



Sadettin Unsal

IFYE Visitor To Lancaster County

by: Sally Bair
Farm Feature Writer

Charm, wit and a sense of humor are three ingredients, which used in liberal doses, are bound to help an international visitor gain acceptance and feel at home in a foreign land.

Sadettin Unsal, a native of Turkey, possesses these traits and more and is using them to good advantage as he visits in Lancaster County as an International Farm Youth Exchangee.

Twenty-five-year old Sadettin is an agriculture technician in Turkey and he is using his six months in the United States to learn methods of agriculture which may benefit his people and his work.

His sixteen days in this county are being spent with the Peter C. Alecxih family, Lancaster RD2, owners of Herr Fruit Farms. Sadettin is using the opportunity to learn about fruit farming, something which there is a lot in Turkey.

Sadettin is a charming visitor who speaks English well, despite the fact that he knew none of the language when he arrived. His first host mother was a teacher and she spent an hour daily with him to help him learn.

Sadettin describes Turkey as being about the size of Texas with 36 million people. Its latitude corresponds with that of Florida. It has a tropical climate, with temperatures soaring to 140 degrees, but seldom going below 60 degrees. Because of the climate farmers can complete three crop rotations in a year.

Tobacco is one of Turkey's largest crops, so Lancaster County's tobacco crop is of great interest to Sadettin. He said that whereas local tobacco is grown mostly for cigar use, Turkish tobacco is all cigarette tobacco. The tobacco harvest, which is currently underway here is done the same way in Turkey - by hand, with a lot of hard work. Cotton is another large crop in Turkey, along with olives and olive oil, and grapes.

Other crops include oranges, grapefruits, apples, almonds and pistachios.

Sadettin explained that this year Turkish farmers will again be growing poppies, after a three-year ban imposed by the United States government. The crop formerly ranked sixth or seventh in importance, according to Sadettin. He said, "We don't smoke opium in Turkey, and there are very strict regulations controlling it." The money paid by the U.S. government to Turkish farmers for not growing the crop was not sufficient to cover their loss of income, according to Sadettin.

In Turkey there are 67 counties, and Sadettin works as a county agent in a county with 360,000 people. He attends one of only six agricultural high schools in Turkey and attended three years of college, also specializing in agriculture. In the office where he works, in the city of Mugla, there are seven agricultural technicians, two home economists and two secretaries.

His work day begins at 7:00 a.m. and goes until 5:00 p.m., with 1½ hours for lunch. He explained, "Three or four of the ag technicians go out to the villages and work with the people. Sometimes they go at the request of the people who say, 'Please come and tell me what is wrong with my crops.' We made suggestions about what they should do."

Three men stay in the office and help people who come in with problems. "As many as 100 people may come in a day - some have flower problems, some have vegetable problems," Sadettin says.

Obviously, part of his work is educational, and he says, "We do demonstrations to show new methods." They also hold meetings, but he said, "Demonstrations are very popular."

Sadettin said, "In America the farmers are very good - many have finished high school, and some have finished college. In Turkey, a farmer may only have finished five or six grades. They don't read newspaper and watch television and get up-to-date information."

One of Sadettin's interests is assisting in the terracing of farms. He said they take pictures of the land from airplanes, study the water drainage and then advise how the terracing should be completed.

The average Turkish farm, according to Sadettin, may be five to ten acres. These farmers grow mostly vegetables which they then market at one-day farmers' markets in larger towns and cities. Fifteen to 25 acres would be a large farm in Turkey, according to Sadettin. But, he added, farmers in the villages almost all own their

own tractors. Most farmers live in villages and travel to their land.

Sadettin has had the opportunity to work at Meadowbrook market with the Alecxih family and he says Turkish markets are similar. At their markets there is sometimes haggling over prices, but basically he said he prefers to set a fixed price.

Sadettin grew up on a 25 acre farm where his father raises apples and peas. Up until ten years ago, he also raised tobacco which Sadettin helped to grow and harvest.

Sadettin owns fifty acres of his own, on which he grows olives, pistachio nuts and almonds. The work, he says, is done mostly on weekends and holidays. He also owns 60 beehives and said honey "brings very good money" in Turkey.

