

Corn Grower's New Challenge

The world never grows out of problems. As soon as one is solved, there's another. or more.

This is true because changing conditions create new situations with their own particular problems

Problems, then, are an inevitable part of change.

If change is viewed as a challenge which must be faced, the problems that go with change are also challenges. With this kind of approach, new problems are creative and bring out the best in people.

That conditions change and that change has its problems was shown at the recent corn meeting. While the corn blight scare was still lingering, farmers were told not to be too concerned about it.

But at the same time, they were told the corn rootworm has been developing rapidly in recent years and has the potential for being a far more costly factor for local farmers than the blight.

How rapidly things change.

Our purpose here is not to explore why the rootworm is suddenly such a menace, but we bet it's associated with the changing farm scene. We note particularly the trends toward more corn acreage and continuous corn, both trends which make it easier for the rootworm, which relies on only corn for survival.

The point is that as we move toward bigger and better corn yields we can expect to encounter new problems created by the new conditions and methods used to generate our progress. Change inevitably creates new problems.

But we don't want — even if we could — to go back to fewer corn problems and lower yields. As long as we can achieve the higher yields with increased efficiency, we are committed to continuing change.

Problems which crop up are temporary stumbling blocks. They are challenges.

The corn rootworm is another challenge. Like many other challenges encountered on the long road to today's high yields, it will be met.

The Optimistic Corn Forecast

The Penn State extension personnel gave an excellent in-depth summary at the recent Lancaster County meeting on what is known to date about the 1971 corn crop prospects.

Much of what they said is not new, although they did an excellent job of summarizing everything and putting it in its proper context.

Their contention that Southern corn blight is not going to be any worse in Pennsylvania in 1971 than it was in 1970 goes against some previous reports and the thinking of some local farmers.

There previously was much concern that the Southern blight would overwinter here, get an early start in 1971 and, unlike in 1970, kill corn before it had properly matured.

But the Penn State men said that while the Southern blight will blow into Pennsylvania from the sunny South in 1971, the blight will again hit here too late to cause major damage.

There is, of course, always the possibility that the Penn State men, although they have the best information available, will be wrong. An unusually humid summer, it is believed by some, might cause the blight to spread faster than expected.

Also, while Pennsylvania was one of the few major corn producing states to escape major blight in 1970, Mother Nature, always tickle, might decide to be more generous to some other states instead in 1971.

But despite all the ifs, ands and buts, we believe the prediction by the Penn State specialists carries some compelling logic behind it.

More Farmer Know-How

First, there's the experience of the past two years. Besides the Southern blight this year, yellow blight hit in this area in 1969 and again in 1970. It's not new anymore. Farmers know a lot more about how to manage their crop to attain maximum plant resistance to the blights. Farmers will be

very conscious of using the best possible management practices in 1971. This will give the crop an important advantage over both 1969 and 1970.

Besides helping farmers know what to do, the experience with the yellow blight shows that what begins one year does not necessarily increase to disaster the next. Many farmers were very much worried about the yellow blight after the 1969 crop. But yellow blight — even though it was more destructive than the Southern blight — was not considered a major corn problem in 1970. While some individual farmers had major blight losses, corn loss in Pennsylvania overall was estimated at only two to five per cent, far below the seven to 15 per cent loss often cited as the typical harvesting loss.

Experience shows, we believe, that farmers and agribusinessmen adapt very rapidly to adopt new practices to blunt threats to the all-important corn crop.

More Resistant Corn

Second, the possible exposure of corn to blight in 1971 will be far below the 1970 level. While there has been much talk about the fact that the nation's seed firms cannot manufacture enough resistant seed to meet the 1971 demand, the extent to which the seed firms are making the change, we believe, has not been properly appreciated.

While there was almost none of the normal (N) corn in 1970 which is considered nearly completely resistant to the blight, some 22 per cent of all seed corn in 1971 will be N corn and this corn will have sales priority, meaning that most left-over seed corn will be of the non-N type.

Probably far more important in assessing the role of seed corn in 1971 is the fact that the firms are rapidly phasing out or improving those varieties which were most susceptible to the blight in 1970. Our information indicates that in 1970 only a handful of varieties suffered major blight losses. This means that even in the 78 per cent non-N seed, much of it showed good resistance to blight in 1970, and in 1971 there will be a major emphasis of the resistant varieties and de-emphasis of the non-resistant varieties.

We believe this combination of converting about one-fourth of corn to N or resistant seed, plus a very sharp reduction in the amount of the less resistant seed corn will make a very big difference in 1971.

