

## Corn Outlook Still Favorable

Reports so far indicate that the Southern Corn Blight is spreading into all parts of the country.

While this is not encouraging, the reports also indicate that the number of fields infected is not large and that the infected fields are widely scattered, except in some areas, mainly in Indiana and Illinois. Except for the Southern states, which were hit hard last year and turned largely to resistant seed this year the heaviest rates of infestation appear to be generally in the same areas that were hit hardest last year.

It would appear that most of the infections which have occurred have stemmed from shelling and moving corn which was infected last year.

We're not sure what this means yet. One obvious recommendation which has already been made many times is that farmers should not shell or handle blighted corn in such a way that it will contribute to the spread of blight.

We recognize, however, that this may run contrary to economical management on the particular farm. Animals simply have to continue eating and economy dictates that the farmer continue using management practices and equipment which is available to meet the needs.

However, the farmer should weigh possible adverse effects on his corn crop of spreading blight against additional costs which may be incurred in using other feed

sources until the present corn crop matures.

Based on reports so far this year and experience gained last year, we believe that it is too early to predict what the blight will do to the crop this year.

It would appear that the blight needs moist conditions to spread effectively. Moist conditions in corn fields usually do not occur extensively until the corn crop is near maturity. As the stalks near full growth and the corn begins to form—this is the period when the ground will be shaded and moist conditions can occur. The extent of moisture, however, will depend very heavily on weather.

With hot, dry weather, blight apparently would have a hard time causing much damage. But with cloudy, humid and wet weather conditions would be ideal for spread of blight and damage to the corn crop.

Weather so far has been nearly ideal for corn production and the crop is off to a vigorous start. This in itself should be favorable. Healthy and vigorous corn, as well as early corn, we are informed, is much less subject to blight than corn which is under stress and late in maturing.

Overall, despite early infestation, reports so far indicate that the local corn crop outlook continues to be favorable. While this could change rapidly, we think farmers should still be optimistic at this time.

## Water Pollution -- What to Do?

Our report in the July 3 issue on the water survey by elementary agricultural students in the Eastern Lancaster County School District may have presented some surprises to some of our readers.

But the basic finding that about half of nearly 800 water systems checked in the New Holland area are polluted actually is not news to many officials who are aware of Lancaster County geology and water tables and conditions. Many of these officials have been saying for years that a very high percent, possibly half, of all non-public water systems in the county are polluted.

The importance of the Eastern School District survey is that it is the first extensive and reliable survey which has been made to confirm what has always been suspected.

While it is obvious that many citizens have been using polluted water for years without any known adverse effects on health, it is also true that in some instances polluted water has been at least a contributing factor in adverse health. In addition, polluted water poses future disease and health problems.

Looking to the future, it is clear that as farm operations, particularly the number of livestock and volume of animal waste, increases along with new residential development, the pollution problem will grow.

Actually, the pollution problem will likely grow much faster than the numbers of animals and people because of build-ups of

pollution which already exist and because nature tends to purify a certain level of waste, but at a certain point it cannot do so any longer. The evidence is growing that the point at which nature can take care of the pollution problem has already been passed.

The key question, of course, is what to do about the problem.

We suggest that at the very minimum, persons using well or spring systems be aware of whether their water is polluted by having periodic tests made. This way, if health problems do occur, the water can be checked out as a possible source of the problem.

Better still, possible clearing up of the problem should be studied. Sometimes, the water system can be improved to eliminate sources of contamination. Or we understand that chlorinators or ultra violet light systems can be installed to eliminate problems stemming from coliform.

In attempting to solve the problem, care should be taken to deal with reliable persons to make sure there really is a problem and that any actions taken actually do solve the problem. Reliable laboratory analysis is just as important in evaluating the condition of water as it is in determining the condition of soil and fertilizer needs.

If the problem is high nitrate count, however, it cannot be economically treated in a private water system. Since nitrate poisoning can be fatal to infants during their first few months of life, persons with infants on water systems with high nitrate counts should definitely find an alternative water source during the crucial period of infancy.

Farmers should keep in mind that animals can also be poisoned by high concentrations of nitrates in water. While we have no indication that this is a factor in animal deaths locally, it should be considered as a possibility if unexplained deaths do occur.

An obvious solution is a public water system. However, this is extremely expensive and impractical in most rural areas.

While there is no uniform solution to this problem of contaminated water, farmers should remain aware that the problem is extensive and can affect both their families and their farming operations.