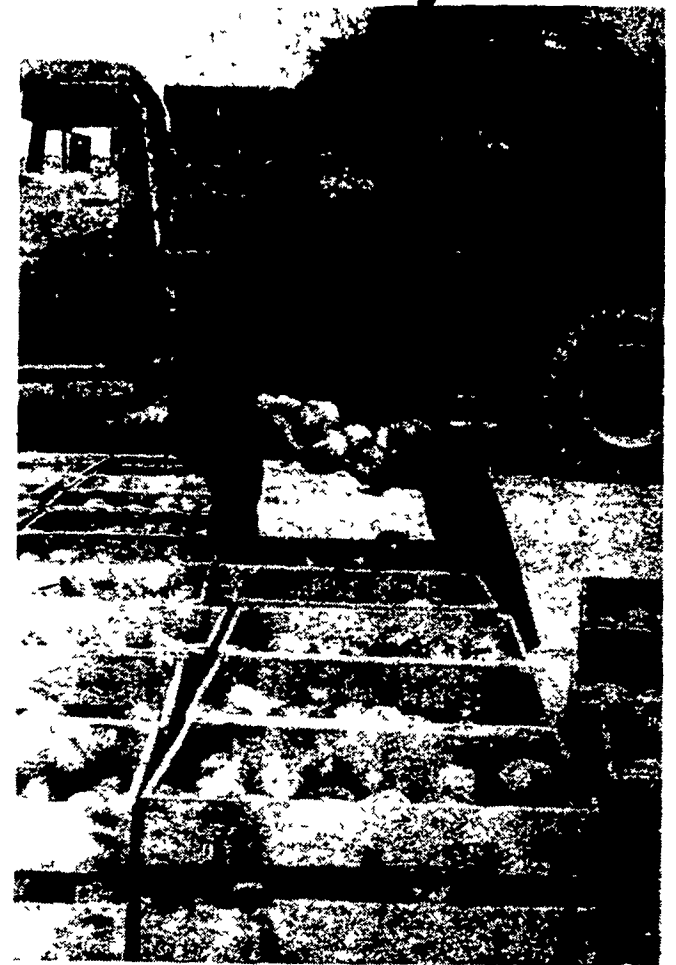
A college education in Turkey is free to students, and each young man must serve two years in the military, without pay and without leave except for emergency. Sadettin has served his two years and he has an older brother, 27, who is currently in the service. Sadettin also has a 31-year-old sister who is married with two children and who is educated as a teacher.

Sadettin said that today women in Turkey are equal with men, although 15 years ago this was not the case. Now they are free to attend college, work outside the home and participate as equals. Dress is just the same in Turkey as in the country, but there are national costumes which villagers might don for special national holidays.

As far as marriage, most Turkish men do not marry until they are between 27 and 30, Sadettin says, because they want to complete college, the military and work for a few years. By contrast, the Turkish women marry younger, usually in their early twenties. Sadettin said that young people date at about age 17, but even now he often asks permission of a young girl's parents before they go out to eat or to the movies. He also said that when he meets the girl he wants to marry, he will ask his parents if they approve, but he said, "they will like whomever I choose." If both parents disapproved, most likely there would be no marriage.

Many Turkish young people live with their parents after marriage, and Sadettin says he probably, as the youngest, will live with his parents. But he doesn't consider it a disadvantage, because he said, "I like my parents."

His father is sixty years old and earns about \$2,000 yearly which Sadettin says is "good money." A professional, like himself, earns about \$200 monthly, but Sadettin explains that he can live for about two days on \$1.00. He said things in the United States are "very expensive," citing his expense of buying film and sending lots of letters to Turkey at 26 cents a letter. He added that



