

Boycott Kraft products:

Support farmers' demands

In 1904 J.L. Kraft started producing cheese, it still tastes the same, and in fact, there's a possibility that...

Did you know that Velveeta cheese is unsaleable, low quality, hard and mould cheese that the public will not buy, and is conditioned, ground, heated, and combined with salt, water and an emulsifying agent then poured into packages, ready for sale.

Did you also know that: In 1966 there were 22,206 dairy farmers in Ontario; by 1971, 7,664 of them had been squeezed out of business. In the last two and a half years, 44 Canadian co-ops and independent cheese factories closed down.

While that was happening, Kraft received a \$250,000 interest free forgivable loan from the Ontario government to build an addition to its Ingleside Ontario plant. (A forgivable loan does not have to be paid back.)

Kraft is the 28th largest corporation in North America with a sale of \$2,751,129,000. The company's net profit in 1971 was \$91,300,000. The president's salary was \$18,000.

In 1969 Kraft spent \$69 million dollars on advertising. It is the second largest television advertiser in North America. The Canadian farmers average net income in 1970 was \$3700.

The National Farmers Union has taken on this monopolistic giant in a boycott that is intensifying across the country as it enters a second year.

The National Farmers Union (NFU) was founded in 1969 with support coming mainly from western Canada. Since then it has spread across the country organizing locals and carrying our militant actions to back farmers' demands.

The NFU is fighting to enable farmers to negotiate in regional groups or on the national level with marketing boards and processors for the prices paid on farm products, and with suppliers for the prices paid on material inputs.

At present, farmers do not have such rights and must accept whatever they are offered for their products by the marketing boards and corporate business. Farmers have often been forced to sell their products at below production cost.

The NFU states that unless the present system is changed the Task Force on Agriculture's goal of removing two-thirds of the present number of farm operators and replacing them with corporate farms will be achieved. Collective bargaining is the vehicle to stop rural depopulation and strengthen rural communities states the farmers' organizations.

Locals are encouraged to formulate policy for their area and the national good of all farmers since local decision-making is an important part of NFU policy.

It makes much more sense to move to a position where you decentralize your population into self-contained units, and to maintain on their own people who have to make day-to-day decisions, rather than tie everyone to a time clock and become part of the industrial machine.

Kraft's profit has steadily increased while the farmer's share of the food dollar has steadily decreased from 37 cents in 1949 to 37 cents in 1970.

Ontario dairy farmers must sell their milk through the Ontario Milk Marketing Board (OMM-B). Directors are elected by farmers, but decisions can be vetoed by the government appointed Ontario Milk Commission (OMC).

The OMMB also allocated the amount of mild cheese factories may receive through a quota system, introduced in 1969. Each processor was assigned quotas which could be bought and sold, thus encouraging the corporate monopolies to take over small plants.

In Leeds County near Brockville, Ontario, there were once 92 small plants, there are now two. The Plum Hollow co-op is one.

Local dairy farmers bought Plum Hollow in 1967 and invested \$60,000 to make the plant a paying proposition. In 1970 the co-op paid an eight percent dividend to its members. Its location allowed neighbouring farmers to ship milk to the plant for considerable less than if they shipped to the closest Kraft or Ault factory.

What you can do:

1. Don't buy Kraft products.
2. Ask your friends and relatives to boycott these products.
3. Urge your store manager to remove these products from his shelves. Let him know you are boycotting Kraftco.
4. Ask your union, lodge, legion, church group, etc. to endorse the boycott.
5. Let Kraft know you are boycotting their products until they sit down at the bargaining table. Let us know too. (Our address is 333-4th Avenue North, Saskatoon, Sask.)
6. Running a program like this is expensive. It is particularly difficult for an organization such as ours with its limited finances. Donations are always welcome.

