

# FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

(Continued from Page A10)

appeared a profile of a South American man with his wife and two children trudging up a mountainside with their burro to pick those coffee beans. How quaint.

But all of a sudden it hit me that no matter how high the price of coffee goes, that poor man with the little donkey will NEVER have a decent bed for any of his family.

"But," people might say, "that's the way it's supposed to be. It's always been that way. Why should we feel guilty about that?"

We dairy farmers are in much the same position.

What would be so wrong if these poor people were allowed to share in the tremendous profits enjoyed by the "middle man"? Don't try to tell me that he's riding around on a donkey! It would be so easy for each coffee company to add one penny to the price of the pound of coffee and pass it back to the "farmer." We wouldn't even notice the penny. (Especially me because I don't drink coffee.) Can't you imagine what a huge difference that penny would make in his lifestyle and even his health and that of his children? He might in time even be able to buy some-

thing made in the USA. From what we read, it would probably be Coca-Cola or jeans, but nevertheless he would be a consumer.

Can't you also imagine the panic if he decided he wouldn't climb that mountain for that much money? The whole country wouldn't show up at work and if they did, they wouldn't be able to do anything.

It all translates back to the farmers in America to a lesser degree. We are all in the same situation. We will get only whatever we demand. It is so extremely hard to wrest another penny from the system. The consumer wouldn't care. One cent a gallon wouldn't even be noticed, and it would add a tremendous amount of money to each farmer's cash flow, which I suspect would go immediately to the nearest machinery dealer. There doesn't seem to be any way to get that penny from the consumer to the farmer. Maybe because "that's the way it's supposed to be." This is supposed to be a commodity column, but I get so agitated.

The Dairy Market News, which is published weekly by the United States Department of Agriculture, has some VERY encouraging

news. The decline in cow numbers more than offset the gain in production per cow, so we are finally in a strong bargaining position. Through the first six months of 1989, the number of dairy cows sent to slaughter has increased, and milk supplies have tightened dramatically.

During the week of July 17-21, the CCC purchased 422,447 pounds of print butter and cancelled 910,142 pounds of bulk butter. There was no cheese or nonfat dry milk activity. The milk equivalent, on a milkfat basis, of these purchases is a negative 10.1 million pounds, the lowest in at least eight years. During the same week, 182,904 pounds of government owned butter was sold back to the trade and butter cancellations exceeded butter offerings.

This is the second consecutive week that the CCC had no cheese activity. In the East, surplus milk supplies are limited. Spot cheese prices in the Midwest have reached "name your price" for barrels, with five cents offered to more than one seller. Current projections at some firms show inventories will be at minimal or below levels for some time to come. In the West, competition for milk is increasing. There has been no cheese activity with the CCC in more than three weeks.

Fluid milk supplies in the South

are tight with large volumes being imported from the Northern areas. Declines in Southern milk production, lower fat tests, and strong cream demand are all contributing to the tight cream supply. The milk situation in Wisconsin was described as "chaotic" because of the shortage of milk. In the West, plants are aggressively looking for milk supplies. Large quantities of nonfat dry milk have been committed to the export market.

Growth in milk per cow has slipped. Retail dairy prices probably will rise five to six percent this year, the largest since 1981. June 1 commercial stock of American cheese remained below the low levels of a year earlier, and will be a price boosting influence in coming months. International prices could strengthen, particularly for nonfat dry milk.

Thus far, commercial exports have been considerably higher than a year earlier, while imports have slipped.

It looks as though we are finally, after all these tough years, in a good bargaining position. We have to remember Juan Valdez, the man with the donkey, and be extremely strong in our negotiations. If we wait for the government to again set the price that the handlers must pay us, we will lose our chance. We are like children who have grown old enough to leave home and have to learn to take care of ourselves.

**UNLESS ALL OF US GET A GOOD CONTRACT, NONE OF US CAN!**

**Kay Zeosky**  
National Dairy Chairperson  
Turin, N.Y.

## Pork Delegates To Be Elected

**KUTZTOWN (Berks Co.)**—The election of pork producer delegate candidates for the 1990 National Pork Producers Delegate Body will take place at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, August 17, in conjunction with a Board of Directors meeting of the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council at the Region VI office of the Pa. Department of Agriculture in Summerdale, PA. All Pennsylvania pork producers

are invited to attend. Any producer, who is a resident of the state and has paid all assessments due under the National 100 percent checkoff may be considered as a delegate candidate and participate in voting. Nominations will be taken from the floor at the time of election. For more information contact the Pa. Pork Producers Council, R.D.#2 Box 219, Kutztown, PA 19530, phone 215/285-6519.

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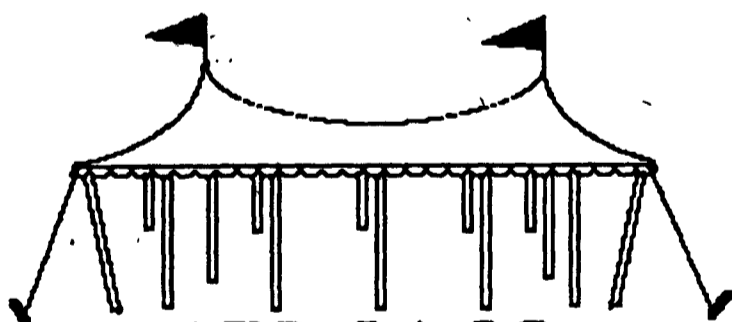
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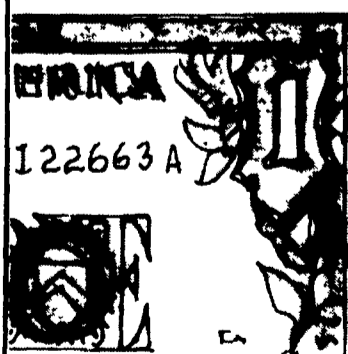
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