

Engagement -- a Time to Learn

The length of time a couple spends together before marriage affects the stability or permanence of their marriage, says James E. Van Horn, Penn State Extension family life specialist.

The length of an engagement has always been a personal matter for the couple in our society to decide. Yet engagement serves important purposes for couples.

It's a time for partners to talk seriously about the kind of marriage they want. It's

a time to consider what they do or do not expect of their future and of each other. It's a time to share feelings about some of the mutual responsibilities they are taking on, and a time for testing how well they can cooperate together under stress.

Van Horn advises engaged couples not to avoid conflict, but use it to learn more about how the other handles a stressful situation. Taken this way, engagement is the most important step toward a realistic marriage.

Debris, Blight and No-Till

Farmers are now being told that they should have plowed down all debris in their corn fields this year.

This advice comes from the wisdom of hindsight. This recommendation was not being made strongly earlier in the year when farmers could have heeded it.

The concern now stems from a generally acknowledged higher incidence of corn blight in no-till fields.

Penn State Extension officials had predicted that corn blight would not overwinter in Southeastern Pennsylvania. They now acknowledge that it did overwinter, in corn cribs and in many corn fields. Overwintering in fields was particularly severe in no-till fields, it is believed.

It is also reported that the blight attacked volunteer corn earlier than the newly planted corn. The incidence of blight on volunteer corn is reported particularly severe in no-till fields.

While N corn is still believed to be resistant to Southern Blight, there have been rumors that some individual fields have been severely damaged. Penn State Extension officials say that all reports of this may be wise not to subject the 1972 crop to any more stress than is absolutely essential. This means plowing down all corn debris, preferably this fall, to allow organisms in the soil to break down any diseases and fungi which might attack next year's crop.

Farmers still interested in no-till could plow down their stubble this fall and plant a cover crop, using the cover crop next year as their no-till sod.

officials express faith that the N crop will be resistant next year.

However, the feeling is growing that it type which have been checked out so far have proven to be false; usually it is established that the corn was not N corn. These

While experience with the blight indicates farmers should continue to proceed with no-till farming cautiously, we think that it should not necessarily spell the end of no-till farming.

The earliest reports urging no-till farming emphasized the importance of proper weed and insect control with no-till. It appears that the disease problem must also be considered.

With N corn next year, it may again be found that the natural advantages of no-till can still offset these advantages.

Some of the advantages include: protection of the land against serious erosion which can occur with conventional corn; lower production costs in some operations; reduced labor costs and fewer times over the field in preparing the ground, and much greater retention of moisture, a factor which could prove extremely beneficial during a drought year.

Overall, there's no doubt that the no-till concept and no-till corn farmers are taking a beating this year, but we believe that the final verdict on no-till is not and should not be in.

As farmers learn more about no-till and how to use it better, we think it still may prove to be a profitable crop technique.

Caution Needed in Diet Change

As we have noted many times already, the battle by medical authorities in regard to food-health recommendations, particularly recommendations on what to eat, could have great significance for the farm community.

In particular, there is a definite trend by health authorities toward encouraging the use of the so-called polyunsaturated fats instead of the saturated fats. The polyunsaturated fats are found in foods such as vegetables, while the saturated fats are found in foods including basic meat, egg and poultry products.

While some scientists and medical authorities are urging a switch to the foods with polyunsaturated fats, many reports, including the famous Framingham study, contradict this recommendation, or show that there is not enough known about either polyunsaturated or saturated fats to make a reliable recommendation.

In the past, health authorities have always recommended that people have a well-balanced diet including some of each of the basic food categories with every, or nearly every, meal.

The reason that authorities have always recommended a well-balanced diet, we sus-

pect, is that they simply recognized that they didn't know enough about the content of the various foods, or the effect of various elements in the foods in relation to peoples' needs.

While knowledge about nutrition has greatly expanded, we think, along with many reliable scientists and doctors, that not nearly enough still is known about human nutrition to allow anyone to tamper in a major way with the diet of Americans.

We note, for instance, a report by the American Dairy Association pointing out that the trend to substitute polyunsaturated fats for saturated fats in the diet in an attempt to lower the cholesterol level may destroy the vitamin E in the human body. The reason cited is that polyunsaturated fats burn faster, reacting more easily with oxygen, than saturated fats; therefore, the body needs a greater amount of vitamin E in a polyunsaturated diet in order to maintain proper control of metabolism.

While vitamin E was only discovered to be necessary to good nutrition as recently as 1959, some scientists now believe vitamin E may play an important role in a wide range of ways very important to the health including retarding aging, protecting fertility, subduing cancer cells, speeding the healing of burns and preventing ulcers.

