
UPDATE

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SEATTLE AREA TO SEND MILK ON THE HUFF TO VIETNAM

Livestock exporters from western Washington are part of a new project to bring modern dairy production to a region west of Hanoi.

The exporters from Yelm are preparing to ship one thousand Holstein heifers to Haiphong and then on to Moc Chau District. The project has been created jointly by St. Lawrence International, a firm in Herman, New York, and Thao Nguyen Milk Company of Moc Chau District.

Reports from Hanoi say the Washington dairy cows are part of a government plan to fulfill a production target of 20,000 tons of milk per year by the year 2000. This would represent 20 percent of Vietnam's total milk production.

Another essential link in the dairy scheme is a short course created by Washington State University for six farmers from Vietnam who will manage the animals and the milk production in their own country.

The instruction and field work will take place in the spring or summer of 1996 at the University's facilities at Puyallup and at nearby farms.

The livestock shipper is Schorno Agri Business in Yelm, about 25 miles east of Olympia.

The Schorno establishment has been collecting the young cows for Vietnam from western Washington farms and other farms all over the Northwest. A nearby large dairy farm owned by J.T. Wilcox is collaborating in the project.

The animals will make the 15 to 16 day voyage in one of the cattle ships built in Australia. The carrier probably will be the Holstein Express, according to Glenn Schorno, vice president of the family business and grandson of the founder who came to Washington State from Switzerland in the last Century.

The Schorno family were the handlers for a large shipment of dairy cattle to southern China in the 1980's. Young Schorno went along, even though he was just 14. That scheme was designed to supply milk for Hong Kong. But the Washington state role in the plan was short lived. The upheaval at Tiananmen Square put an end to that. The Schornos also ship horses regularly to Japan. But they have to go by air. "Horses don't do very well on ships," said Schorno.

CREATION, RENEWAL, PEACE

In the season when darkness recedes and people celebrate in their own special ways we may pause to appreciate both our diversity and our unity, and to pray for lasting peace! What better time to get acquainted with those wondrous creation myths of Southeast Asia. (See page 3)

TET CELEBRATION

The GSVA will be holding a Vietnamese Tet party for its members and guests on February 18, 1996. Everyone is encouraged to share his/her favorite Vietnamese dish during this eventful gathering.

Please check for details on the next issue of UPDATE.

ADVICE FOR STARTING AN EXPORT BUSINESS

Two business people from Seattle talked about some of the ups and downs of creating an export-import business with Asia. And they gave advice for others on how to get started.

The two, Alma Kern and James R. Kern, were speakers at the GSVa breakfast meeting December 5.

Between the two of them, the Kerns have several companies, each with a different focus. He is the president and she is the vice president and owner of Market Brands International, which exports packaged, frozen and fresh food, as well as household products and pet food. Alma also is owner and vice president of Jade King, which imports Asian food, mainly fruits, and Resource Associates, which promotes trade for the State of Washington.

The Kerns started their business by exporting foods to Japan, mainly bakery goods and cheese at first. But they lost money for two years, said James. He said they weren't prepared for the scrupulous contamination controls on imports to Japan. Processed foods with minute contaminants that are permitted by U.S. are often rejected by Japanese inspectors. Besides that, Japanese consumers are not necessarily attracted to new food products from the outside.

James said he and his wife had not researched the market well enough. But once they started introducing pet foods to Japan, their fortunes turned around. They just happened to find that niche. They've had a good market for pet foods ever since. Keep looking for the perfect niche, he recommended.

The Kerns also do a lot of business in Indonesian and the Philippines, where they were more familiar with conditions and had many contacts. Alma grew up in Manilla. She was a social worker there when she met James, a Peace Corps volunteer working with farmers.

Alma said that in doing business in Asia, one must give personal service, learn to know the contacts very well, and talk to them frequently on the phone. She said that their staff has a combined fluency in six languages and are talking on the phone all the time.

James Kern said they learned that they could get a great deal of help from various federal agencies committed to the interests of the small exporter-importer. Learning what these people can do for you and convincing them to do it are essential.

Alma said "sometimes these people will say they can't help. But that's their job. They are supposed to help. Keep after them." Alma said she also became aware of how important it is to choose one's bank carefully. They are not all the same. Some are more interested than others to give the small operator extra help at first. "But you can shop around and get the banker who is just right for you."

Alma is anxious to do business with Vietnam. It is going to be a huge market, she said. When she was manager for Governor Lowry's Trade Mission to SE Asia last September and October, she was impressed by the warm reception her group received from the people of Vietnam. She said they were keenly interested in every article that the governor's group exhibited, and she will be looking for niche there for her exporting service.

