

Heifers Fly From Farm

HARRISBURG — The old ad encourages people to fly the friendly skies. Recently these skies have turned villainous and more and more people are choosing to

stay home. One group of beings that isn't intimidated by the state of world affairs and may actually be aiding in global peace, took off from

Harrisburg International Airport this week. This group, 90 bred heifers, flew from the airport crated like eggs, bound for Jordan.

Almost half of the airborne heifers were donations from farmers participating in the buyout program; this is one of the first organized exportations of such animals. However, plans for this shipment were in the works prior to the Dairy Termination Plan.

Over two years ago Jordan contacted Heifer Project International for a shipment of 200 Holstein heifers. The first phase was completed in the fall of 1985, with the balance being filled earlier this week.

HPI, a non-profit organization, relies on heifer donations from farmers to fill these requests. Projects are not initiated by HPI, rather they respond to appeals from grassroots farm groups.

The recent planeload received an unexpected boost from the DTP. "Many farmers have spent years developing improved cattle and rather than have them slaughtered, they chose to donate them," explained John Dieterly, director of HPI's Mid-Atlantic Regional Office in Maryland.

A local program participant, J. Clayton Charles, Lancaster, explains, "Rather than see the animal slaughtered, I prefer to have them exported where they can do some good for someone else." Relating the adage, "Give someone a fish and you help him for a meal. Teach him to fish and you help him for a lifetime," Charles noted he will probably donate again next year prior to the dispersal of his herd.

Lancaster County farms were scheduled to send 13 heifers on this flight, joining approximately 20 heifers from the remainder of Pennsylvania.

The Clare Oberholtzer and Albert Breneman Farms, previous donors from the county, were donating to this trip also. Both families agreed they felt it was an opportunity to help someone else.

Oberholtzer compared this program to FFA's heifer chain which was responsible for providing him with a heifer during his FFA years. HPI, like the FFA program, requires new heifer owners to give the first born female to someone else in need of an animal.

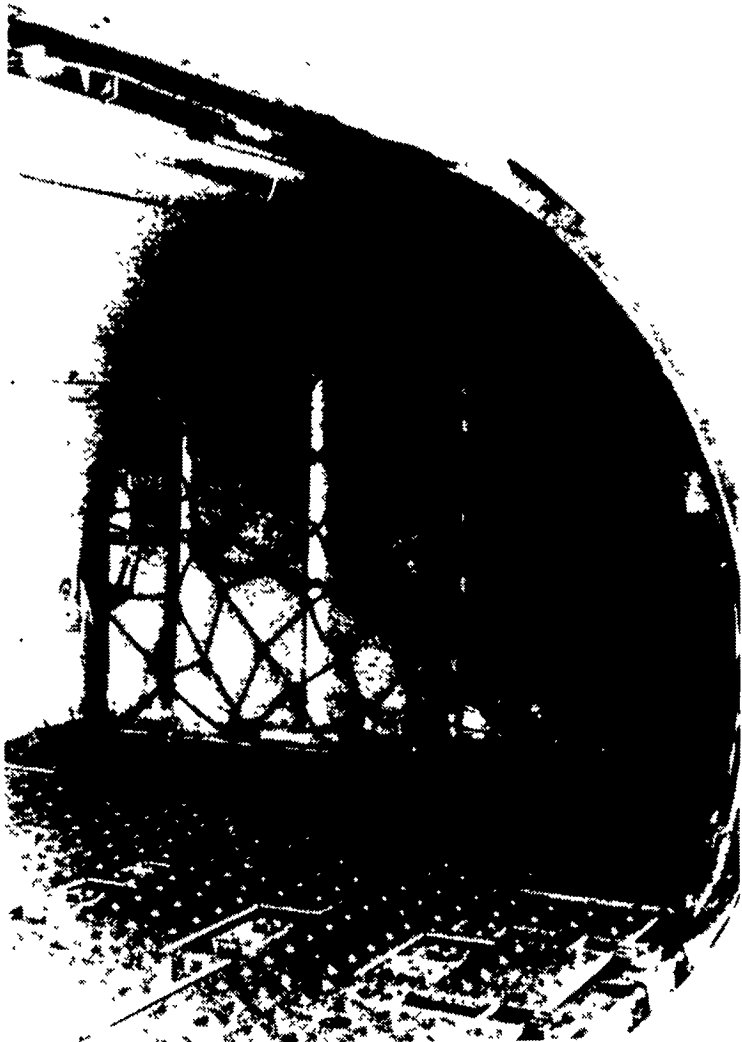
Prior to exporting the animals, they had to be centralized and checked over. For this trip they were congregated at the Pennsylvania Holstein Association's