The new quota system limited Plum Hollow to receive four million pounds of milk in 1971. Half the amount it processed a year earlier. Once the quota was filled, farmers — who are in turn operating under a system that financially penalizes them for producing over their own quotas — are required by law to ship their milk elsewhere.

The OMMB price paid to farmers for milk fluctuates greatly. Here is how the prices changed in a one-year period for a hundred-weight of industrial milk:

January, 1971	\$3.70
September, 1971	\$4.75
February, 1971	\$4.48

While the consumer was paying more — not less — for milk products, the prices farmers receive can change monthly.

The NFU approached the Canadian Dairy Commission, the OMC and the OMMB with statistics showing dairy farmers are not paid enough for their produce. The figures also showed the corporations could well afford to pay farmers more out of the enormous profits taken from processing the milk.

The government agencies only offered excuses why it couldn't be done.

To bring attention to their plight, dairy farmers who were also NFU members, initiated a picketing action at the Kraft Ingleside plant on July 28, 1971. It was the culmination of seventeen meetings attended by some 4,000 farmers held throughout Ontario.

The OMMB district representatives, Sarsfield O'Connor, responded by setting up his office inside the plant. When the bulk milk truck drivers refused to cross the picket line, O'Connor attempted to coerce the drivers, many of whom were independent operators. He reminded them their contracts could be terminated and that under the terms of their contract, they were responsible for the milk in their trucks.

O'Connor did this, even though the NFU had given the Ontario Milk Commission a list of small cheese factories willing and able to handle all the milk diverted from Kraft. Some of these plants had even

offered to pay up to fifty cents per hundredweight above the market price. They were willing to pay the higher prices since they suffered under the OMMB milk quota system.

The milk was finally diverted, but not to the small plants. It was sent to the Ault's plant at Winchester, Ontario. (Ault's is owned by Labatt's Breweries which is also in the chicken and egg business.)

At noon of the second day's picketing, the OMMB announced a price increase of \$1.15 per hundredweight for industrial milk. The farmers decided to remove the picket line and hold a mass meeting the next day.

The following morning over 1,000 people assembled in the parking lot across from the Kraft plant for a meeting called only 19 hours previously. Knowing the OMMB could change the price the next month, the farmers decided to demand collective bargaining rights with Kraft, without any government intermediaries.

The decision was reached realizing, the farmers contend, that the government agencies are merely

The Boycott was called in response to dairy farmers demands for better prices for their products through collective bargaining agreement and the refusal by Kraft to discuss the matter with the NFU.
The Kraft Boycott is important to the NFU because it is the means through which farmers may obtain collective bargaining rights.

vehicles through which corporation were assured a cheap supply of milk.

On August 19, 1971, the NFU called for a nationwide boycott of all Kraft products to back the farmers' call for collective bargaining rights.

Kraftco has refused to talk with the National Farmers' Union. However, people writing the

president of Kraft of Canada receive a from letter reply. (R.J. Greenwood, 9600 Devonshire Road, Montreal 307, Que.)

Although Kraft refuses to publicly discuss the Boycott, associations to which Kraft belongs or over which it has influence have attacked the NFU.

The National Dairy Council, on which Kraft has two seats, has attacked the NFU for spreading "lies". The Dairy Council claimed farmers have no legal right to obtain collective bargaining agreements. Because the laws have been set up to prevent farmers from obtaining a collective bargaining agreement, the Dairy Council's claim is accurate. The Boycott is designed to force a change in the law so farmers can bargain collectively.

Kraft's influence indicated the issues raised by the boycott are related to the fight against corporate monopoly. The domination of Canada's economy by foreign corporations and the control of food quality and distribution by these corporations are all part of the Boycott.

Besides the economic question, critics have questioned the quality of Kraft's products. James Turner in *The Chemical Feast* quotes from Ralph Nader's study group in the United States Food and Drug Administration:

"... one Food and Drug Administration official believes that Kraft has been responsible for a major decline in the quality of cheese made in the U.S.A., but the agency can do nothing about it in spite of various cheese standards."