She said, however, that Vietnam is a difficult market for the small exporter, because Vietnamese people are very brand-conscious. They want the brands they got familiar with when the American Army was there, according to Alma. Small exporters can't compete with the large exporters on those big brands. It just requires working harder and finding a niche.

NEW SERIES OF BREAKFAST PROGRAMS FOR 1996

To meet our business members' needs, GSVa will be conducting a new series of breakfast programs for 1996.

Some of the meetings will evolve around the questions "Why do business in Vietnam", "Where to start", etc.

Please keep your eyes open for a detailed program in our next issue of UPDATE.

THE LEGEND OF LAC-LONG-QUAN AND AU-CO

In many Southeast-Asian countries, including Vietnam, one may see a shared mythic theme regarding the origin of ethnic races.

The Palaungs (a Mon-Khmer people) told about a serpent maiden who fell in love with the son of the solar King, consummated their relationship, and delivered three eggs. Due to a misunderstanding with her lover, who had been called back home by his father, the Naga Princess took two of the eggs and threw them into the Irrawaddy River. One of the eggs was later found by and gardener upstream to Man Naw (Bhamo). The male child hatched from the egg was named Hseng Nya. He later married a daughter of a Shan chief, changed his name to Udibwa, and became father to two sons, one of whom became Emperor of China, while the other became leader of Palaung chiefs. The second egg drifted down the Irrawaddy and was picked up by a washerman and his wife. From this also came a man-child, who grew up to be the King of Pagan.

The same mythic theme appears again in a folktale from Hsen-Wi, a Northern Shan state of Burma. This legend began with an old couple who lived on the bank of Lake Gnawing Put. Their son felt in love with a Naga princess who appeared in human form. The Princess brought her lover back to the country of the Nagas. In an attempt to make his new son-in-law feel at home the King of the Dragons granted his daughter's wish to allow all the dragons to assume human form. Reality dawned on the young lad when the Nagas resumed their dragon shape during Annual Water Festival, leaving him a great desire to return to his own homeland. The Princess accompanied him back to his country but did not stay. Before returning to her own home, the Naga Princess laid an egg and left it with her husband. She informed him that if either he or their new son ever encountered danger, she would come to their aid upon their striking on the ground three times. The child grew up to marry another beautiful princess and reigned over her Kingdom for seventy-two years.

Vietnam can stand on her own, next to her Southeast-Asian neighbors, when it comes to maritime character of

folk-tales and mythical origins. A similar theme of marriage between human beings and aquatic animals is found in a Vietnamese national myth related to Lac-Long-Quan and Au-Co.

Accordingly, more than four thousand years ago, King De-Minh, a descendant of the Chinese King Than-Nong, met and married a fairy while visiting Ngu-Linh mountain (Hu-Nan province). The couple later had a son, Loc-Tuc.

Loc-Tuc inherited the southern part of his father's Kingdom and adopted the royal title of Kinh-Duong-Vuong (2,879 B.C.).

Kinh-Dung-Vuong married Long-Nu, daughter of the God of the Sea who gave birth to their son named Sung-Lam. Sung-Lam succeeded his father under the royal title of Lac-Long-Quan.

Lac-Long-Quan retreated to his mother's former Palace of the Sea. However, he was later summoned to save his father's kingdom, Xich-Qui, from the invasion of a Chinese Emperor, De-Lai.

As fate would have it, Lac-Long-Quan felt in love with, and married, the enemy De-Lai's daughter, Au-Co. Au-Co bore a pouch of one hundred eggs which gave them one hundred children. Vowed that each would take part in raising future leaders, Lac-Long-Quan and Au-Co divided the children between themselves. Half of them went with their father to the South China Sea. The other half accompanied their mother to the mountains located in the area of Phong-Chau. Once in Phong-Chau (now Bach-Hac, Vinh-Yen Province), the fifty sons who had followed Au-Co named their eldest brother the first King to reign over the new Kingdom. This was Hung-Vuong, and his Kingdom was called Van-Lang.

It is the wondrous union between mortals and omnipotent creatures that legends are made of.

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A grassroots, non-profit, duly incorporated and registered organization dedicated to helping the people of Seattle Create and maintain links with the people of Vietnam.	
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Vietnamese Riddle

Five boys use two poles.
They chase a herd of white water buffalo into a dark cave.
What is this!

Answer: A hand using chopsticks to eat rice.