produced "breeding stock".

For the past four years I have been working on marketing lambs so that I, and other producers, could get a fair price for our lambs. It is as simple as that.

My first effort was to organize a shipment of lambs from Pictou County to Montreal through the New Brunswick Lamb Marketing Co-Op late in 1978. In 1979 I started work on the development of the local market, organizing two large shipments of lamb for Sobeys through Canada Packers. I also organized several shipments for Montreal through the N.B. Co-Op. In 1980, a number of us urged the Sheep Producers Association to run a marketing trial at the Halifax Farmers Market, and while the then-President of the Association chose to condemn it as a failure, the fact is that it proved the point that there was a substantial unsatisfied market for lamb in the Halifax area.

Following that, I organized a number of shipments for Sobeys in 1980 and carried this forward to weekly shipments from June through February, 1981-2, on behalf of the Northumberland Lamb Producers Association. This project worked quite smoothly in 1981. It was not publicized and did not really interfere with



the drovers. But when the project was transformed into the Northumberland Lamb Marketing Co-Op in 1982, with the stated objective of selling all market lambs in Nova Scotia, it was to be expected that there would be trouble from various quarters, particularly since there have been a series of attacks on me since 1979 because of my concerns and efforts in marketing lambs.

Having developed the market and established the possibility of getting a fair price for lamb, we have created a situation attractive to a variety of predators: An abattoir, who would like to engage in buying and selling from their position of advantage; a wholesaler, who would like to cash in on the market we have developed; or an opportunist producer. The price of lamb this fall has dropped, not because of pressure from the stores, but because of the vicious price-cutting practiced by those who want to make money not by their labour as butchers, wholesalers, or producers, but by buying and selling, making money off the labour of others. These people are not concerned about the price the producer gets, and they do not want to see a producer controlled marketing system which would confine them to their legitimate functions.

It is in response to this situation that Northumberland is calling for the next step to be taken.

#### CALL FOR A MARKETING BOARD

Northumberland will propose a resolution at the Annual Meeting of the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia, calling for a referendum to establish a Lamb Marketing Board in Nova Scotia.

In accordance with the legislation governing the marketing of natural products in Nova Scotia, this Board would have the authority to control and regulate the marketing of all lambs destined for slaughter and sale on the wholesale market; it would have pricing authority; and it would appoint Northumberland as its agent to carry out the marketing of lamb on the wholesale market.

#### OBJECTIVES OF NORTHUMBERLAMB

Northumberland is the registered trade name of the Northumberland Lamb Marketing Co-Op Ltd. According to its Articles of Incorporation, the co-op was created to:

"organize and operate under producer control, a program for the wholesale marketing of lamb and mutton in the Atlantic Provinces based on the principles (1) that there should be a steady supply of top-quality lamb available to consumers in retail stores throughout the year, (2) that the producer should receive a price high enough to promote adequate supply, and (3) that the cost of bringing the product to the consumer should be minimized."

Members of the co-op are all active sheep farmers.

#### THE NATIONAL PRICING SYSTEM

Lamb prices in Eastern Canada are basically determined by the price of "Virginia" lamb bought in Toronto via "tele-auction" by Canada Packers. The price this fall has been around 65¢ landed in Toronto. Even more shocking than the price is the volume: up to Oct. 16th 28,233 lambs have been imported from the USA compared to 20,209 to this date in 1981. (3/4 into Ontario, 1/4 into Alberta.)