"... three of the most important features in the (American) law were the 'distinctive name' provision, the failure to require an indication of quality on labels, and the failure to require that food products clearly identify their contents on labels. The 'distinctive name' provision in the 1906 Act

meant that if a manufacturer was clever enough to think up a distinctive designation for his product, it would not have to meet standards for similar products under law."

With the help of concerned citizens, the NFU is now widening its boycott activities, establishing urban support committees across Canada to carry out actions in urban areas. These groups are presently involved in informational picketing and leafletting at supermarkets.

The Kraft Boycott is essentially a power struggle. If it succeeds some power will be taken away from the corporations and redistributed into the hands of small Canadian farmers and consumers. If the Boycott fails the quality of food will continue to deteriorate and prices will continue to rise, with little opposition to corporate power.

The provincial minister of youth and culture responded by writing to the chairman of the organizing committee, asking him to seriously consider not using any Kraft products and to avoid purchasing Kraft products with the government money allocated to the games. The Saskatchewan caucus of the New Democratic Party has also given moral support to the boycott.

Its position represents a switch from the provincial NDP convention last December when paid party organizers had members of the Regina City police seize Boycott material from an information table operated by Boycott co-ordinator Don Kossick. The move stemmed from a motion passed during the convention's first limiting information tables to organizations directly affiliated with the NDP. Ironically, much of the material seized had just been printed by Service Printers, which is owned by the NDP.

By the end of the year the NFU hopes a solid network of urban support committees will be operating across the country. Once the network is established, co-ordinating actions against Kraft will take place across Canada.

Since profits are the major consideration for the corporate decision-maker, Kraft will grudgingly press for legislative changes when the Boycott starts to hurt seriously. Because the laws now favour Kraft and the company has money to tap from its other subsidiaries around the world, the struggle could likely continue for years.

The American United Farm Workers' Grape Boycott required five years to win collective bargaining rights for California grape pickers. But the grape workers did win and so can Canadian farmers — with the help of the Canadian consumer.

Watch for these labels. Don't buy these or any other brand sold by Kraftco Corporation.



NON-KRAFT SHOPPING LIST

Alternatives to Kraft Products do exist

Cheddar Cheese

- Libette Bros.
 - Balderson
 - Casselman
 - Cherry Hill
 - Black Diamond
- House brands are available in any chain store — Top Valu at IGA, otherwise look for store name.

Processed Cheeses

- Top Valu
- Loblaw's
- Dominion
- Swiss Garden
- Wispride
- Clover Cream Slices

Imported Cheeses

- Unadulterated imported cheeses are sold under their own brand names — often in the delicatessen section, but usually with imported cheeses. Why pay for an imitation when the genuine non-Kraft product is so easy to pick up?
- Gouda
 - Gruyere
 - La Vache qui Rit
 - Parmesan
 - Mozzarella
 - Camembert
 - Swiss
 - Romano

Brick Cheeses

- Balderson-Oxford Farms
- Loblaw's
- Black Diamond
- Tigre
- Swiss Knight
- Chalet

Cream Cheese

- Steinberg's carries a bulk cream cheese at their delicatessen counter, lighter in texture and noticeably cheaper than Kraft's Philadelphia brand.
- Black Diamond Cream Cheese spreads
- Cherry Hill

Cottage Cheese

- Clark
- Crescent
- Ricotta (rih-COT-ta) from any Italian delicatessen
- Steinberg's — available in bulk at the delicatessen counter, dry and creamy — mix your favourite fresh fruit into the cottage cheese.

Ice Cream

- Borden's
- Laura Secord
- Top Valu and other house brands

Powdered Cheeses

- Bravo Powdered Parmesan

Goat Cheese

- Natur

Cheese Dinner

- Catelli

Sour Cream

- Crescent Brand

Milk

- Borden's
- Cochrane's
- Clark