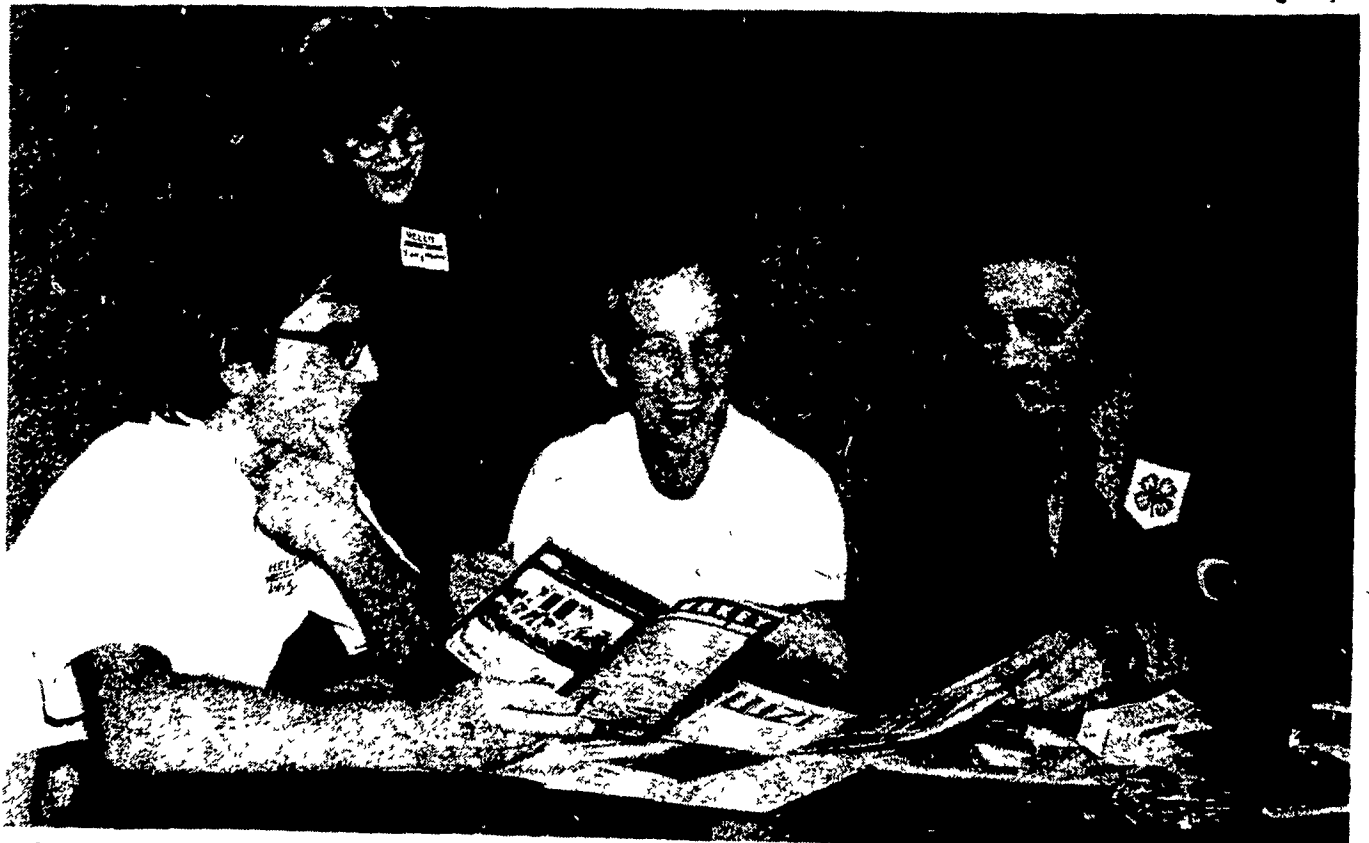
Working with fruit is something Sadettin knows about having been raised on a fruit farm in Turkey.

he thinks Americans are "rich," but conceded that it costs a lot more to live here than in Turkey. Items like cars are very expensive in Turkey, and the VW beetle which he owns cost him \$10,000. Clothes and other necessities are much cheaper in Turkey, and milk is "very cheap."

Although Sadettin is Moslem and therefore cannot eat pork, he says the food here has been "no problem for me. I like everything." He also said, "I am a good cook." One thing the Turkish people eat a lot more of than we do is soup. He said something like chicken rice soup is usual, and they change soups simple by varying the ingredients.

For breakfast he typically eats some kind of fruit such as apples, oranges or grapefruit and honey and drinks hot

[Continued on Page 44]



Sadettin Unsal, right talks candidly about his native Turkey with David Lapp, Jody and John

Hinkle at a gathering in the IFYE's honor.