

Of all the regrets of this old life, I wish most of all that I'd saved my money when I was young and bought a banana boat. Over in San Angelo on a Saturday afternoon the shopping carts are so overloaded in bananas that one third of the world's production must pass out those supermarket doors.

As in all booms, there has to be a downside. The bananas draw customers to the fruit and vegetable department, and they do buy lots of other produce. But while shoppers are loading up on one item or another, they are constantly free grazing off the seedless grape bin at the tune of about a buck fifty a pound.

Where I trade, the manager has tried to hedge the grape shrinkage by offering free samples of dried apple chips and big platters of fried fish fragments. However, last Saturday it seemed to me that the more dried apple they ate, and the more fish they speared on the toothpicks, the more they craved something sweet and fresh like those delicious grapes.

The serious part as far as I am concerned is that the last time I was at the zoo in San Antonio, I saw a big blue and red faced baboon use the same style tearing bananas from a stalk that I'd watched a momma with three kids use to split off what she needed to take home.

Folks are carrying all this nutrition business too far. People are already eating so many corn flakes and skimmed milk and green bananas, barbers claim that instead of their temples turning gray, they're turning the same color of tan Kellogg's cereal.

I sure don't want to pick on the wool capital. But I don't want to show up some Saturday and find security guards watching the grape bin. Probably the best thing to do would be to contact the zookeeper in San Antonio and find out what he'd substitute for bananas.