

Food in the Year 2000 - Will it Cost Less?

By the year 2000, Americans will spend only 12.5 percent of their disposable personal income for food, compared with 16 percent today, according to Dr. Roy M. Kottman, Dean of the College of Agriculture and Home Economics, The Ohio State University.

"Higher incomes will permit consumers to continue to choose more animal products," Dr. Kottman told representatives of the nation's livestock and meat industry attending the 50th anniversary meeting of the National Live Stock and Meat Board in Chicago. Speaking on "Future Prospects for U.S. Animals Agriculture," he based his projections on a three-year long-range planning project, "Life 2000," conducted by faculty members in the institutions which he heads.

Dr. Kottman predicted that each U.S. citizen will consume an average of 667 pounds (retail weight equivalent) of animal products in the year 2000, compared with an average of 634 pounds for the year 1967-9.

"Consumption of beef and veal will increase to 140 pounds per person per year, compared with

115 pounds today," he said, "and pork consumption will climb to 75 pounds, 15 percent above present levels, reflecting favorable public reaction to dramatic improvements in pork quality along with more aggressive marketing and promotion of pork products. Lamb and mutton consumption may decline slightly, however.

"This means that by the year 2000, U.S. farmers will need to produce 70 percent more beef and pork, and the same amount of lamb and mutton as at present," Dr. Kottman said, adding that his projections were based on a U.S. population of 280 million in the year 2000.

"Much of the publicity today about high food prices fails to recognize that U.S. families were spending 25 percent of their income for food 20 years ago, compared with 16 percent today," Dr. Kottman said. Continually increasing livestock production efficiency will help hold down relative costs, he said, explaining that "despite recurrent conjecture that U.S. animal agriculture has reached plateaus in production efficiency, genetic variation in today's

livestock indicate that the biological potential for efficiency improvement and cost reduction is tremendous."

Dr. Kottman said that studies which are frequently cited to show that a given quantity of protein from plant sources costs considerably less to produce than an equal quantity of protein from animal sources "do not give sufficient attention to several significant factors," such as:

1) "the current retail cost of protein from soy-based analogs may well be higher than the cost of protein from red meats and poultry, because the process of texturizing and shaping soy flour into a form that caters to the preferences of U.S. consumers is costly"; and

2) "food consumption projections based solely on comparative cost ignore the fact that few people who have sufficient income to eat as they choose select their diets on the basis of the lowest cost per unit of nutrient or food energy. Instead, they choose foods that satisfy physiological, psychological, and social needs."

Besides the question of comparative costs, Dr. Kottman said

that there are three other major challenges which the animal industry will face in the future: The alleged relationship between animal fats and heart disease, pollution from livestock waste and the adequacy of land and other resources to support a continually growing livestock industry.

"In no important dietary matter, except perhaps in his gullibility with respect to fad diets for weight reduction, and the so-called 'health' foods, has the U.S. consumer been so thoroughly confused and so grossly misled as has been true with respect to saturated animal fats and cholesterol," Dr. Kottman said.

"Today, more than 15 years after nationwide publicity caused cholesterol to become a word to be feared in many households, and after years of research, there is still no solid evidence of a cause-and-effect relationship between heart disease and consumption of animal products."

Dr. Kottman, who heads a three-pronged organization which includes nutrition research and education among its many missions, added that "growing numbers of medical and nutritional scientists are concluding that heart disease is probably caused by a complex of factors, many of which may be as yet unidentified, and that the indictment of saturated animal

fats appears not only to have been premature, but quite probably incorrect."

As for pollution, Dr. Kottman said "we believe that great strides will be made during the next 30 years in reducing pollution — waste and odor — arising from animal production. Long before the year 2000, large quantities of animal waste will be processed and recycled back through livestock. In addition to consuming their own recycled wastes, animals may well make a major contribution to disposal of other wastes, such as garbage, and waste from food and lumber processing industries."

The increased feeding of processed wastes may help reduce the cost of feeding livestock, Dr. Kottman said.

Regarding the adequacy of resources, Dr. Kottman said that studies at The Ohio State University and the U.S. Department of Agriculture indicate that "there appears to be little question that sufficient land, water and other resources will be available to produce the feed grains, hay and pasture that will be required by a substantially larger U.S. animal agriculture in the year 2000 and beyond."

"Except for isolated instances, synthetics and substitutes will not make significant inroads into the demand for animal products over the next 30 years," Dr. Kottman concluded.

