

# Paraguayan IFYE compares farm life in the Americas

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Every day is a new experience for Luis Ketterman. The twenty-year-old youth lives on a 500-acre farm in the South American country of Paraguay, and is spending five months in the United States learning about farming in this country as an exchangee in the International 4-H Youth Exchange program.

Luis is observing closely all that he sees because he wants to return to Paraguay and share some of this knowledge with farmers there.

He works for the Cooperative Colonias Unidas, the second largest cooperative in the country. It is a purchasing, marketing, and supply cooperative, and Luis works in the office with exports as one of his main responsibilities.

Major crops in Paraguay are wheat and soybeans. While most of the soybeans are exported, the wheat is used domestically. Another important crop for Paraguay is tung oil, which Luis' cooperative processes and exports. Tung oil is used for furniture finishing.

"A little corn is grown there, but we don't have too much," Luis states. "We also grow some tea

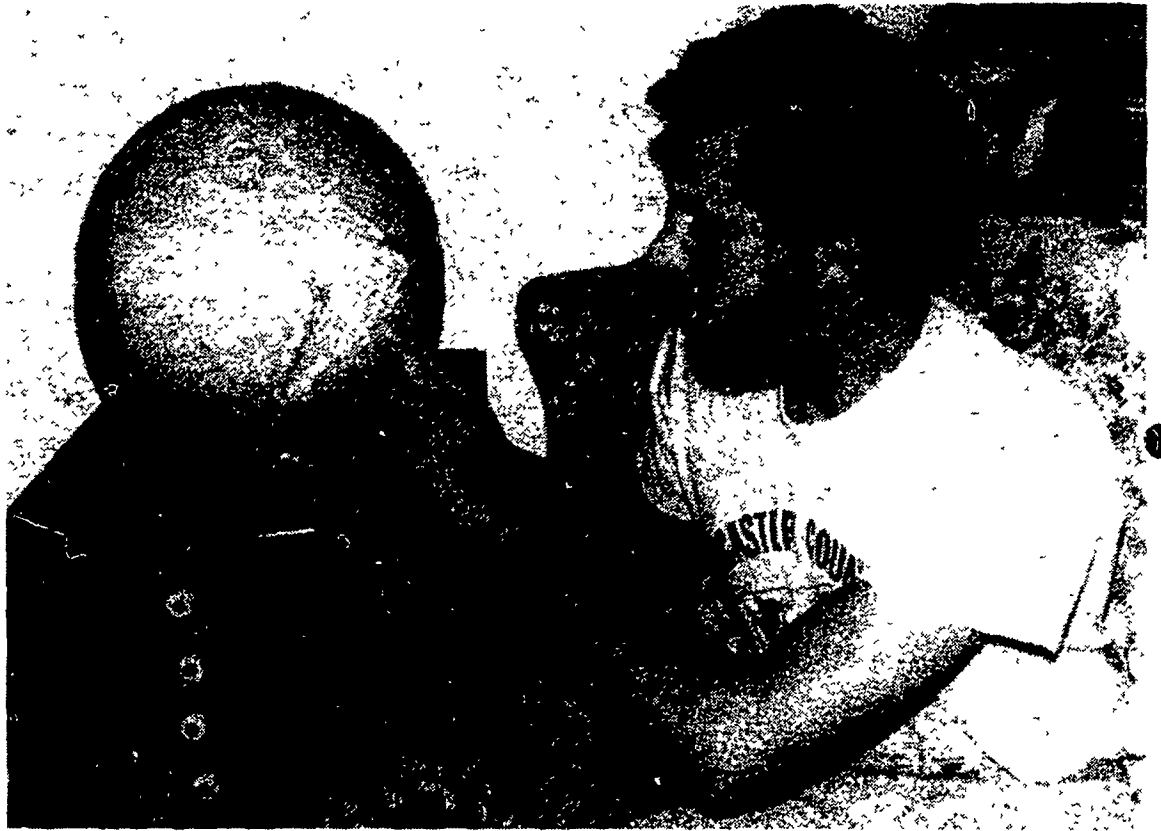
and the cooperative processes that." Another feature of the cooperative is a large supermarket, similar to markets in this country.

It was through the cooperative that he had the opportunity to travel as an IFYE exchangee. He explains it this way, "The 4-C clubs (similar to 4-H) are sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture. The cooperative and the agriculture ministry work together. In the cooperative, we have a section which is called the farm education section. They sent me to one IFYE program to see if I was interested."

