

On Making Rain Profitable

Remember those droughts a few years ago?

Irrigation and dropping water tables were the topics then.

But not this year. For Southeastern Pennsylvania farmers, 1970 has been the year of the rains.

The ground is saturated with water. The water table is high, higher than it has been for many, many years.

Very few farmers are even thinking about irrigation — except maybe some who have been around long enough to know that irrigation will again have its day.

While irrigation may temporarily not be worth much as a discussion topic, 1970 should have made many farmers again aware, painfully aware, of another issue, erosion.

Plenty of rain and a rising water table have been a mixed blessing for many farmers because of erosion. For these farmers, what nature has given in the form of plentiful water for crop production, it has taken away in lost soil.

Perhaps the years of drought and the years of normal rainfall made some farmers a little careless about the need for good conservation practices, the need to preserve the good soil that God has supplied in abundance in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

Soil and Farm Prosperity

It is self-evident that the agricultural prosperity which is often taken for granted in Southeastern Pennsylvania is based on the soil. The soil cannot be allowed to wash away in the huge quantities without serious consequences to the farming community.

Those big gullies in many cornfields, those big mounds of dirt at the end of the gullies, the almost constantly muddy water in many local streams are all too common signs this year that nature has taken a heavy toll on local soils.

Conservation is long-established art. While particular conservation practices have been improved over the years as know-how has increased, conservation itself was an important issue at the turn of the century when Teddy Roosevelt made a name with this issue. Basic conservation practices were known long before Roosevelt.

Farmers who don't know about these conservation practices or who need help whether merely some advice or financial assistance can get it for the asking by

contacting their local Soil and Water Conservation District.

A Little Common Sense

To stop the biggest part of his soil loss, however, most farmers, we think, don't really need any advice or help. A little common sense and concern can solve the worst part of the problem.

For instance, if a big gully is being washed out on a hillside, the farmer knows he has to do something to divert water away from the area or to enable the water to flow over the area without washing away the soil.

Strip cropping is one possible solution. Alternating bands of alfalfa and corn, instead of one large field of alfalfa and another large field of corn, will often solve an erosion problem. Stopping the long, unimpeded, downhill flow of water is often the solution to erosion.

Where strip cropping isn't enough, where the water channel is subject to particularly heavy volumes of water, it's a common practice to skip that small section of the field when plowing, leaving a natural sod waterway to resist erosion. The small extra care in plowing, the small loss of land to active production is often amply rewarded through saved soil. A sod waterway is of far more benefit to a farmer than an impassable gully.

In situations where a sod waterway isn't enough, terraces have become popular. These terraces trap the water, slow its movement and erosion potential, giving it time to sink into the ground where it can benefit the farmer. Terraces are more complex than the other practices and the farmer is more likely to need technical assistance with these than with some of the other practices.

The Farmer's Choice

Fortunately, the farmer still has great freedom to decide how he will use his land. But the public is increasingly concerned about pollution and soil erosion is a serious water pollutant. The outcry against pollution can be expected to grow.

By solving his soil pollution problems, the individual farmer can save his own valuable resources.

At the same time, he can help wage the wider public battle against pollution, while helping to maintain his own freedoms against controls levied in the name of pollution abatement.

Watch That Egg Market

The egg market has dropped significantly in the past four weeks — some 10 cents per dozen on the new UEP market for the Northeast and about the same on the Uner Barry New York market.

The price, however, is still not as low as it got earlier this year. But the trend is clearly downward and the Northeast Egg Marketing Assn., Durham, New Hampshire, has issued a news letter warning that the situation is urgent and this may be the beginning of the egg bust predicted earlier this year.

Commenting on the UEP "Action Now" program to stave off the egg bust, NEMA states: "Fowl movement to date has been

disappointing. The 45 cent white egg price could have been 48 cents today instead of 35 cents if old fowl had been moved as recommended. Chick hatches in some areas will be higher than they should have been for July."

NEMA states, however, that considerable progress has been made. "Overall it does look as if the August hatch would be off 75 per cent at least; and if the remaining months do not exceed a year ago, this phase of the program will be a success." UEP has asked for a zero hatch for August.

NEMA continues, "If enough fowl starts to move, profitable egg prices can be maintained." The UEP program calls for slaughter of laying flocks 45 days ahead of schedule or culling of flocks by 10 per cent for the next six months.

The UEP program is strictly a voluntary one. Leading egg industry men know what a significant over-supply of eggs will do to the market, but only individual producers can cut back on production.

Indications are that some major steps have been taken to avert the projected 22 month slump in egg prices. But evidence so far also indicates that not enough has been done to avoid a bust altogether.

Questions for the individual producer remain. How big will the slump be and how long will it last? What should I do?

But whatever the individual's answer, we think it's vital that he stay posted on the situation and how it applies to him.