The proportion of fields subject to the blight will be sharply reduced in 1971. If so, this should also tend to slow down the spread of blight from one place to another.

While it's far from certain, the combination of these and other factors could lead farmers to wonder at this time next year. Whatever happened to the blight?



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent

To Prepare Farm Show Livestock

The 1971 State Farm Show is only a few weeks away. All livestock exhibitors are urged to refer to the Premium List for all requirements in having their animals tested and injected to meet health regulations. These requirements not only protect the show animals but may prevent an outbreak in the herd or flock after the show. Your local veterinarian is qualified to do the work. Don't forget that proper fitting and training will give your animal a better chance in the show ring.

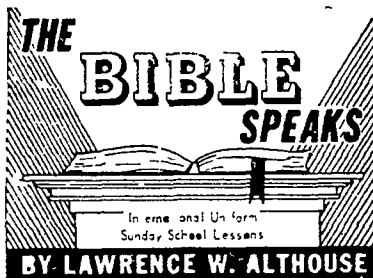
To Control Parasites

All livestock and dairy producers should be certain that they are not supporting a parasite infection in any of their animals. Body lice on the outside can do as much damage as worms in the stomach. Efficient milk production and weight gains are neces-

sary in order to make any profit; any kind of a parasite will decrease this efficiency. Two treatments two weeks apart are needed to clean out body lice. Stomach worms may be identified by submitting a fecal sample to your local veterinarian.

To Order Legume Seeds

In recent months we have heard a lot about buying and ordering the proper variety of seed corn for next year. This is in relation to leaf blight resistance. I'd like to point out the value of alfalfa and clover on many farms and to say that these seeds should also be ordered while the supply is sufficient. Growers are urged to evaluate the various varieties and then order what they want. Early spring seedlings in winter grain or as straight seedlings are two methods of establishing a new crop. The latter method is gaining in popularity and usage.



THE GREAT RACE

Lesson for December 27, 1970

Background Scripture: Philippians 3:12
Devotional Reading: Ephesians 4:17

Several decades ago an enterprising songwriter used a beautiful melody by Frederick Chopin as the basis for a song we still occasionally hear today. "I'm Always Chasing Rainbows" was one of Perry Como's biggest hits.



Rev. Althouse

Hundreds of thousands of people have sung, hummed, or heard this as a pleasant song. Yet I wonder how many have ever stopped to think of the plaintive message behind that beautiful tune?

A "wild goosechase"

As Perry Como sang the song, it all sounded very beautiful, but when you begin to consider the words by themselves, there is nothing beautiful about the experience of which they speak. Life, says the song, is a "wild goosechase" of chasing one "rainbow" after another.

Paul also saw life as a race but he saw it in much more positive terms. He described life in terms that could easily be understood by any first century A.D. sports fan. "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." He had been even more pointed in his allusion to running in 1 Corinthians 9: "So run that you may obtain it (the prize)." (24b). Later the writer of Hebrews would also urge "let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us . . ." (12:1).

So, life might well be likened to a race, rather than a stance. For Jesus did not say, "I am the position," but "I am the way . . ." and the first name given to those who followed the resurrected

Lord was "followers of the Way." Christianity was not intended to be a fall-out shelter, country club, or asylum for the fearful, but a people of God on the run in the midst of a great race. Whether that race is a "wild goosechase" or the winning of a crown of laurels depends upon the way we run it.

Don't look back

Russ Boyle, my track coach in high school, had a maxim which he never tired giving to his runners: "Don't look back!" That may seem an unimportant principle, but if you've ever done any competitive running you know that giving in to that urge to look back can cost you the race. The act of turning one's head, even ever so slightly, can throw the runner's body off-balance, may break his stride and lose a valuable second that may win or lose the race. The momentary diversion may also cause a runner to stumble or waver. "Don't look back" is a vital instruction for the athletic runner.

It is also important for this race we call "life." Paul knew this " . . . forgetting what lies behind, and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal . . ." Failure to emulate this can cost us the race. We may become impaled on the past, forever looking over our shoulders to what we have left behind.

Keep your eye on the goal!

Not only must we not look back we must keep our eye on the goal. There are times in a race when the body says "I'm exhausted; let's quit." Often the only thing that keeps us from giving in is the lure of the goal before us. We put up with the pain and exertion of the moment for the sake of what we will receive when we finish.

So it is with life. If we keep our eye on the goal we can keep going even though the body, mind, or spirit counsels quitting.

Life need not be either a "rat race" or a "wild goosechase." If, like Paul, we remember to look ahead instead of behind and keep our eyes on the prize, it can be "the great race."

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