MARKETING BOARD LEGISLATION

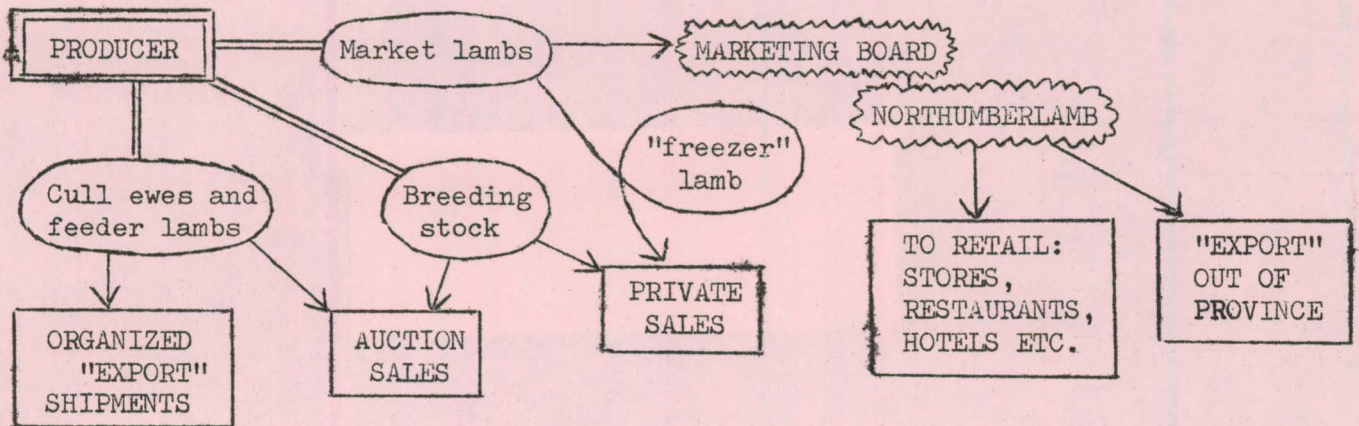
Marketing Boards in Nova Scotia are regulated under the Natural Products Act, which is administered by the Natural Products Marketing Council, a government-appointed body. By law, this Council has the right to totally regulate and control the production and marketing of any natural product in the province, and is answerable to the Governor in Council (i.e. the Cabinet).

A Commodity Board is what we generally refer to as a marketing board. Such a board may be set up by the Natural Products Marketing Council after a referendum of producers requesting such a board has been approved by 2/3 of those voting.

A Commodity Board, once it is voted into being by the producers, is governed by a Marketing Plan, the general outline of which is usually part of the referendum. The plan may or may not include provisions for the imposition of production quotas, the value of such quotas if they are imposed, the basis on which quotas shall be allocated, etc.

Where the Marketing Plan does not include quotas (such as our Wool Marketing Plan) the Plan can include such powers as: the authority to set prices for the regulated product; the authority to designate one or more bodies, organizations, or persons as the sole legal agents for the marketing or for the receiving of the regulated products; the authority to impose levies or check-offs to cover the costs of operating the marketing system; the authority to require every person engaged in the production of the regulated product to register with the Board the amount of their production; and the authority to seize products which are marketed in contravention of the Plan and to prosecute and/or fine persons who disobey the regulations.

This Marketing Plan is generally drawn up, in accordance with the spirit of the referendum which establishes the Commodity Board, by the producer group which requested the referendum, in consultation with the Council. In this case, authority is being sought simply to establish prices and single-desk selling.





# THE RAM'S HORN

Vol. 1 No. 1

November 1980

"And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, then all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city will fall down flat." - Joshua 6:5

This is the first issue of a new publication for the sheep farmers of Nova Scotia. With sufficient support, we hope to put this letter out six times per year to subscribers at a cost of \$5 per year. This newsletter will not be subsidized by either the provincial government or business interests. It is open to all farmers who wish to contribute news, ads, reports, helpful suggestions, etc. We hope your \$5 will cover the costs of preparation and mailing.

- Brewster & Cathleen Kneen, editors

Make cheques payable to Brookland Farm, R.R. 3, Scotsburn, N.S. BOK. 1R0

## BROOKLAND FARM AND POTTERY SALE

Annual Christmas sale of earthenware pottery by Cathleen Kneen - at the farm in Brookland, near Saltsprings, Pictou County. Phone 925-2768 for directions, or follow the signs up Six Mile Brook Road from Saltsprings.

DECEMBER 6 and 7, 10 am to 5 pm  
or whenever you can make it!

WOOL GROWERS SUPPLIES and ELECTRIC FENCING EQUIPMENT are also on display and for sale in our new showroom at the farm.

Electric Fence Wire will be available at Flemmings, Truro, until Jan. 1st at \$30.25 per 60 lb (2600') roll.

FOR SALE: 25 grade Suffolk ewes, two years old or younger.  
call: Donnie MacEachern, 926-2631  
Box 58, R.R. 1, Merigomish

## S.P.A.N.S. DIRECTORS elected Nov. 8:

Peter Rogers, John Mildon, Guy Sanders

At the directors meeting following the Annual Meeting, Wayne Woolfitt was chosen President, Guy Sanders Vice-President, and Roy Evans was appointed Secretary-Treasurer.

