

**On Being a Farm Wife**  
(and other hazards)  
**Joyce Bupp**

of my buddies.

Then they stopped at me. "Go away. Bug off. What's your problem?" I wanted to moo to them. But you can't tell a human anything, so I just swished my tail and shook my head in irritation. After they pointed and gestured and eyeballed me for a while, they left. Good riddance. Hoped I'd seen the last of this pestiness.

But, nooooooo way. A couple of weeks later, one of my humans comes and slips this rope thing around my head. Tugs on it 'til I follow him to the end of the barn. And then — get this! — he ties me there. All by myself. The indignity. At least there was a pile of silage there that I could munch on. After while, they took the rope thing off and sent me back to the herd. Go figure.

And did the same senseless thing again the next day. And the next. Let me tell you, this was getting old. But I didn't kick or butt or try to run away, or anything like that. See, I try to get along.

Why me?

Why have they singled out me for all this attention?

After all, I'm just one of the herd members in the milking string. I try to do my job. Stay healthy. Eat lots. Milk well. Not get tangled in any fences or bruise my udder or shove the other girls around.

Of course, even though I am fair size for my age — I'm only two — some of the older cows are lots bigger and heavier and can push their weight around a lot bet-

ter than me, anyway. I learned my place in the bovine pecking order early on, believe me. Some of those old mamas can ram you pretty hard if they want your spot at the feed bunk.

So there I am, standing with the rest of the herd in the barn sometime ago, just munching away on my cud and waiting for my turn to be milked so I could be more comfortable and lay down to rest. And a couple of strange humans come walking down through the barn, pointing at and talking about some

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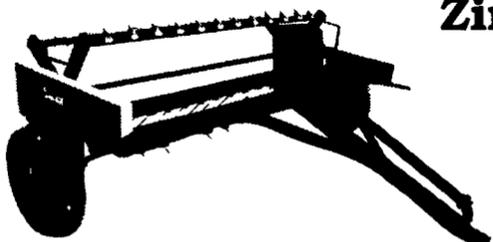
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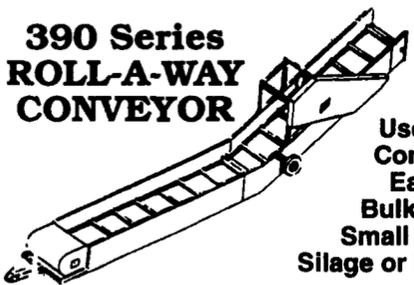
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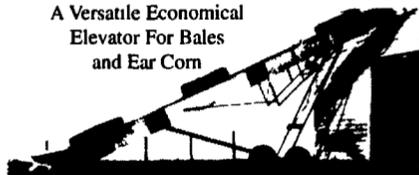
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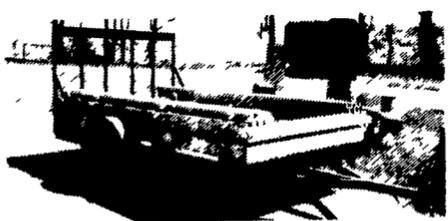


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