

1975 ✓

A LOOK BACK
TO 1975

Village chosen for zero meat test

THE village of Luddenden was declared a meat-free zone for one week as part of a televised experiment organised by Granada's "World in Action" programme.

The idea was to examine the world food crisis and show people the vegetarian alternatives including cooking with soya bean substitute.

Most of the 438 villagers, led by their vicar, the Rev Philip Mortimer, agreed to take part and were treated to a "last supper" of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding before frontier posts were put up on the edge of the village denoting that people were entering a meatless area.

The butcher's shop was out of bounds and even the children's school dinners were meat free.

"Coronation Street's" Betty Turpin, played by actress Betty Driver, helped to get Baht Meat Week off to a start, joining in a village procession which passed an assembly of one cow, six sheep, two pigs and 32 chickens, the estimated amount of meat which would have been eaten during the week.

Other activities included non-meat cooking demonstrations and a meatless cookery competition.

Throughout the week, villagers also experimented with textured vegetable protein to produce such dishes as shepherd's pie and stew, although it did not tempt everyone's tastebuds.

"That stuff hasn't got any taste unless you put a lot of spices with it, and if you use a lot of spices I don't think it's much good anyway," said one unconvinced resident.

The aim was to strike a light-hearted note but it also had a serious aspect in looking at the economics of food production in Britain which imported up to 50 per cent of its food.

Nevertheless, after a week most people were happy to put meat back on the menu and return to their carnivorous habits.