WANTED: A flock of about 100 Cheviot ewes. Contact Art Perry, 895-8946

## HIGHLIGHTS OF SHEEP PRODUCERS ANNUAL MEETING, NOVEMBER 8, 1980

The minutes of the Semi-Annual Meeting were approved and the Secretary-Treas. gave an interim financial report. Brewster Kneen then resigned as Secretary, effective immediately, while agreeing to remain as treasurer until the end of the calendar/fiscal year.

The President, Roy Evans, gave his report, which was not well received. Exception was taken in particular to comments on the Farmers Market project and a resolution thanking Michael Isenor for his diligence and hard work was passed unanimously.

There was inconclusive discussion about current sheep diseases, but it was agreed that a special meeting be called with the Provincial and Federal vets. (This meeting is set for Dec. 6 at 1 p.m. at N.S.A.C.) Dr. Jim Love was asked to present some research on sheep diseases to the semi-annual meeting.

The Sheep Fair and Sale was discussed briefly, with the Purebred Breeders to be asked to run the ram sale next year.

It was also agreed that the Association should no longer run a fall lamb sale.

The marketing of lambs by the Experimental Farm (Nappan) was discussed in response to information presented by a local producer, David Firth; and it was agreed that all lambs, of whatever origin, should be marketed at current lamb prices as established by major market activity at the time.



### Three Year Campaign Brings Victory

The first objective of a three-year campaign was achieved recently when the Secretary-Treasurer of the Sheep Producers Association of Nova Scotia resigned after presenting his financial report to the annual meeting of the Association on Nov. 8th. For those who have been watching this process, it was a good lesson in political science, as a minority of members succeeded in gaining a majority of directors and appointing two of their three leaders to the positions of President and Secretary-Treasurer.

The major issue for the association is that of popular versus elite organizing. In recent years the Sheep Producers Association has been a highly successful voluntary organization capable of financing substantial projects out of its own resources, providing extensive benefits to its members, and calling upon its members for considerable voluntary labour in carrying out its projects. The Sheep Fair is the best known and most substantial of its activities, involving much of the membership in its organizing and running, but the importing and marketing of electric fence at moderate prices, and before that the cooperative purchasing of woven wire fencing, has been of very practical benefit to a large number of farmers. Significant efforts to market lamb at fair and stable prices within Nova Scotia have met with mixed success and failure, but the local lamb market and the public image of the sheep industry have both improved as a result of these efforts.

Another significant factor in the growth of membership was the newsletter of the Association which grew out of an earlier commitment to circulate complete minutes of all meetings to all members. In response to membership encouragement these minutes were expanded in reportage and included information on bulk prices of sheep supplies, market information, events of interest, and personal experiences.

Such a policy of sharing all information concerning the Association created difficulties for those who preferred to do their buying and selling and utilization of government assistance quietly and without everyone knowing what was going on. For the past two years, as a result, the faction that has taken over the Association tried every tactic they could think of to limit the function of the secretary-treasurer and to reduce the newsletter-minutes to a formal recording of motions and resolutions. To this end they even tried to hand the secretarial functions over to the Federation of Agriculture, though such a move would have been unconstitutional.

It would appear, at this point, that the three year campaign to take over the Association was not initially a group project, but rather the initiative of one man who two years ago lost his temper at the annual meeting when the Secretary raised the topic of marketing and pointed out how much money was being made by those buying and selling through the weekly sale and on the farms. (He illustrated by giving the figures for his own buying and selling over a few weeks that fall.) The alliance with other businessmen and some government employees seems to have evolved gradually as it became clear that the deeply personal motivations of some persons were compatible with and even useful to the bureaucratic commitments of the Department of Agriculture. For example, the government is committed to the role of enhancing private enterprise by assuming, out of public funds, the risks and certain costs of doing business. That is, the risks are underwritten by the public while the profits are appropriated by private corporations and individuals. This has been called "corporate socialism". In the area of lamb marketing, this has meant that the government sees its role as one of promotion, leaving it to private business to reap the benefits, whether this be the individual farmer or a large corporate packing house or chain store. Thus the past-president of the Association used a government/Association promotional event (the Sheep Producers booth at the Food Fair in Halifax) to benefit his personal business through display of his personal calling card.

