

REGIONAL NEWS

ONTARIO HYDRO'S DILEMMA

Ontario Hydro, the Canadian Utility planning on constructing a nuclear or coal fired plant across the St. Lawrence River from Ogdensburg and Waddington, has announced it has overestimated its load demands for the 1980's by as much as 40 per cent. Hydro, which is owned by the Ontario Government, would have to receive a change in its charter in order to begin exporting power instead of producing it for its own customers. The debate in Canada centers around the advisability of expensive construction of new plants, with the resulting social and environmental costs, purely for use outside of Canada. There is also concern about possible oil or nuclear fuel shortages in the near future and a resulting desire by Canadians to conserve resources that may be needed later.

Of Ontario Hydro's current surplus, Clifford Spieler, spokesperson for PASNY, has said it is overpriced. Officials at Consolidated Edison, one of 23 utilities offered power by Ontario Hydro, have concluded they can produce power for no more than the cost of the Canadian power, when the cost of transporting the voltage is included.

It is likely that the search for markets for its surplus power by the Canadian utility will serve to increase opposition to its program of new construction. Looking to the United States for power demand may lead the utility to discover that it has not cornered the market on overestimating future power needs. American utilities have made the same error.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN FISH SAFE TO EAT, D.E.C. SAYS

Dr. Kenneth Bogdan of New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation's Division of Pure Waters has compiled, for the first time, all available information on the occurrence of trace metals and organic compounds in Lake Champlain's waters. The recently completed comprehensive technical report indicates that there is no significant metal or toxic substance contamination in the fisheries of the Lake and its surrounding basin.

The report is one contribution by the State to the New England River Basin Commission's Lake Champlain Basin Study. Environmental Conservation Commissioner Robert F. Flacke said he was encouraged by the report's finding. "There should be little concern by anglers about toxic substances in Lake Champlain fish," Flacke said. He also reported that New York and Vermont will continue, on schedule, with the cooperative salmonid restoration program. New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation will continue to monitor fish from Lake Champlain, especially in waters adjacent to urban areas.

FOLKLIFE CONFERENCE SCHEDULED

A three-day conference entitled, *Getting the 'Lore' Back to 'the Folk'*, sponsored by the Center for the Study of North Country Folklife, will be held on the State University of New York, Canton campus, on the weekend of June 14-17, 1979, with a program of topics about the application of academic folk cultural study to the communities in which research is done. Philosophical and ethical issues, as well as academic and pragmatic questions, will be discussed about such concerns as fieldwork, archives, publications, media presentations, public performances, and sponsored research.

Panelists leading discussion sessions will include Bruce R. Buckley, Cooperstown Graduate Programs; Edward Ives, Northeast Folklore and Oral History Archives, University of Maine; Alan Jabbour, American Folklife Center; Susan Kalcik, Smithsonian Institution; Charles and Nancy Martin-Perdue, University of Virginia, and others.

Anyone interested in applied folklore -- academic and amateur folklorists, public school teachers, librarians, historical society and museum staffs, town and county historians, archivists, neighborhood associations, 4-H Club and Boy Scout and Girl Scout leaders, writers, etc. -- are invited to attend.

Specific written suggestions for issues and problems to be discussed by the conference will be welcome. A post-conference report with edited transcriptions of discussions will be published later and available to the public. The conference is subsidized by a grant from the New York Council on the Humanities.

For advance registration and additional information, please write:
Applied Folklore Conference
Center for the Study of North Country Folklife
SUNY A.T.C.
Canton, New York 13617



NEW YORK RECYCLERS GET \$1 MILLION

With the help of research compiled by The Institute for Local Self-Reliance's waste utilization staff, recycling advocates in New York shook loose \$1 million in state funds for low-technology source separation recycling.

The money came from a contingency fund of a bond act that had been designated only for high technology solid waste treatment. When New York recyclers realized they were completely left out, they appealed directly to then Environmental Conservation Commissioner Peter Berle. They quoted statistics prepared by the Institute on the economics of recycling based on reports from private, municipal and community-based recyclers. They also cited a comprehensive recycling plan prepared for the state of Oregon. As a result, \$1 million is now available for low-technology recycling projects in New York.

Making the funds available, however, and getting them out into communities seem to be two different things. Recyclers complain that there are restrictions on low-tech projects that do not apply to high-tech proposals. No funds can be spent on low-tech buildings, for example, while almost all the high-tech money is being used for this purpose. Also, a low-tech system must be in place and working successfully with guaranteed markets before state help is provided.

