

Georgia Hills Farmer Found in Middle of Chicken War

By N. C. CHRISS
United Press International
 CANTON, Ga. (UPI) — Almost anyway you look at it — fried, roasted, barbecued or just pecking in the branyard — the lowly chicken has become a cause celebre.

For a creature credited with as much sense as a fence post, the chicken has caused angry resolutions, international conferences, financial wrangling and some harsh words between the U. S. poultry industry and the European Economic Community (EEC).

What has now become known as "the chicken war" began last year when the EEC, better known as the "monster we sponsor" by some American critics, upped the tariff on U. S. chicken imports by about eight cents a pound.

Depending on his economic well-being, almost everyone in the multi-million dollar poultry industry in this country has a different slant on the chicken demarche.

But if there is a man caught squarely in the middle of what has become a tremendously complicated problem, it is probably the man down on the farm where the chickens are raised.

In the rolling wooded hills of northwest Georgia, for example, there is Grady Chadwick, 40, a soft-spoken farmer who has spent all his life near the good earth, trying to scratch a living from it.

Scenery Excels

Some of the most beautiful scenery in the country can be found in the hills and mountains of North Georgia, but the land has never done much to provide a livelihood for the people who live there.

Chadwick's home is in Cherokee County which claims to be the biggest broiler-producing area in the world. The population is split pretty much down the middle: either you work in one of the few factories within commuting distance or else you farm chickens.

The transformation from cash cotton crops to poultry raising began some 30 years ago when the farmers, like Chadwick's father, used to till the rugged hills to raise cotton.

"Lord, it was hard work," Chadwick recalled.

The rural area around Canton is still dotted with the rustic unpainted two-room houses of the sharecroppers. A washing machine sits on the porch and lean and weather-beaten old men sit on the front porch looking aimlessly at the highway.

Chickens did much to change this.

Chadwick's longest sojourn away from his native hills was during World War II, including the Battle of the Bulge. And in a way he is doing battle with the Germans again, this time in the "chicken war."

Income to Drop

Chadwick says his income will drop \$1,200 this year, directly he contends, because the Common Market raised the tariffs and slashed U. S. poultry imports.

Accustomed to raising five flocks of 23,700 broilers annually, Chadwick says this year he will raise only four.

He admits he is only dimly aware of what the Common Market is or who the members are.

"To me it's just a new problem," he said.

"But it does seem," he added in his quiet voice, "that we could continue to sell broilers to them and they could sell something to us that they produce cheap."

The one member of the Common Market which Chadwick was sure of, was West Germany — once the biggest importer of U. S. poultry.

Mass Rail Transit Said Fund Threat

PORTLAND (UPI) — The executive director of the National Highway Users Conference warned Tuesday that proponents of mass rail transit systems are a threat to highway building funds.

Arthur Butler told the Oregon chapter of the conference that a constant watch is required to prevent rail transit advocates from diverting funds from road building.

He lauded the 1963 Oregon Legislature for defeating a bill which would have authorized purchase of expanded freeway center strips for monorail or other rail transit use — an example, he said, of efforts to divert highway money unobtrusively.

Butler, of Washington, D.C., also praised Portland's freeway system, which he says "opens up the city and gives it a clean, spacious appearance."

About 81 per cent of the U.S. labor force works for wages and about 19 per cent is self-employed.

U.S. railroads in 1964 established a passenger fatality safety mark of only .07 per 100 million passenger miles.

Chadwick's understanding of the tariff increase is that West Germany and the other five member nations are seeking to encourage poultry raising in their own barnyards.

"I guess I can't blame them," he said simply.

"However I know it will take them a long time to be able to

produce broilers as cheaply and in such quantities as we do. Seems they could let us continue," he said.

Started in 1916 Chadwick bought his first 80-acre farm in 1946. In 1965 he purchased another of 235 acres, in 1958 a third of 80 acres and in 1960 his fourth farm, 119 acres.

He paid \$4,000 for the 235

acres, and recently, he said, he was offered that amount for 80 acres of it.

"I think I'll hang on to it for a while," he said.

Chadwick, who quit high school in the 10th grade ("most all the older boys had gone into the Army, and there was a lot of work to be done on the farm"), has four children rang-

ing in age from a boy of 17 to a girl of 4.

"I work about an average of 10 to 12 hours a day and on Sunday I usually get by with only 4 or 5 hours of work," he said.