NOW IS THE TIME...

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Beware Of Weeds

Given a choice, cattle will seldom eat foul tasting or poisonous weeds, however, with a green-chopping program during the growing season some farmers have to glean any kind of green material at times in order to have feed for the herd. If this mixture contains many kinds of weeds, the end result may be sick or dead animals. The same is true of any hay or silage crop: weeds have to go along with the good forage, but if the percentage of weeds is high, the quality of the feed will be lowered or made toxic. Under natural grazing conditions the livestock will eat only what they like, however, when green-chopped in a mixture, they have little choice

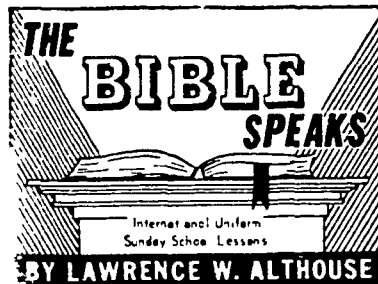
into silage. Many kinds of gas are formed when fermentation takes place in the silo. When plants are high in nitrates, nitrogen oxide gases may be formed; they may be colorless and odorless, or they may be chlorine-smelling and yellowish in color; these gases are all heavier than air. They are dangerous and all members of the farm family should be warned about them. They may develop from a few hours to two weeks after the silo is filled or partly filled. A burning or choking sensation in the nose, throat, and chest is a warning signal. Keep the silo chute and barn well ventilated and never enter a partly filled silo without running the blower for at least 10 to 15 minutes.

To Be Alert For Silo Gas

Silo filling time is coming and many tons of corn will be made

To Buy Pre-conditioned Feeder Calves

Cattle buying time is approaching (Continued on Page 5)

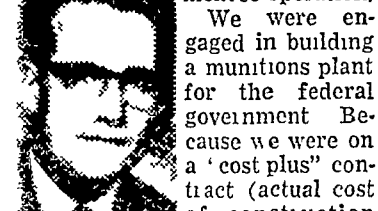


DEADLY PRIDE

Lesson for August 16, 1970

Background Scripture: Genesis 11:1-9; Psalms 10:4, Luke 12:13-21; Devotional Reading: Isaiah 14:3-15.

Several of the summers when I was a college student I earned part of my next year's expenses with a pick and shovel as a construction laborer. It was in one of these summers that I witnessed an unusual example of labor-management co-operation.



We were engaged in building a munitions plant for the federal government. Because we were on a "cost plus" contract (actual cost of construction plus a fixed percentage of profit for the contractor), both the labor unions and the construction companies' management co-operated to defraud the government. This was one of those rare occasions when both parties realized that in order to get the most money out of the project, they would have to work in the closest collaboration. I have never before or since witnessed such close co-operation between these two parties.

"A name for ourselves"

It is this same kind of co-operation that we see indicated in the story of the Tower of Babel. There is a high degree of co-operation here, but the motive behind that co-operation is not very commendable. In this case, however, the motive is not one of cheating a third party, at least not in the strict sense of that word. The driving force behind this unusual co-operation is naked pride. "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves..." (Gen. 11:4).

The "tower" to which they refer was probably much on the order of the ziggurats which were used as Babylonian temples. These ziggurats were huge and pyramidal, often rising in seven

terraces, the last of these topped by a shrine which was regarded as the entrance to heaven. To ascend the tower and its seven terraces was regarded as an approach to the gods and their heaven.

Killed by pride

The tower of Babel, then, seems a proud attempt to reach heaven and perhaps become the equals of the gods. This is not the first story in Genesis that deals with the destructiveness of human pride. It was this same desire to be equal with God that led Adam and Eve to pick and eat the "forbidden fruit." So, too, the men of Babel wanted to be like gods, to rise above their status as men.

How many of the world's problems are caused and perpetuated by our tendency to forget that we are men, not gods? God wants us to be aggressive, enterprising, and ambitious, but he also knows what happens to men when they forget who they are as God's creatures.

Recently a prominent captain of industry shocked the community by committing suicide. Though in ill health, the man was not in danger so long as he curtailed his activities. But it was this curtailment that caused him to lose the desire to live. He was an extremely proud man, particularly of his health and athletic abilities. Though his body would have carried him to a much longer life, his pride could not withstand the hurt. He simply could not accept his new limitations. He was killed by his own pride.

To be fully human

The proud man arrogantly prides himself on his self-sufficiency. He doesn't need any one else, he thinks. He relies solely on himself and his powers and abilities. Yet, there may come a day when the proud man may lose some of his powers and then discover that he very much needs both God and other people.

So pride is a very divisive force. It separates men from their fellowmen, making the world a Babel of confusion. Worst of all, it separates men from their God and keeps them from achieving the full humanity for which he creates us.

No man ever need strive to be equal with God. To be fully human is quite enough.

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