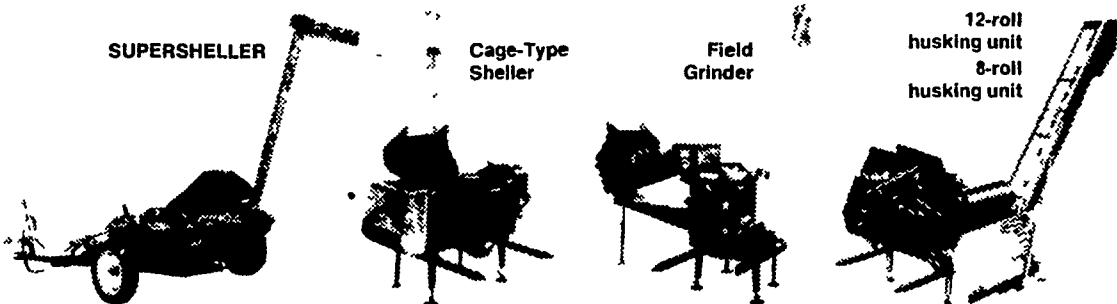
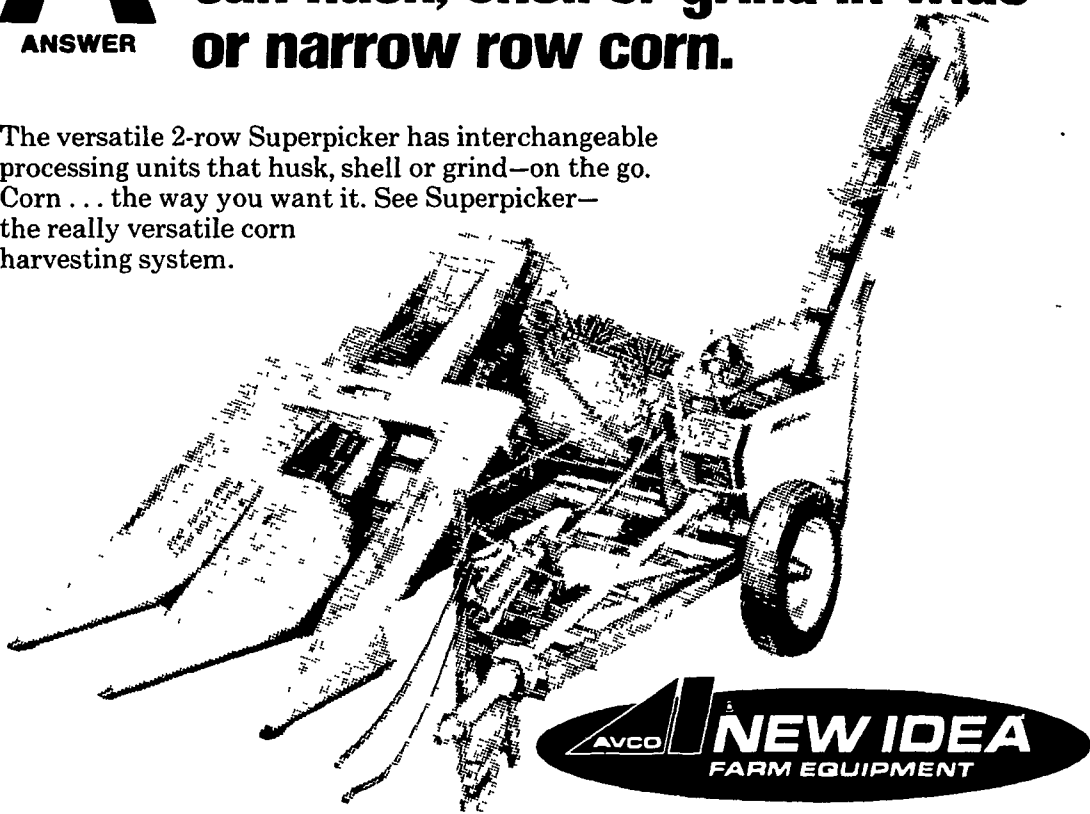
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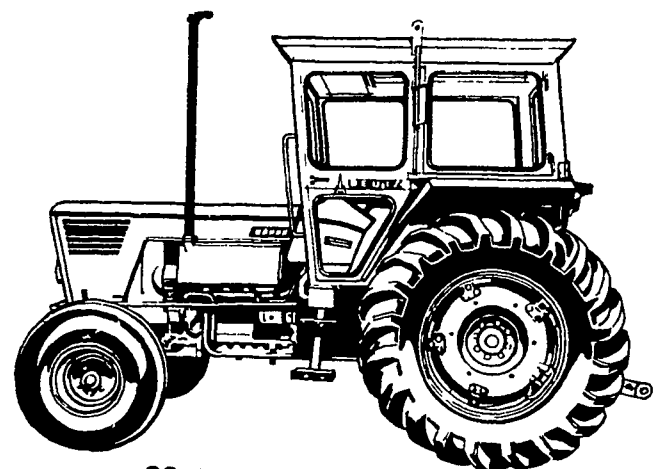
Thanks to those of you who responded to the recipe request in last weeks Lancaster Farming.

For those of you who didn't see the request, or those who may have forgotten, we are asking you to send recipes to begin the recipe exchange again. We are not asking for specific recipes, just whatever you choose to share with us and other readers.

To share your selection, send it to: Recipes, Lancaster Farming, Box 266, Lititz, Pa. 17543. You will receive a potholder for your efforts.

We would like to receive some more for use in the column next week, so won't you please take a few minutes out of your busy day and send one or so to us.

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