



(Continued from Page A10)

cient to being exploited. If large farms hire Mexicans with green cards in order to profit, this crosses the line from efficiency to exploitation. Efficiency is always rammed down the farmer's throat, but never seems to apply to the rest of the food chain. In 1980, dairy farmers received 52% of the consumer dollar now that figure is down to 30% or less. I suspect that processors have also become more efficient, leading to huge profits, which

they use to consolidate their power over us.

The second one-sided story is the over production line. Our prices are low because milk production increased faster than the increase in dairy product use last year, right? Fact: the United States has not produced enough milk to meet domestic demand for several years. Has anyone said that this 1.6 billion-pound "surplus" last year was less than the INCREASE in dairy imports

for fiscal year 1999? We are told that the world price is under \$10 per hundred weight. We imported \$1.57 billion worth of dairy products in fiscal year 1999 or about 16 billion pound milk equivalent. This represents at least a 7 billion-pound milk equivalent trade deficit in dairy products. Talking heads can talk until they are blue in the face

about expanding export markets but the fact remains that imports are out pacing exports at an alarming rate.

We hear a lot about "Market Forces" as if these are uncontrollable, much like the weather. Hogwash. "Free Trade" is allowing foreign dairy products to flood our markets and hold down producer prices, causing untold suffering for farm families. This

is abhorrent, unjust and immoral. WE MUST DEMAND A TRADE BALANCE FOR DAIRY PRODUCTS. Some will howl protectionism. Is there anything wrong with protecting America's ability to produce it's own food? I do not consider the destruction of America's farms to be "Progress."

Gerald Carlin Meshoppen

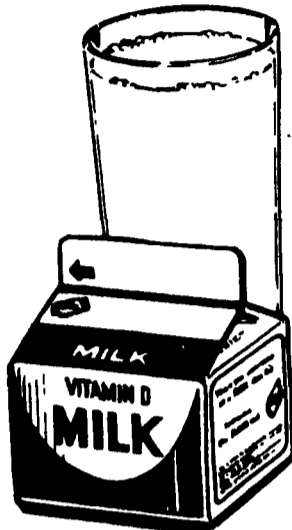
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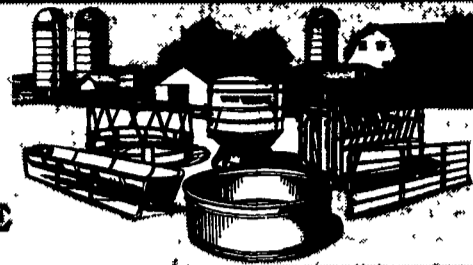
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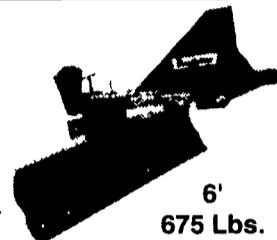
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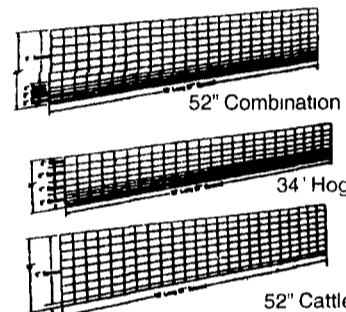


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