

# USDA Projects 6% Blight Toll

The USDA last week issued an estimate of a six per cent national loss as a result of the corn blight. It wasn't exactly good news, unless it's considered in the light of some early estimates of 25 to 50 per cent loss.

Our sources locally had projected a five to 10 per cent loss, with the stipulation that it's difficult or impossible to tell for sure. It was noted that additional losses are still possible, even after the grain is stored.

Altogether, it has been and, to a large

extent still is, a highly uncertain situation. But our observation and local sources have confirmed from the start that while some individual farmers have been hit rather hard by the blight, the overall loss has not been great in this part of Pennsylvania.

With a little luck and some cooperation from Mother Nature, farmers in the next few weeks will harvest the golden crop and the farmer will have survived another bout with the elements.

## Corn—Plug ALL the Losses

Fifteen per cent of Delaware's 15 million-plus bushel corn crop will be left in the field "due to poor machine adjustment or operator carelessness," according to Thomas H. Williams, extension agricultural engineer at the University of Delaware.

By following a few simple steps farmers can keep field losses to less than five per cent and add as much as \$6 per acre to their profits, Williams says

Think of it!

All this panic about a six per cent loss of the corn crop to blight, while farmers regularly dribble 15 per cent over the fields during harvest.

Doesn't make sense does it?

It doesn't make sense, but farmers ought to do some serious thinking about it during harvest.

For instance, the individual farmer who loses 15 per cent during harvest could more than make up his six per cent corn blight loss by reducing his harvesting loss to the five per cent level.

### Stopping Machine Loss

The majority of corn lost to improperly adjusted machines, Williams points out, occurs in the gathering and snapping areas. He says the rearward movement of the gathering chains and snapping roll spirals should be about the same as the forward speed of the picker.

Snapping roll clearance should be small enough to grip the stalk firmly, but the stalk should not be broken when the ears are removed. Too much clearance will increase the shattering, and driving too fast or driving off the row will also increase losses.

Williams says studies indicate that the maximum yield is obtained when corn is harvested at 25 per cent moisture content. Snapping and gathering losses increase rapidly when the moisture content falls below 20 per cent.

A combine operator can tell how his machine is operating by watching the tailrings and grain augers. If damaged corn and pieces of cob appear, the cylinder speed is too fast and the clearance too small. The machine is properly adjusted when whole cobs with no kernels attached are coming off the straw walkers.

Once the machine has been adjusted, check it in the field for harvesting efficiency. Williams says 17 kernels per square foot left in the field represents a one bushel per acre loss. And with the

corn price outlook very favorable this year, a small loss may soon become very costly.

The point for the farmer, of course, is much broader than simply cutting harvesting losses.

### Many Other Losses

The point is that farmers are constantly making little mistakes with their corn crop — mistakes which result in losses far exceeding the six per cent currently estimated as the Southern Corn Blight toll.

Drought, even a small drought, takes more than six per cent of the crop.

Planting the rows too close or too thick within the row can cost much more than six per cent. Similar losses or worse can also be had from not planting enough seed.

Improper or inadequate fertilization can be very costly.

Poor germination from inferior seed can cost much more than six per cent.

The production difference between varieties far exceeds six per cent.

Poor weed control can easily cause yield losses of two or three times the six per cent.

Since Lancaster Farming ran an article on August 22 on the corn rootworm, the word has come back from several sources that the corn rootworm probably will cause considerably more corn yield losses in Lancaster County this year than the blight. Yet, until recently, many local farmers apparently were not even aware of the rootworm in their fields or of the extensive crop losses it can cause.

### The Farmer's Control

The farmer must remember that he can exert considerable control over most of these factors which cut into his yields.

He can control his plant population, the quality of his seed, his weed control and corn rootworm. Some farmers have even made considerable progress in forming a partnership with nature through the use of irrigation and other techniques which curbed the severity of adverse weather conditions.

Corn blight? That too will be controlled. It's a matter of time. The only question is whether enough progress can be made in the next few months to achieve control in 1971 or whether it will be 1972 or 1973.

Based on reports we've seen so far, those who are selling out the 1971 corn crop for fear of the blight are probably premature. We think chances are good that losses from the blight next year will be less than this year. It's something to watch closely in the future.

### More Good Years

Last year, it was the Yellow Leaf Blight and many farmers got plagued with it again this year. But the yellow variety was overshadowed by the new southern strain.

What will it be next year?

We predict next year will be like this year for the corn producers who control, rather than are controlled by, the factors that go into making a high yielding corn crop. For most of these conscientious farmers next year should follow this year — being another good year.

For the few who don't make it this year, lean years are an occupational hazard, but the good farmers, the successful farmers don't keep repeating their mistakes.

## NOW IS THE TIME...

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent



### To Apply Lime

Small grain seedings that will go into grass-legume mixtures next season should have the lime worked into the topsoil this fall. In many cases the soil needs lime and to broadcast it on top of the winter grain this winter or next spring is not the best way to apply it. Lime needs time to sweeten the soil. If the legumes are to start as intended, Corn-stalk ground that is to be plowed this fall or winter and then seeded to legumes early next spring should have the lime mixed into the topsoil either before plowing or at the time of plowing. Don't expect lime on top of the ground to do the most good.