*which was that*



By contrast, the efforts during the past two years of the progressive elements of the sheep producers to market lambs collectively indicate why a popular organization becomes an obstacle to the government-business combine, particularly when the organization assumes to know better what is good for the farmers than the government or a few opportunist individuals. The motivation of these collective marketing projects has been the conviction that the drovers and businessmen were making more per lamb than the actual producers of that lamb. The objective of these collective marketing projects has been to achieve both a higher and a more stable return to the producer. These efforts, financed by the Association and by individual producers, with only minimal government financial participation, seem to have nurtured that alliance between the government and the businessmen who each have their own reasons for disliking producer-controlled activities. The government requires dependency, and the businessmen require an unorganized area in which to buy cheap and sell dear. Self-reliance, self-confidence, and strong organization are strong defenses against exploitation,

The three-year campaign to take over the Association does contain some interesting lessons. It started with a quasi-fraudulent election of one director whose task it was to sow distrust between Cape Breton and the mainland of Nova Scotia. In retrospect, the motivation for this activity is clear, and it did succeed for awhile until other directors realized what was taking place. Divide and conquer is an ancient tactic. GNY P

A year ago the campaign was stepped up with organized meetings to set the "big" producers against the small, accompanied by the skilful manipulation of association meetings to either discredit individuals dedicated to popular organizing and self-help, or to obstruct constructive efforts by them. This was done by utilizing parliamentary procedure to generate ill-will and confuse the general membership. It was a lucid example of how parliamentary procedure was deliberately designed to mask and protect the power of the elite. Voting, rather than working an issue through to a point of consensus, is a sure way to destroy a democratic organization, a point well understood by the leader of this coup, and by the chairman of the meetings who deliberately stifled all discussion to the point where members would not come to meetings because they knew they would not be able to participate. Attendance at membership meetings increased steadily until the fall of 1979, and then it suddenly dropped off so that in Nov. 1980 the majority of those present were under the influence of the business-government faction. The tactics followed by those seeking control were clever, because they set the stage for the legal take-over of the organization - first you drive the members away, then you bring in your hand-picked followers who will play the game according to your rules.

Taken in by a smokescreen of innocence, and a carefully pre-arranged agenda. in 1979 the membership allowed the re-election of one director and the election of another who was already at work to destroy the association. Operating in good faith, they assumed the best of the persons involved. This is an essential ethical principle of popular organizing, even though at times it causes severe problems and even defeats. But a popular organization can only be built on good will and good faith.

The past year then saw a diligent campaign of flattery and innuendo to win over another director to the plot.

Observing these efforts, the Secretary-Treasurer realized that his hands were tied as long as he occupied his position in the Association. Anything he said could be turned against him by a skilful elite. At this point he decided to resign at the appropriate moment in order to be free to work for a popular organization of sheep farmers and of farmers in general. The point came



4 0 2

during the annual meeting before the election of two more directors that gave the "business" faction a majority. The resignation at that point caused some disruption to the tactics of the elite that had announced its intention to provoke the Secretary and other directors to a point where they could be expelled from the meeting. (This was announced at a Directors meeting prior to the general meeting.) The prepared report of the President was to be one of these acts of provocation. Another was a misplaced tirade by an employee of the Dept. of Agriculture. But the "businessmen's coup" was accomplished!

Other actions during the past year illustrate the collusion of government and individual opportunists. Three initiatives were taken that, by themselves, were not disturbing **but** taken together in the context outlined above, one is led to question their motivation. A Task Force on the future of the sheep industry was set up by the association president in consultation with the government but not with the Association, though an attempt was made to have the Association bear the costs of mileage and per-diem for non-government members. This Task Force was to define a federal-provincial subsidy program for the next five-year period, but the Association as such was not consulted nor was there any attempt made to communicate the direction of the discussions with sheep producers in the province except for one vague and incomplete report distributed to members by the government under pressure from the Secretary of the Association.

The second initiative was a committee to look into particular disease problems. Again a joint government-"business" committee, the producers on the committee were appointed by the President without consultation **with or even notification** of the directors of the association until after the fact. To date there has been no formal reporting of this committee either. The members of the task-force and of this committee look unsurprisingly like the elite that has taken over the Association.

