

From Where We Stand . . .

People-Pressure On Lancaster County Agriculture

Whether you call it urban fringe farming, rural-urban farm problems, or, whatever, the simple fact remains — the proportion of people to land is quickly moving from the fantastic to the impossible.

Between 1920 and 1950, the population growth in Lancaster County was fairly constant. In a sense, time stood still in the county for that one generation interval. But between 1950 and 1960, an 18 percent jump in population made Lancaster the fastest growing standard metropolitan area in the state. The greatest growth rate was in the townships, not the cities.

By 1980, a projected increase of 150,000 people is foreseen for the county. This doesn't sound like much until you consider that for every one-hundred new people, 75 acres will be taken out of agricultural production. Therefore, projecting an increase of 150,000 people, means that Lancaster County agriculture will lose 112,500 acres by 1980 — approximately one-quarter of all the land farmed here in 1960.

While we presently have a larger rural-farm population than any other county in the state, or in the nation, the trend shows a steady reduction of farms below 180 acres, farms above 180 acres have increased in percentage of total county farms.

The miracle ingredient that has made our county one of the most prosperous in the nation is the balance that has existed between agriculture and industry. That balance has been shifting gradually in favor of industry in recent years. It will continue to move in that direction as time goes on, probably at an accelerated rate.

There is very little that we can, or should, do about that trend. But we can, and must, do some active planning for the years ahead so that this population pressure has some definite direc-

tion. It should not be allowed to just "happen".

The competition for land in the county, especially that land bordering the boroughs and townships, will grow ever more fierce. As farm land prices pass the \$1000 per acre level, extensive farming as we know it in Lancaster County can probably no longer be justified. When this happens, one of the great agricultural advantages our county has over other eastern areas — the ability to grow a large part of its own feed — will be lost.

When we think of thousands of extra people, we think immediately of homes. That is the most obvious source of land use. But add to this all the businesses and institutions needed to service the increased population — shopping centers, schools, churches, yes, even nursing homes, as witnessed by the photograph on the front page of this issue.

What can be done about this chronic, progressive problem? The Lancaster County Soil & Water Conservation District, working through the County Planning Commission, hopes to effectively guide future development of housing and industry in the county so that Class I farmland will not be devoured indiscriminately.

To help avoid some of the unnecessary pressures which will be generated by the projected population influx, Lancaster Countians will have to become, not just aware of the problem, but actively concerned with its solution. Agricultural interests can't go it alone. They will need the cooperation of industry and home-owners.

By working together on this major problem, perhaps we can maintain a semblance of that magic "balance"; hopefully, this combined effort will assure that Lancaster County retains its title "Garden Spot of the World".

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Swinemen Hear Hog Prices Will Hold Into 1967

Dwight Younkin, Penn State Extension livestock specialist, told approximately 100 area hog producers Thursday night at the Lancaster Farm Credit Building that good hog prices should continue well into 1967. He cited hog futures and a red-meat shortage as factors which virtually assure prices in the \$25-\$30 range.

After opening on this bright note the major part of the Lancaster County Swine Producers Association

educational meeting was well received by the audience. A panel of area hog producers, including John and Abram Zeiset, both of East Earl R1, Norman Martin, Myerstown R1, Irwin Martin, Lincoln, and Herbert Schick, Krumsville, discussed personal experiences and problems in hog production.

Slides depicting each of these operations were shown, and the meeting was thrown open for what proved to be a lively discussion session.

Also present to offer some of the technical considerations in hog housing was Lester Burdette, Penn State Extension livestock specialist.

Burdette explained that in a new building proper ventila-

tion can be built in with no trouble based on present knowledge of needs. But remodeling a barn, involves more than just putting in a few fans.

He pointed out that there is a substantial difference between ventilation and just moving air around.

Association president John Hinkel reminded the group of the Spring Carcass Show which will be held March 14 at the Lancaster Stock Yards. "There is still room for a few more entries," he said. He also announced that the Association's annual banquet would be held March 18 at 6:30 p.m. at the Blue Ball Fire Hall.

Farm Calendar

March 7 — On the 7th and 8th the Penn State Farm Management short course will be held on the University's main campus.

— 7:30 p.m. Corn weed control meeting sponsored by P. L. Rohrer & Bio and featuring DeKalb A-611 Assn and Geigy Chem Co representatives will be held at Donegal High School.

March 8 — 6:30 p.m. Lancaster County Soil & Water Conservation District annual banquet meeting at Blue Ball Fire Hall.

— 7:29 p.m. Garden Spot

YFA class at Garden Spot HS subject: Leadership development.

— 7:30 p.m. Repeat for

weed control meeting sponsored by P. L. Rohrer & Bio as shown above. To be held at Witmer Fire Hall, Witmer.