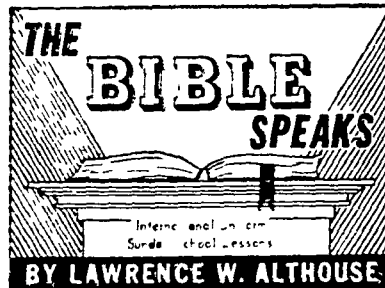
### To Beware Of Frosted Crops

Killing frosts may be expected in the next few weeks and some

crops need special attention in order to prevent the poisoning of livestock. Sorghum or the sorghum-sudan hybrids should not be used after a killing frost unless the crop stands for a week, or unless the crop is made into silage and allowed to ferment for 30 days. New growth from these plants after a killing frost may be too high in prussic acid for using in the fresh condition. Careful management is needed. Clover or alfalfa plants should not be grazed by livestock when covered with frost. permit the frost to melt and the plants to dry before grazing.

### To Grow Winter Barley

It appears that we may be facing some problems by growing continuous corn; both the (Continued from Page 4)



"NO GOOD"  
Lesson for September 20, 1970

Background Scripture: Genesis 28 through 32  
Devotional Reading: John 1:43-51.

"That boy's just no good!" That seems to be a favorite line for some adults, doesn't it? It has probably been said millions of times since history began. It has been said of some of the world's most infamous tyrants and villains and others whose names are found in history's "dishonor roll".



People also probably said this of young Jacob. They had plenty of reason for saying it too. Jacob Rev. Althouse was the kind of boy who craftily turned every situation to his advantage, regardless of what he might have to do or to whom he might have to do it. For example, using his brother's near starvation, he "conned" him in to surrendering the birthright that belonged to Esau as the first-born.

### The supplanter

What kind of brother would do that? The kind of brother Jacob was! He was well-named, for Jacob meant "he supplants," —he takes the place of another. That was Jacob all right.

Nor was this the last time he supplanted his brother Esau. In Genesis 27 we see him once again, stopping at nothing to get what he wants. The "blessing" he wants from his father was more than just some "nice words" from a dying man. The ancients believed that a man's dying words were capable of exercising real power over the events he would foresee. These words were thought so powerful in themselves that they would hold true even if mistakenly bestowed on the wrong son. No wonder we are told: "No, Esau hated Jacob..."

Fearing for his life and encouraged by his mother, Jacob began a 350-mile journey back to the land from which God

had called his grandfather Abraham. The trip would be long and treacherous and he was carrying an extra load: a burdened conscience. The neighbors probably said: "Good riddance; that boy's just no good."

### A stone for a pillow

We can imagine how weary and foot-sore Jacob must have been as he sank to the ground that night. Quite a turn of events had just taken place. A few days earlier he had been "on top of the world," having gained his brother's birthright and his father's last blessing. Now he was a fugitive; alone, broke, hungry, tired and possibly deeply troubled. Last night he had slept in the comfort of his father's house, tonight he had only a stone for a pillow.

Yet, perhaps that is what he needed—a stone pillow for his head. Without that there might have been no dream, and without the dream Jacob might never have become Israel, the father of the Twelve Tribes. That tells us something about life, doesn't it? Sometimes we need a "stone pillow," an experience of hardship, suffering or pain in order to be able to see the truth.

In his dream, Jacob encountered God—not just any god (for the Canaanites believed there were many), but the God of his grandfather Abraham and his father Isaac. Strange as it may seem, he was now to be Jacob's God and Jacob was to father God's chosen people.

### The strange choice

Why did God pick Jacob? Didn't he know that the supplanter was "just no good"? We can understand his choice of Abraham, a man of faith, and Isaac, who was an obedient man. But why Jacob?

We can never completely answer such a question. Yet we know that when God chooses a man it is not because the man is worthy as he is, but because he has the potentiality to become someone useful to God. God has often made strange choices in people. Jesus did the same thing when he chose twelve to be his disciples. Yet, by the grace of God these choices have often changed the world.

(Based on verses copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Released by Community Press Service 7-3440)

ATTEND THE CHURCH OF YOUR CHOICE SUNDAY

**LANCASTER FARMING**  
Lancaster County's Own Farm Weekly

P. O. Box 266 Lititz Pa 17543  
Office 22 E. Main St. Lititz Pa 17543  
Phone Lancaster 394 3047 or Lititz 626 2191

Robert G. Campbell Advertising Director  
Zane Wilson Managing Editor

Subscription price \$2 per year in Lancaster County \$3 elsewhere

Established November 4, 1955  
Published every Saturday by Lancaster Farming, Lititz, Pa.  
Second Class Postage paid at Lititz, Pa. 17543

Member of Newspaper Farm Editors Ass'n  
Pa. Newspaper Publishers Association  
National Newspaper Association