With these requirements, it is no wonder that so far only \$2900 has been allocated for one low-tech project, even though the \$1 million fund was created almost a year ago. And even if all the money is spent, it pales by comparison to the total funds going to high-tech systems: \$175 million. With that kind of spending bias, recyclers say they are fighting a losing battle. 'It looks as though all of the high grade paper from our government offices will be burned in a forthcoming refuse-derived-fuel plant in the Albany area,' said Jean Smalldon, a member of the Ulster County Environmental Management Council. 'Recyclers there have already noticed a lessening of interest in recycling, because people feel the plant will solve the waste problems.'

Ms. Smalldon says that she and Environmental Management Council members from several other counties are pressing state officials to follow through on what has been promised for source separation and recycling. For more information, write to Ms. Smalldon at: Ulster County Environmental Management Council, County Office Building, Kingston, N.Y. 12401.

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While recyclers in New York must fight for every public dollar they can get, garbage-to-energy plants, also called resource recovery plants, continue to receive huge public subsidies. Our conservative estimate puts public support for resource recovery to date at a half billion dollars. This year, the Department of Energy will provide \$300 million in loan guarantees and price supports for commercialization of resource recovery facilities.

But even this amount of money hasn't made the resource recovery industry work. A plant in Saugus, Massachusetts, for example, has been plagued with rising operating costs, technical bugs and difficulties buying garbage and selling energy since it opened three years ago. When residents near the plant demanded last summer that it be closed because of soot pollution, the company president was quoted in the *Wall Street Journal* as saying, 'Close it down! Do us a favor! I'll lead the parade.' And government and industry spokespeople cite this plant as the only successful resource recovery operation.

The *Journal* article (November 16, 1978) went on to describe the 'economics of resource recovery' as 'the heart of the slowdown' in the industry. This 'slowdown' has driven out about thirty of the fifty companies originally involved in resource recovery. Cities and regions considering one of these plants, it seems clear, are taking a big risk.

(Reprinted from *Self-Reliance*, published bi-monthly by the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 1717 18th Street NW, Washington DC 20009. Subscriptions: Individuals, \$8; Institutions, \$15.)

DECEMBER CONFERENCE REVITALIZES N.Y.S. FEDERATION OF COOPS

The New York State Federation of Coops held a conference in Ithaca, New York, on December 8-10. Members of 28 coops (mostly food coops) and 3 regional coop federations (Buffalo, Central N.Y., and the Hudson Valley) met to share experiences and to discuss their collective future. The group decided, (1) that it was important to begin immediate action on the Coop Bank Act Regulations to insure that grassroots coops had a voice in the outcome, and (2) that they should begin really organizing our state-wide federation with the short-term objective of forming a paid staff to undertake projects that would benefit us all.

We chose a temporary steering committee of seven people to carry out the following duties:

- (1) promote the New York State Federation of Coops by asking more coops to join;
- (2) ask for suggestions concerning possible functions and services that the N.Y.S. Federation might perform, and to begin planning toward building an organization that could serve these functions;
- (3) establish a sliding scale of membership fees and annual dues;
- (4) establish a regular steering committee with regional representation;
- (5) publish a quarterly newsletter for distribution to N.Y.S. coops;
- (6) begin a process leading to the incorporation of the N.Y.S. Federation of Coops;
- (7) set up a checking account to receive dues and donations and to pay for expenses on the newsletter and Federation business;
- (8) contract the production and distribution of an action packet concerning the Coop Bank Act Regulation proceedings; and
- (9) plan the next State Federation Conference, to be held in the Hudson Valley.

After two years of inactivity the Federation is coming alive. It wants you to join and it wants your input, and it is beginning to work on your behalf.

We would like to receive your views and opinions about what the N.Y.S. Federation should be doing to serve the needs of your coop. We would like your coop to become a member of the Federation. Since we have no set dues yet, *we are asking for donations* (to be credited against the membership fee and annual dues that will be established soon). Many of the coops that attended pledged donations of \$25-50. Some pledged more.

