

Farm wives deal with the high price of coffee

By JOANNE SPAHR

LANCASTER, Pa. - "On these cold days you just have to have a hot drink," lamented one forlorn farm wife who is feeling the "coffee crunch" in both her wallet and on her taste buds. It seems that everything has to come at once - sub-zero weather, low supplies of natural gas and oil, and now high prices on one of this country's favorite habitual drinks.

So, midst all the furor that has come from this commodity price increase how are Lancaster Farming's readers dealing with the situation?

For the most part, farm women are cutting down by a few cups over the course of the week, but most admit that they still have coffee on hand and haven't really had to rearrange their drinking habits.

Mrs. David Rohde, Glen Rock R1, is a typical example. She admits, perhaps a little sheepishly, that she hasn't had to cut down as yet because she's the only one in her family who drinks coffee. She does feel, however, that "prices are getting ridiculous" and that consumers really should do something about the situation.

Questioned if she thought boycotting is the answer, she said she thought that plan of action "wouldn't hurt" if the prices got too high.

Other farm wives have actually begun to substitute different hot drinks in the place of coffee. One such person is Bernice Miller, Lititz R2.

"I'm thoroughly disgusted with these high prices because I'm a coffee drinker," she said adamantly, but with a laugh, "And, I'm trying to slow down." To do this, she and her family have gone to drinking more tea and hot chocolate to warm up when they come in from doing the farm work. Although she isn't certain why the price of coffee went up, she does say that coffee prices were already high before stories of the frost problems in the coffee producing countries were publicized. So, she's a little suspicious of the stories and explanations she hears.

Mrs. Lois Brubaker, Manheim R2, offers another side of the coin. She's one woman who said that prices would have to go really high before she would boycott or start substituting other drinks for her pound of coffee she goes through every other month.

"I think it's unfair to boycott," she said, explaining that she distinctly remembers the effects of a meat boycott several years ago.

"Once you've been there you remember it," she pointed out. If the coffee producing countries follow the pattern of the United States, she noted, they might have a good year once every 10 years, and she said she hates to run it for them.

Although few consumers share Mrs. Brubaker's sentiments, sales of the commodity have, for the most part, stayed at the same level as with the pre-escalated prices and in some cases have actually increased.

Weis Markets, Lititz, reported that sales of the three pound cans of coffee have risen in the past weeks because housewives are stockpiling the product for fear of spiraling costs. Weis also noted, however, that some of the items such as the instant coffees have been fluctuating downward as well. The Pantry Pride chain as well as Acme Markets reported no change in sales because of price.

"Once you're hooked, you're hooked, no matter what the price," commented one store manager.

Farm dairy stores are also reporting little to no change in the sale of this product. Both Green Acre Dairy Farm Market, Lititz, and Elm Tree Acres Dairy, Mount Joy R2, report few, if any, fluctuations in sales.

Prices are a different story - they keep changing upward at a steady rate, and, from the comments of grocers, they are not likely to stop at their present levels. One well-versed chain store food manager who preferred to remain unnamed said prices could go as high as \$10 for three pounds of coffee, although he added quickly that he had no way of knowing exactly how high the prices would go. Actually, the economics of supply and demand are too variable to predict prices with any degree of certainty. One thing is for certain, they aren't expected to stop at their present levels which range anywhere from \$2.29-\$2.99 for a one pound can depending on the store shopped in, the specials that store has running, and the brand of coffee purchased.

What are the alternatives? According to the store managers, the best thing to do is temper drinking habits to alternate between coffee and tea or some other coffee substitute. For instance, coffee can be drunk for breakfast, and tea at the evening meal or vice versa. The reasoning behind alternating rather than totally boycotting coffee and turning to entirely tea is that in a few months the tea prices will rise substantially if consumers create a high enough demand. As in most cases, moderation is probably the best policy, according to store managers.

Mrs. Kenneth Kreider, Strasburg R1, has another answer. Rather than bothering with the hassle of finding a substitute, she prefers to go "cold turkey" when the need arises. "I'd just as soon do without," she says. She admits to really enjoying coffee but also to the fact that she's trying to cut down because she thinks it's better for her health. If she really ever needs a substitute, she says she will drink hot water with about one tablespoon of lemon juice in it to quench her desire for something hot. She says this satisfies her.

