

Briefs

away from a halt it called two days earlier in a pricing dispute with the United Nations.

Iraq, the third largest producer in OPEC, stopped production Friday, blaming the United Nations' refusal to authorize a new payment arrangement for exports under the oil-for-food program.

The halt, however, did not disrupt oil markets as many had feared. The United States has said it would tap its reserves to counter any Iraqi cut-off and Saudi Arabia — by far OPEC's largest producer — hinted it could do the same, citing the need to keep the market stable.

Mad cow disease spurs crisis meeting

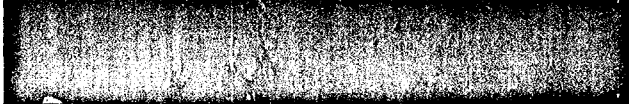
BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) — A crisis session of European Union farm ministers this week will consider drastic new measures to combat the spreading mad cow disease and try to stem the damage to consumer confidence in beef.

The ministers will assess proposals today to ban animal products in fodder for cows, pigs and poultry for six months starting Jan. 1 and keep out of the food chain untested animals that are older than 2½ years — measures that would further sap already stretched farm budgets and raise prices.

Spacewalking astronauts give space station wings

of a busy Ohio freeway.

in its name, effectively erasing a major resource investment.



AP photo

Subcomandante Marcos, leader of Mexico's Zapatista rebels, hands out literature to journalists in La Realidad.

Zapatista leader says he's ready to seek peace

LA REALIDAD, Mexico (AP) — The first time he burst from the jungle it was to start a war that shook Mexico to its core and vaulted Indian rights to the top of the national agenda.

Now Subcomandante Marcos says he's ready to leave the Chiapas wilderness again in search of an agreement that could lock those rights into Mexico's constitution.

Responding to offers from new President Vicente Fox, the ski-masked leader of the Zapatista guerrillas announced he will travel to Mexico City in February to lobby for an Indian rights bill Fox promises to introduce on Tuesday.

"We will go and we will see

what happens," Marcos told a news conference Saturday in this jungle hamlet that served as a sort of rebel capital.

Fox said Sunday that he would do everything in his power to clear the way for peace talks.

"Today, fortunately, we have the response" of the Zapatistas," he told farmers during a rally. "We'll try to meet the conditions put on us so this dialogue can begin as soon as possible."

The Zapatista National Liberation Army emerged from the jungle on Jan. 1, 1994. The overwhelmingly Indian rebel force briefly captured six Chiapas towns.

A cease-fire took hold 12 days later after 145 deaths.

HUDSON RIVER PCBs REASSESSMENT PROJECT

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will hold two public meetings to present and discuss the Proposed Plan for the Hudson River PCBs Reassessment project. At this meeting, officials from the EPA will discuss the alternative which the Agency is proposing as the best method for addressing the contaminated sediments of the Upper Hudson River. This is an important and historic moment in the future of the Hudson River. Public participation and comment is an important facet of EPA's process and your input is important. Please make every effort to attend.

Tuesday, December 12, 2000 at 7:00 pm

Saratoga Springs City Center
Broadway, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
Open House 4:30 pm

Thursday, December 14, 2000 at 7:00 pm

Sheraton Civic Center Hotel
40 Civic Center Plaza
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Open House 4:30 pm

Open House

Both of the public meetings will be preceded by an "Open House" exhibit on EPA's Hudson River PCB Reassessment. The Open House will be held at 4:30 pm prior to each public meeting as noted above.

For more information, you can visit our web site at www.epa.gov/hudson, or you may contact Ann Rychlenski, at 212/637-3672. Public comment will be taken at both of these meetings. Additional meetings at various locations throughout the Hudson Valley will be held after the holidays, and will be announced well in advance for your convenience.