We need your donations. Our initial costs for compiling the Coop Bank packet, putting out the next newsletter, and postage are approximately \$150. The alternatives fund of Ithaca kindly loaned us that amount, but we must pay it back. Please make checks payable to:

The New York State Federation of Coops	
c/o The IRFC Grains Store	c/o Bob Burns
213 Fifth St.	203 College Ave.
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850	Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

MEETING OF THE NATURAL FARMERS ASSOCIATION OF THE ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY

About 50 local small farmers and homesteaders met at Carena Farm near Old DeKalb on Saturday, January 20th. Much of the meeting was spent in informal information-sharing and getting to know one another. Several projects to be undertaken by the NFA were discussed. A file was started giving the location of members, information about their land, and what they produce. Alpha Research Group from Russell are working on a hydroponic greenhouse, which may eventually supply local markets with fresh tomatoes and leaf lettuce throughout the winter. Alan Casline, editor of *ROOTDRINKER* magazine, is working on starting a co-op to store and market root crops and other storage vegetables. There is already a successful organic carrot growers co-op in Vermont.

John Montan, working with the St. Lawrence County Planning Board, discussed the availability of grants for developing ideas or products involving appropriate technology. Arlyne Katz gave a progress report on the Potsdam Community Cannery. Doug Jones of Birdsfoot Farm discussed the NFA apprenticeship program and an experimental project using sludge as fertilizer. Doug would also like to hear from people who commute to different parts of the county (particularly Canton to Massena or Watertown) who would be willing to help distribute local produce.

Also of interest, the NFA will again be ordering rock phosphate fertilizer and Biotrol (a biological control for cabbage worms). There will be a small rock phosphate order, so if you want to be sure of getting some, call Bob Penski at (315) 386-4801

One of the major aims of the NFA is to link up local producers with local markets. Toward this end, a marketing survey is being conducted. If anyone who is involved in a food service, restaurant, school lunch program, etc., would like to get more local fresh produce, contact survey team member Art Piltch at the Potsdam Consumer Co-op (315) 265-4630. Anyone interested in participating in the survey or any of the above projects, or who would like to be on the NFA mailing list, leave your name at the Potsdam Co-op or call or write Doug Jones at Birdsfoot Farm, Star Route, Canton, New York 13617. Phone: (315) 386-4852. **MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP ARE OPEN TO ANYONE WHO IS INTERESTED.**

The Natural Farmers Association has announced its list of Farming Arts Coordinators for the 1979 growing season. The following people are experienced in various areas of small-scale farming, homesteading, food processing and distribution. They have offered themselves as resource people, willing to answer inquiries related to their special skills. The list is not complete or exclusive—please contact the *Education and Communications* coordinators if you have suggestions for new categories and people with farming skills.

DAIRY COWS: Rebecca Wilson, Valerie Summer, Birdsfoot Farm, Canton, NY 13617.

OXEN: John Scarlett, Rossie, NY 13646; Frank Peters, Butler Road, Rossie, NY.

SHEEP: Skip Brushaber, Rt 1, Waddington, NY 13694; Stuart Cuthbert, Chippewa Bay Rd., Rossie, NY 13646.

HONEYBEES: Jackie and Paul Earle-Cruickshanks, RD 2, Gouverneur 13642; Jon and Kathy Montan, RD 2, O'Brien Rd., Canton, NY 13617.

SOLAR GREENHOUSES: Alpha Research Group, RD One, Russell, NY 13684.

MAPLE SYRUP: Chuck Beeler, Star Route, Hermon, NY 13652; John Scarlett, Rossie, NY 13646.

VEGETABLES: Samantha Kallin, Grass Lake Road, Rossie, NY 13646; Andrew Shelton, RD 1, Gouverneur, NY 13642; Doug Jones, Birdsfoot Farm, Canton 13617.

FRUIT: John Van de Water, Russell Road, Canton, NY 13617; Bill MacKentley, Nursery Hill Enterprises, RD 2, Potsdam, NY 13676.

WILD FOODS: Joanne Sweeney, RD 1, Winthrop, NY 13697.

FORAGES AND GRAINS: Clyde Morse, Ritchie Rd., DeKalb, NY 13630.

SOIL MANAGEMENT: Nate Morrell, Star Rte., Watertown, NY; Doug Jones, Birdsfoot Farm, Star Rte., Canton, NY 13617

NUTRITION, FOOD PROCESSING, AND COOPS: Art Piltch, RD 2, Canton 13617; Allan Sirotkin, Birdsfoot Farm, Canton, NY 13617; Randy Rolfe, Rte. 1, Box 87, Winthrop 13697; Arlyne Katz, Cherry St., Potsdam, NY.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATIONS: Alan Casline, RD 1, Hermon, NY 13652; Doug Jones, Birdsfoot Farm, Canton, NY 13617.