Mrs. Luke Wise, Lebanon R2, and the American Dairy Association have another suggestion. The day Lancaster Farming contacted Mrs. Wise for her comments on the coffee situation, she had discovered that she was down to the last of the coffee in the can and was faced with the decision of what to do.



Mary Brubaker (left) of 345 Church St. Landisville, and Mrs. Ralph Todd, Manheim R1 and her two-year-old son Denis, ponder over the price of coffee. Mrs. Brubaker says she refuses to buy

coffee except for holidays if she's entertaining guests who she knows drink this beverage - otherwise she substitutes other drinks in its place.

"I told my husband we may have to start drinking tea if the price is too high," she said. Coming from a dairy farm she has another substitute in mind as well as

tea - milk. The American Dairy Association had the same idea in a new ad which states, "Take a coffee break, drink milk," which suggests to people to take a break

from the high prices of coffee and substitute milk. Whether the public will take the advice or not remains an uncertainty as does the future

course of the price of coffee. As always in the supply and demand world of food commodities, only time will tell the outcome of the whole situation.

Vote set on payment provisions of N.Y. - N.J. milk order

WASHINGTON, D. C. - The U.S. Department of Agriculture will hold a milk referendum to determine if affected dairy farmers want to change the timing of certain payments requested of handlers under the New York-New Jersey federal milk marketing order.

H. L. Forest, dairy official in USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, (AMS) said the order sets minimum prices, based on supply and demand, that milk dealers or handlers must pay for milk purchased from individual dairy farmers or from dairy farmer cooperatives.

One of the changes, Forest said, would make the 19th day of the month the date by which cooperatives must

receive class price payments from handlers for milk

delivered during the previous month. Presently, most processors buying milk from cooperatives must pay for it by the 15th of the month. Processors who buy milk from individual producers, however, do not have to pay for it until the 25th of the month. The proposed change would

reduce the present 10-day difference in payment dates to six days. This would reduce somewhat the incentive that processors now have to buy milk from individual dairy farmers instead of from cooperatives, according to Forest.

Another amendment would change the dates for making payments to and from the producer-settlement fund, from the 18th and 20th, respectively, to the 21st and 22nd of the month.

The proposed changes are based on evidence from a

public hearing in New York City on September 16.

Farmers who supplied milk to the New York-New Jersey milk marketing area in August 1976 will be eligible to vote. Two-thirds of those voting must approve the amended order before it can become effective.

Details of the referendum will be announced by the referendum agent, Norman K. Garber, 205 East 42nd St., New York, N.Y. 10017, or may be obtained from the Dairy Division, AMS, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Corn, tobacco and soybeans up from last year

HARRISBURG, Pa. - Pennsylvania's farmers produced more grain corn, tobacco, and soybeans in 1976 than a year earlier, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service. However, the production figures based on acreage, utilization, and production showed that less corn silage and hay were produced during the year.

Seventeen per cent production increases were found in grain corn and tobacco. Farmers produced 103,500,000 bushels of grain corn and 23,125,000 pounds of tobacco during the past year. Soybeans produced were 1,218,000 bushels, an in-

crease of one per cent over the 1975 production figures.

The 6,090,000 tons of corn silage produced by Pennsylvania farmers was a decrease of one per cent from 1975 levels. All hay produced in the Commonwealth added up to 4,325,000 tons, a drop of two per cent from the previous year.

U.S. figures showed production of grain corn and corn silage up, but tobacco, soybeans and hay production all decreasing.

The 6.2 million bushels of grain corn produced in the U.S. amounted to an increase of seven per cent over the 1975 grain corn

production. Corn silage produced was 116 million tons, up three per cent from the previous year.

Soybean production in the U.S. dropped 18 per cent to 1,255 million bushels in 1976. Hay production decreased nine per cent to 121 million tons and tobacco production was down three per cent to 2,119 million pounds.



The population of the United States in the year 1900 was 75,994,575!



Whole Grained

A whole grained cereal is one that contains the three principal parts of the cereal - the inner germ, the endosperm, and the outer bran layer. Whole wheat and oats are examples of whole grained cereals.

Pizza

Pizza prepared properly - with lots of meat or sausages, cheese and tomatoes - has good food value. It is a good source of protein, calcium, and iron, plus Vitamins A, C, and B complex.