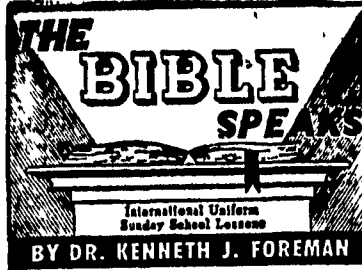
March 9 — 7:30 p.m. management meeting for better farming on small community farms speaker M. M. Smith, Lancaster county agent at Lincoln Independent School, Martinsdale.

March 10 — 6:30 p.m. Lampeter-Strasburg FFA Parent-Son banquet at LS H. S. cafeteria.

— 7 p.m. Solanco FFA

Chapter Parent-Son banquet at Solanco H.S. cafeteria.

March 11 — Grassland FFA Chapter Parent-Son banquet at Garden Spot High



Man in God

Lesson for March 6, 1966

Background Scriptures: Psalm 118; Luke 11:1-13; John 14:15-17; 16:1-7; Hebrews 4:14-16; 1 John 1:1-4.
Devotional Readings: Psalm 118:1-8.

A THRONE MAY look like a chair, but it is no ordinary chair. In ancient times only one person could sit on a throne: a king. Even when the king carried his throne about with him like a camp chair, as one of the



Dr. Foreman week here, God [s never said to be seated in a chair or on a couch, only on a throne. He is "seated" not because he is tired or lazy. To be seated was then the mark of authority (our Lord always taught sitting down), and the throne itself stood for the power and majesty of the one who sat upon it.

Honesty in prayer

The simple and easy word for coming before the throne of the Almighty, the Lord of the universe, is prayer. It is the uplifting and at the same time the most humbling experience possible to man. The Christian life has been defined as life-in-God. Call it communion, call it fellowship, call it companionship, or simply the life in God, — there is nothing to compare with it.

One thing we must always be sure of: we must leave all makes-believes outside. There is no fooling God. Beneath the high-sounding religious language we often use, he hears what we really want. There is no use trying to flatter God, he cannot be flattered. Dishonesty ruins all friendship. Especially is it ruinous to any fellowship we may hope to have with God. We can often

heck the honesty of our prayers by asking, "How much am I willing to do, or to give up, in order to bring my prayer to pass?" "Thy Kingdom come" is a noble prayer; but when the offering plate is passed it may turn out that what we really meant was "Thy kingdom come, but not over a dollar's worth this week, please."

Habits for prayer

Good words are often spoken about habits of prayer; but there are some pre-prayer habits which we may call habits for prayer. One is the habit of thinking often about God, shutting one's eyes a moment to think how close he is, and what kind of God he is and what kind of life he wants us to live. True prayer — deep, joyous, free — comes only out of life that is in harmony with God. If prayer-time is the only time you give a thought to God, you soon may find it is difficult to think of him even then. Another habit of thought, fruitful for the sincere God seeker, is to become familiar with the life and words of our Savior. This cannot be done without long-continued study and meditation. Remember what he said, "If you abide in me and full of picture-my words abide in you," (that part of the fabric of your thinking,) "ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you." The most successful prayer arises out of Christ-centered, Christ-directed lives.

Fruit or bonfire

Fellowship with God can be looked at selfishly, like his other and lesser gifts. But the mystic vision, the inner light, is not to be enjoyed apart from service of the Master and his cause. Jesus put it plainly. The secret of the bright Christian experience is in verse, I in you . . . you in me . . . The sunshine is in the flower, the flower is in the sun. The Christian shine — both equally true. Christian is in Christ, Christ in the Christian. But for what purpose? To bear fruit, Jesus said, — fruit of joy, fruit of faith, of hope, of love.

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Now Is The Time . . .

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agent

To Prevent Soil Compaction

This is the time of the year when heavy equipment will pack the soft ground so hard that most crops will not have much of a chance. With modern, heavy tractors and equipment this problem becomes more common and one very hard to correct. However, we would be of the opinion that it is best to keep this equipment off of crop land as much as possible until the ground has a chance to dry out. The later we go into the month of March the less chance of heavy freezes that will correct this compaction.

To Topdress Pastures

Many permanent pastures will respond to fertilization early in the spring. The applications of 20 to 30 pounds per acre of actual nitrogen will bring the grasses earlier than normal. Some livestock men will treat part of their pastures with nitrogen to force earlier grazing. On permanent bluegrass sod with some white clover, a complete fertilizer such as 10-10-10 is recommended.

To Establish Contours

Farmers that have some slope to their crop land should consider establishing contour strips to control both soil and water erosion. In many cases the field can be started when being plowed for corn. Alternate strips of a row crop and a sod crop will be of great help in maintaining soil fertility as well as increasing yields.

To Evaluate Corn Growing Practices

Much is being published in the farm press about planting corn in more narrow rows. This might be the trend



SMITH

has some advantages including increased yields. However, in the opinion of this County Agent, many corn growers can achieve the same 10 to 15% increase in yields by improving good practices with their normal 36 to 38-inch rows. When a grower has put all the best-known practices into operation and after producing from 125 to 150 bushel of shelled corn per acre with present row widths, then he is ready to consider a closer row spacing along with quite

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