The third initiative may well not belong in the same category as the other two. It is, however, still open to question because of the procedures it has adopted, the lack of adequate communication to sheep producers about its formation and objectives, and its governmental financing. This is a Purebred Breeders Association, which, according to the past-President of the Sheep Producers Association, has been established under the Societies Act in order to receive government funds. It is not difficult to interpret these initiatives, along with a few more minor events involving government employees, public funds, and the elite "farmers", as part of a deliberate policy to destroy the Provincial Sheep Producers Association, a policy agreed to by the right-wing business element (the three leaders of which formed a business partnership, NEWA Consultants - Nettleton, Evans, Woolfitt Associates - some months ago) and the provincial government. The aim is not to **better** serve the farming community in general and sheep farmers in particular, but to replace a popular, self-financing association with an association that is dependent on government financing and personnel and favourable to the operations of right-wing business interests.

The question remains, what will sheep farmers do now to ensure that they are part of a popular, representative organization that can and will act on their behalf and on behalf of farmers generally.

Brewster Kneen  
November 25, 1980

Comments, responses, news and notices are welcome - the next issue will be out in two months or less, depending on your response.



John + Helen  
for your consideration  
officially

A CONSIDERATION OF AGRICULTURAL POLICIES  
(without malice)

Recent events and a variety of communications since the end of November have given sheep producers some pieces of what appears to be a very strange puzzle. In trying to put the large number of pieces of the puzzle together, some sheep producers have come up with the following scenario. In this instance it must be remembered that some producers buy and sell as a major economic activity. It must also be remembered that to describe a process is not to say that those involved are even aware themselves of the process, nor that they are acting with malicious intent. But the process must be described as best we can do it nevertheless.

Provincial policies (subsidies), whatever their intent, seem to function to help the big farmer get bigger. That is, the policies are basically available to those with money to invest, rather than to people getting started or desiring to remain small.

assertions  
generalizations

Federal policies, on the other hand, tend to be across-the-board, based on production. But these policies by their structure pay the biggest share to those already big. \$25 per head on 20% of a 40 ewe flock is not enough to make much of a difference in the living of the farm family, while \$25 per head on 20% of a 400 or 1000 ewe flock does make a substantial difference in the living of the farm family.

Given the fact that it has been Federal policy for the past decade to "rationalize" Canadian agriculture - meaning to eliminate most small farms while consolidating the remaining few into corporate structures - perhaps it has also been Federal policy until quite recently to let sheep disappear from Canada altogether, thus simplifying or "rationalizing" the agricultural scene.

Hard?

With the turn-around in sheep in the past two years, it has been necessary for the Federal - and Provincial - Government to begin to impose on sheep its formula for other commodities as described above. While the small farms are diminishing and the large getting larger, it is time to introduce a marketing board, which is now possible because there are fewer independent farmers to deal with. Once the marketing board has been instituted, it is reasonable for the government to appoint the board from among the "large" producers who will co-operate because it is to their advantage.



At the same time, the remaining small producers will also be subsidized so that they can and will provide "reasonably priced" lambs for the large feeder operations. It must be recognized that lambing is labour intensive, while large-scale feeding can be capital intensive. In this way the high-risk aspect - lambing - is socialized, while the high profit area is privatized and protected by a marketing board that does not represent the interests of all the producers.

The preceding might indicate that a marketing board is, in itself, bad. I do not believe this to be the case, as it is really a matter of the structure and aim of the board and those composing it. The real issue is that of control. A marketing board may be controlled in effect by a few large producers, by a few or one corporation, by the government, or by the producers organized into a representative body. It would seem to me that the question of whose interests are represented by the board is crucial. My own feeling is that a marketing board ought to aim to represent every producer by establishing a price that gives a fair return to labour and investment, regardless of size, with accessibility to the market of all producers, large or small, on the same basis. The best interests of the farmer with a flock of 400 are the same as those of the farmer with a flock of 50 or 100 insofar as the small flock is not run as a hobby without regard to costs and returns. A marketing board could protect the interest of the small producer against the hobby farmer whose lambs are sold below cost by prohibiting such price cutting. Obviously this also assures the large producer of a fair return, and a stability now lacking, though it may well work against the short term interests of those buying and selling.

Coming back to the question of subsidies, the matter would be much less complicated were there some sort of marketing board. If the "market-place" by itself could not provide a fair return, the direct subsidies per lamb sold could make up the difference, with the producers then free to decide how they would best manage their own affairs.

Of course, any consideration such as this would also have to include the entire region, that is, the four Atlantic Provinces, and make a strenuous effort to develop the regional market to diminish the current dependency on Montreal and Upper Canada.