The point, we think, is that efforts to change the diet substantially before enough is known about it could result in far greater harm than benefit.

If we allow the trend away from the concept of the well-rounded diet involving a wide choice of foods, health problems which stem basically from malnutrition will increase. This is why we should continue to be very skeptical toward those who urge major changes in the diet.

We think that the time is still far away when we can recommend prolonged drastic changes in the diet without creating more problems than are solved.

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Be Prepared To Ensilage Corn

The spread of the Southern Leaf Blight on some fields of corn has been very fast; growers are urged to inspect the corn plants daily to determine the development of the ear and the moisture content of the plant. Some samples may have to be tested for moisture. We are told to ensilage the corn when the silage is from 55 to 70 per cent moisture; this may be difficult to know without running a moisture test. Many stalks are still high in moisture even though many of the leaves are dead. We are also advised not to add a non-protein nitrogen such as urea or anhydrous ammonia to corn silage if moisture level is below 65 per cent. As long as any of the leaves on the corn plant remain green, the ear should be developing and gaining in feed value. The early dent stage of maturity is still desired for silage of the highest feeding value.

To Be Careful With Antibiotics

All livestock producers and especially dairymen are urged to follow the recommendation on keeping the milk, or selling the animal for beef, after it has been treated with antibiotics or other drugs. Inspections are being made constantly and producers must be aware of the regulations that have been set by the Food and Drug Administration. Local veterinarians and sanitarians are in a position to advise producers of these regulations. Most of

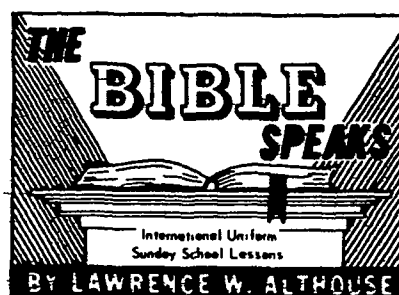
these materials can be of great help to the health and production of our livestock producer but they must be used correctly and carefully.

To Store New Grain Properly

Most farmers are looking forward to harvesting their corn crop even though some of it may be damaged by the leaf blight. The acres of resistant varieties of corn look real good and the national forecast on the corn crop is a big one. When corn is harvested for grain, either ear corn or shelled it should not be put on top of old corn for any length of storage time. Grain insects may be in the old corn and will quickly get into the new crop. The old crop should be fed out first, or sold, and not mixed with the new corn crop. We are told of a material called propionic acid that may be sprayed on shelled corn that is too high in moisture (30 per cent for normal storage) that will keep the corn from molding during the storage period. Additional research work is being done but this method appears to have some merit.

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NO PASS JUDGEMENT

Lesson for August 29, 1971

Background Scriptures: Romans 14:13-23; I Corinthians 10:23 through 11:1; Galatians 6:1-5
Devotional Reading: John 8:1-11.

It was about six months ago that my telephone rang at about three o'clock in the morning. Dazed, I groped for the phone asking myself the inevitable question, "Who could that be . . . at this time?" The voice at the other



Rev. Althouse
Someone to talk to

Upon realizing this, I felt a wave of irritation and anger. (I am not one who wakes up cheerfully at that time of night.) She had picked me and my number because my name leads the listing of clergymen in the telephone book: lucky me! "I don't know who you are," she mumbled, "but I just needed someone to talk to so that I don't decide to end it all."

We talked (or rather, I listened) for the better part of an hour. She was an intelligent woman whose life was being wasted away by alcoholism. She had had

all kinds of psychiatric treatment, been to group therapy, Alcoholics Anonymous, a private rehabilitation center, yet she was still an alcoholic. She still went on long binges and got, as she said, "roaring drunk."

Before the conversation ended, I invited her to attend our Thursday morning prayer and healing service at my church. I found it hard to conceive that we could help her when everyone else seemed to fail with her. What failed to take into consideration, however, was that the Lord himself could heal her and reclaim her life. And that's what he's doing today. Though I am not ready to make any long range claims or predictions, it is obvious to many of us that God is performing miracle in her life.

A Christian response

Today I am sobered by the thought that I had wanted to quickly terminate that conversation. I was annoyed and angered to have to disturb my sleep for babbling drunk. Yet, if I had hung-up, as I had wanted, I might never have had the opportunity to see this remarkable woman healed and made whole.

Too often churches and other groups have despised both the sinner and the sinner. They have rejected the alcoholic seeking help. They would be scandalized if problem drinkers were to frequent their services and programs.

The churches must never feel to pass judgement upon this great evil, while at the same time must heed Paul. "Let us not pass judgement on one another . . ." (Romans 14:13). We must fight alcoholism, yet at the same time love and minister to the alcoholic. That is the Christian response to the evil of alcoholism.

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