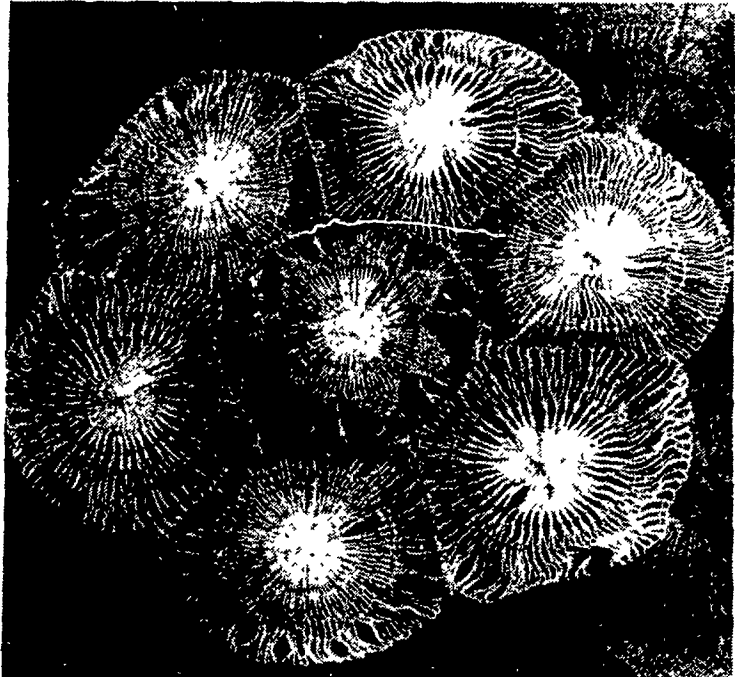
Obviously he was, and when he returns he will work with the farm education part of the cooperative, teaching farmers ideas which may make their agriculture better.

Luis keeps a daily journal of his activities here, and is taking many pictures, and he also wants to share what he has experienced with members of the 4-C clubs.

He finds agriculture in this country somewhat different, noting, "You have a lot more machinery and use more chemicals than we do. Where I live we have a lot of farmers. It is good fertile land, and we live about two



Twenty-year old Luis Ketterman, an IFYE exchangee from Paraguay, points out his South American homeland on a globe. Ketterman is at home there on a 500-acre wheat and soybean farm.



This fine handwork was created by Paraguayan Indians and is called Nanduti. Luis called it "typical Indian" work, inspired by looking at spider webs.



Driving a tractor came naturally for Luis, since he is accustomed to helping with field work on his father's Paraguayan farm. This is one job he can assist with on the farms he is visiting as part of the International 4-H Youth Exchange program.

miles from a river, near Argentina. We don't use much fertilizer but we do use insecticides."

Luis pointed out that most equipment must be imported which makes it very expensive. It comes from the United States, Europe or Brazil.

He said most farmers, including his family, use harvesting equipment rented from the cooperative but own their own tractors.

One of the things which made a big impression on Luis, was the care one host father in Kansas took of his equipment. "Before he started to work he put oil in and checked it over. When he was finished he cleaned it up. He took very good care of his machinery. I think this is something I can tell farmers in Paraguay," he said.

Luis is quite busy when he is home in Paraguay. He works full time at the cooperative and attends college in business in the evenings. On weekends, he works on his parents' farm, where he lives.

The Ketterman family farms soybeans and wheat, and Luis says their 500-acre farm is medium sized for the part of Paraguay.

The family also raises about 20 beef cows, 10 pigs and 60 chickens for their personal use. Most farmers, he says, also have large gardens to supply fresh vegetables for the family.

The climate in Paraguay is tropical, and Luis says it averages about 90 degrees in the summer, getting as low as 30 degrees in the winter. "It freezes a little in the morning in the winter," he states.

But he laments, "I have never seen snow." It is pointed out to him that since he is leaving in October, he probably will not have that wish granted while staying in Pennsylvania.

It is currently winter in Paraguay, and Luis notes, "I will have three summers this year. I had summer at home, now I have summer in the United States and I will have summer when I return."

Luis says his family has always been farmers. They are part of a large group of German people



Cutting tobacco was a "totally new" experience for this international visitor. Here Luis Ketterman stands in a full tobacco barn, proud of the work he contributed to the harvest at the Elvin Brenneman family farm near Mount Joy.

*Homestead*  
*Notes*

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