.....are these some of the issues as you see them?

Brewster Kneen  
11 Jan 80



THE YEAR OF THE RAM -- FINAL EDITION

The purpose of this final letter is to review 1979, get some information to you prior to our annual meeting 1 Dec 79, and make some recommendations. We look back on 1979 with a sense of satisfaction. The Farmer's Market trial clearly demonstrated that a market for quality, fresh Nova Scotia lamb does exist in the Metro area. The Breeders sale was a success with more sheep, strong prices and greater than ever producer involvement. The feeder lamb sale was about as expected -- adequate but still necessary. Overall prices have been strong and we had a good year in spite of the weather.

As a result of proposals put forward at our last annual meeting, ie: planned five fold increase in sheep production by 1990 we formed a task force to follow through and present our proposals to you at the annual meeting. The task force consisted of producers, NS Dept of Agriculture, NS Dept of Development, Agriculture Canada and selected specialists. We had five meetings to date, the first was an organizational one where we defined our task, looked at the big picture and set tasks for the following meetings. The second and third were taken up with land and capital. We recommended to the committee on land that policies for sheep be extended to Class IV land (now only apply to 2 & 3) and that agricultural land now going to waste be purchased and block leased for sheep production. Rollie Hayman assisted in our look at capital. We discovered that no capitalization rate guidelines exist for the sheep industry unlike dairy, swine, etc. We attempted to come up with a figure but found that variables throughout this province make it difficult. We finally concluded that new investment capitalization rates would range from \$300 - \$500 per ewe. You wouldn't believe the hours of work that went into the last sentence. Our fourth meeting was held in Nappan and concerned itself with research.

Dr. Nicholson and Frank Calder gave us an overview of what has been done and welcomed sheep producer input into future research. Ernie Maynard also indicated that more definative work will be done with the college flock. He will explain at the meeting. We indicated several areas of practical research where we would appreciate further investigation. These included pneumonia, parasites, forages and pasture management, etc. We emphasized the need for useable research at the producer level. The fifth meeting was devoted to a look at future policies and proposals. These would not be for 1980 but for a five year period 1981 - 85. We did not get into the nuts and bolts of the matter but identified certain guidelines. These included:

- a. Policies must apply to both new and expanding procedures;
- b. The producer must prepare an acceptable five year business plan to be eligible for assistance;
- c. Present training vehicles for new producers are inadequate;
- d. Present grading system for lamb, mutton and wool needs revamping;
- e. Lack of proper handling facilities is deterrent to expansion and proper flock health care;
- c. Effective electric fencing must now be considered a reality;



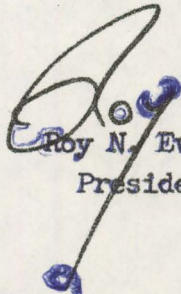
- g. The "save the ewe" policy has not brought about significant expansion; and
- h. We must have our proposals ready by Sep 80.

You can see that we did not come up with anything earthshaking but we made a start. We also discarded a lot of "unworkable" ideas. I would like to thank all those who participated in these deliberations and push on with the task ahead — to formulate a workable set of policies for the period 1981-85.

In times of increased returns it is easy to become self satisfied. We, as an organization, could fall into this trap. I feel we need to take a hard look at ourselves in several areas:

1. The breeders sale and sheep fair. We were one of the first to establish this sort of fair/sale but our imitators are catching or have caught up. I feel we need a small committee to take a good critical look at our set up and make recommendations. There will be more at the general meeting.
2. We have communication problems ((doesn't everyone?)) Unless producers attend the two general meetings, their views may not be known. Certainly we as producers don't write the secretary. We should consider electing our directors as zone representatives. Digby, Yarmouth and the South Shore are badly represented at present. I feel another small committee to look at this problem is in order.
3. We, in my opinion, need a secretary manager in our organization. This person would be a paid employee of the Sheep Producers Association and charged with the day to day running of the association. He would be responsible to the Chief Executive Officer and the Board of Directors. More at the meeting.

I derived a great deal of personal satisfaction as your President for 1979. Your directors attended meetings faithfully and got on with the business at hand. Brewster and Cathy spent hours and hours on our behalf. The task force was an extremely positive experience. I have yet to meet a producer I didn't like and respect. Thank you one and all.

  
Roy N. Evans  
President

Peoples Food Commission  
Report.  
6236 Willow St.  
Halifax.