## NOW IS THE TIME . .

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent



### To Control Wasps

Hornets, yellow jackets, and wasps are all of the wasp family and should be controlled. They are getting more common in many areas and often attack humans and may cause serious illness. Most of these stinging insects may be eliminated by spraying their nests at night, when there is less danger of getting stung, with a chlordane spray; aerosol bombs may be bought containing materials to kill all members of the wasp family. It is suggested that heavy clothing and a bee veil be worn to reduce danger of serious stings.

### To Beware of Lightning

An old saying that lightning never strikes in the same place twice may be true, but it is certain that some places are more dangerous than others during electrical storms. The greatest danger period is just

before the rain begins to fall. Single trees out in the open or wire fences are especially dangerous places during electrical storms. It is not uncommon for a single bolt of lightning to kill a group of cattle under a tree or along a wire fence. When losses do occur, farmers are urged to get a veterinarian examination to verify the cause of death; this will be needed for insurance claims.

### To Draw Soil Samples

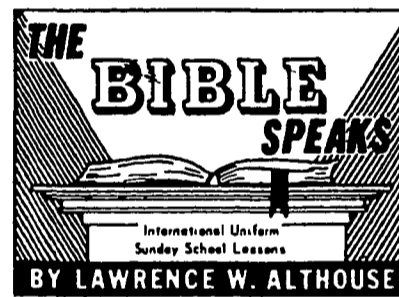
The summer seeding of alfalfa is less than a month away and small grain fields will soon be prepared for the fall seedings. To have a complete soil on this ground is good soil management and strongly recommended. Soil that needs lime should have it worked into the topsoil before the legume or small grain seeding is made. Lime and fertilizer go together for maximum crop yields.

## Help Us Serve You

Don't assume we know about your farm organization's meeting. To get your meeting on our Farm Calendar, it's safer to assume we don't know.

Remind us by calling 394-3047 or 626-2191 or by writing to Lancaster Farming, 22 E. Main St., Lititz, Pa. 17543. You'll be helping us to serve you better.

P.S. — If you're not sure you told us already, we don't mind hearing from you again.



## THE PROBLEM WITH GOOD MEN

Lesson for July 11, 1971

Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 17: 14-20, Judges 9 8-15, Mark 12 13-17; Romans 13-17, Timothy 2 1-6  
Devotional Reading: Romans 12 1-13

Reinhold Niebuhr, the great American theologian, once noted that "not much evil is done by evil men." To the contrary, "most of the evil is done by good people who do not know that they are not good." Along this same line



he concluded that the First World War had been "made inevitable not by bad people who plotted against the peace of the world but by good people who had given over their conscience into the keeping of their various political groups."

### The problem with "fatness"

Niebuhr was commenting on the tragic tendency of Christians to "leave politics" to others. Many of the failures of our society can be attributed to a failure of Christian citizenship. All too often we have been content to live our complacent lives quite indifferent to rendering any more to "Caesar" than we have had to.

This is the meaning of the parable which Jotham tells in Judges 9:8-15. The occasion of the parable is a crisis in the life of the Hebrew confederacy. Gideon, the great man of God, is dead. One of his descendants, Abimelech, an evil man, has successfully plotted

the deaths of almost all Gideon's other descendants. Ruthlessly, he seizes power for his own selfish aims

Jotham, one of the few of Gideon's other descendants who escapes, tries to rally the good but indifferent men of Shechem. Abimelech's tyranny is possible, he realizes, so long as the men of Shechem fail to respond to his challenge. So he tells them a story of how one time the trees sought a king. Going first to the noble olive tree, they ask: "Reign over us" (Judges 9:8), but the olive tree responds: "Shall I leave my fatness, by which gods and men are honored, and go and sway over the trees?"

Unfortunately, the olive tree loved its prosperous existence and did not want it disturbed for the sake of exercising responsibility. The same was also true of the fig tree and the vine. Thus, because the capable trees refused to rule, the trees in desperation turned to one who was not fit to rule, but at least willing: "Then all the trees said to the bramble, 'Come you, and reign over us!'" (9:14). And the least capable tree of all became the ruler.

### Tyranny doesn't "just happen"

One of the things that this parable should teach us is that poor government, corruption, and even tyranny do not "just happen." We find ourselves ruled by evil men, very often, not because they have waged a campaign to seduce us, but because we have actively (not passively) allowed them to fill the vacuum of leadership in our communities and nations. In the parable, the bramble bush did not seek to become king; the trees turned to him because the capable trees could not be bothered with the responsibility.

The problem with good men, all too often, is that they sit back and leave the world to those who are not good.

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