barn outside of Middletown.

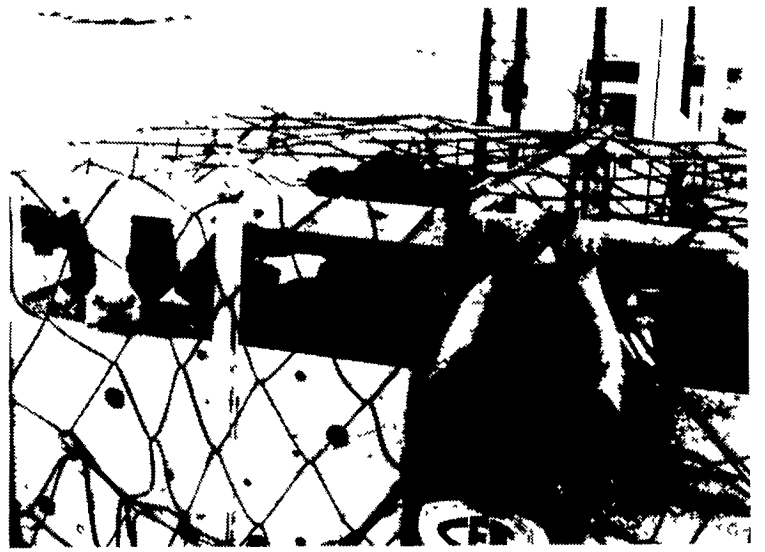
This facility was chosen for its central location for the seven states sending animals, and, "It has one of the finest quarantine and export preparation facilities anywhere," Dieterly noted. The Holstein Association has been very supportive of our efforts, he added.

Bill Nichol, executive secretary of the association, spoke at Sunday's dedication for the animals. He offered praise for HPI and noted that this organization assisted in opening the export market to Turkey by helping to establish its dairy industry through these projects.

At the PHA barn the animals were sorted, weighed and inspected by Dr. Rossow, a federal veterinarian. Before any animal can be exported, certain health requirements and mountains of red tape must be cleared, Dieterly



The heifers loaded in the crates and the plane awaits takeoff.

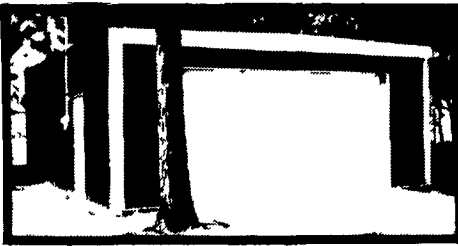


Netting was secured to strengthen the sides of the one use only crates.

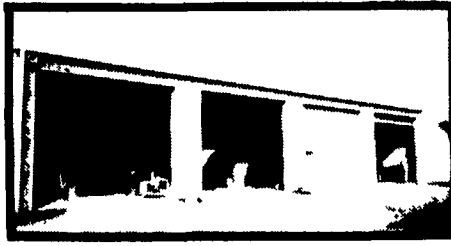
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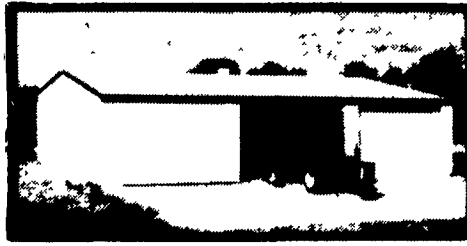
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