He and his family live in a modest white house and he drives a pick-up truck and a Chevrolet that saw its heyday a dozen years ago.

"You can see the way we live," he said. "It ain't much."

Despite the slump, Chadwick is building a large new chicken house with the help of a sharecropper who, with Chadwick's wife and children, help him tend the four farms of chickens, a few cattle and acres of rich green pastureland.

"The Common Market isn't

the only problem I got to face," he said.

"Right now I'm having to wait about six weeks before I get my new flock of chicks. I don't believe I've ever had to wait that long before."

The reason for the delay is over-production. Chadwick had been making some money by raising brooder hens and selling

the eggs. Now he says, with the Common Market slash, and the market glut, that income also is going out the window.

Right now it costs Chadwick 14 cents per pound to raise his chickens, and he is being paid 12½ cents. This is not permanent. Chadwick hopes, only the result of a slump caused by the Common Market tariff, over-

production and other problems in the industry. He has earned much better and hopes to do so again.

"When you've worked hard for 15 to 20 years, you don't just throw up your hands and quit because you hit a rough spot," he said. "You just keep plugging away. That's what I'm doing."



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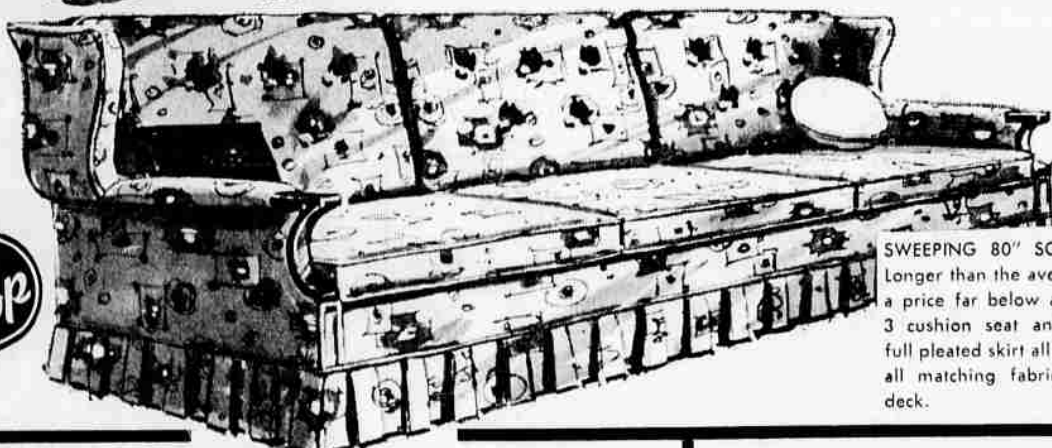
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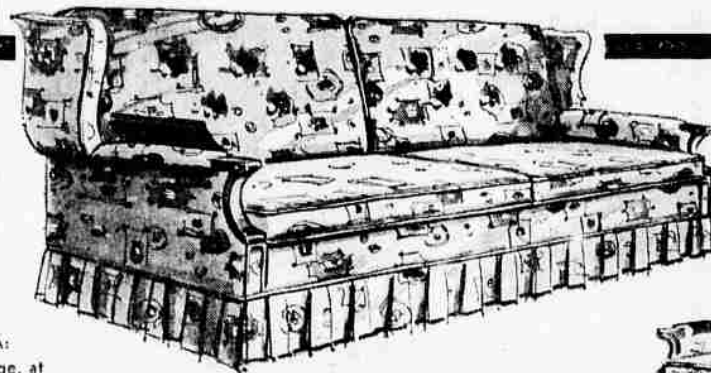
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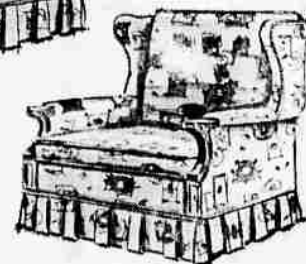
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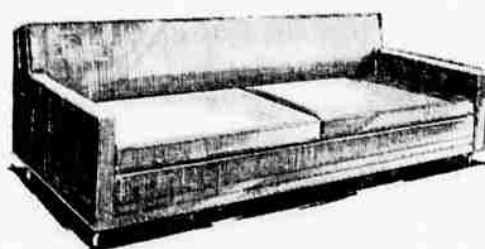


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