

## How Many Lambs? How Much Meat? or On Getting Production Facts

How many lambs is a ewe carrying?

This is a question which a new ultrasonic scanner developed at Cornell University is answering.

The scanner produces a high frequency sound which echoes when it strikes the fetus. These echoes are reported on polaroid film by camera mounted on the scanner. By holding the two polaroid prints, showing the right and left sides of the ewe, a composite picture shows how many lambs the ewe is carrying.

According to a recent report in the Drovers' Journal, estimation of the number of fetuses before lambing can be very useful in managing. For instance, ewes carrying more than one lamb require a higher level of nutrition in the last four to six weeks before lambing to prevent pregnancy disease, or ketosis. Also, ewes with more than one lamb require more assistance during lambing.

Separation of ewes carrying multiple lambs from those carrying a single lamb can save the owner considerable cost in feed and losses of lambs and ewes.

Previously, the only sure way to tell how many lambs a ewe was carrying was through x-rays, which are costly, time-consuming and potentially hazardous.

The same instrument developed at Cornell University is used to measure back-fat and loin eye area of cattle, sheep and swine.

We project that this type of instrument, which can give the producer valuable and reliable information on his animals, eventually will be accepted as a very important new management tool. This type of information will replace the previous system of guesstimates based on study and experience.

The only comparable type of information now available is through experience with what actually happens when the ewes have their lambs or by study of carcasses after slaughter. But this information is after the fact. It isn't reliable enough or accurate enough for the farmer to get the top-notch results which he could expect from an instrument such as the Cornell scanner.

Imagine the value of such an instrument, for instance, for the swine, cattle or sheep breeder who is striving to develop a line of animals with high feed efficiency which still have an unusually high percentage of useable meat. A scanner which could give reliable information on the meat characteristics of the animal while it's still alive could enable the breeder to develop a culling system which is many times more effective than the eye-ball system. It could enable him to do in three or four generations of breeding what may now be taking a dozen generations or more. It could help him avoid many costly set-backs which result from using breeding stock which have an appearance of quality, but which may be lacking in reality.

We think the short-comings of the eye-ball system are repeatedly demonstrated in carcass events when animals which are judged on foot as being among the best often show up relatively poorly in actual carcass tests, and animals which were downgraded in the on-foot competition sometimes show up surprisingly well in the carcass competition.

We foresee problems in getting the scanner generally accepted. But we think the scanner has the same potential value as a management tool as the already proven DHIA milk test or soil test.

It's another way of getting at the facts and working with them.

## Behind the New DES Rules

Most farmers by now have become familiar with the new seven-day withdrawal period imposed by the USDA on diethylstilbestrol, more commonly known to livestock producers as DES.

It's no secret why the new regulation was passed. Some livestock producers didn't comply with the previous two-day withdrawal rule. When DES residues were found in the livers of some animals which weren't taken off DES within the two-day period, national publicity and a public outcry left the USDA with two alternatives.

Greatly tighten the restrictions or ban the use of DES entirely. When complied with, the previous two-day withdrawal was reported to be very effective. But because a handful of producers didn't follow the rules, all producers who use DES now are not only faced with a seven-day withdrawal, but they must comply with red tape to show that they have complied with the withdrawal rules.

We expect the new rules to be effective.

Any producer who tries to take a short cut, however, should be aware of the possible consequences to himself and his industry. If caught not complying, the producer's animals will be held off the market for at least seven days; more importantly, the producer likely will become a very unpopular person within the industry—because it probably won't take many cases of non-compliance to result in banning of DES entirely.

The whole procedure may seem to some farmers to be very severe and uncompromising. It is.

But farmers themselves have more to lose than anyone else if the public loses confidence in its food supply.

Actually, a whole new industry known as natural or organic foods is already springing up. This industry promises to remove the fears that some people have about chemicals and "unnatural" elements and products used to grow food.

Naturally, as most farmers can readily predict, these natural foods cost more. In the long run, we think they will be proven not to be superior to products which have been properly fertilized and treated for insects.

Indeed, it has long been a popular saying among farmers that: You get out what you put in. When plants and animals get the best possible feed, the result will surely be the best possible food for people.

Food consumers, like other consumers today, increasingly can afford and demand quality—quality which can be counted on every time a product is purchased. Farmers can and must assure the consumer that this kind of quality will be provided.

## NOW IS THE TIME . .

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent



### To Furnish Stilbestrol Certificate

New Consumer and Marketing Regulations require that all cattle and sheep producers who sell animals for immediate slaughter must furnish a signed Certificate from the feeder. The Certificate must state that the animals had not been fed stilbestrol for seven days, and that if fed the hormone at any time, it was fed in the legally prescribed manner. Most all marketing concerns will have the blank Certificate for the feeder's signature. Local producers are urged to follow these directions in order to produce a marketable product and to stay out of trouble.

### To Put Leases in Writing

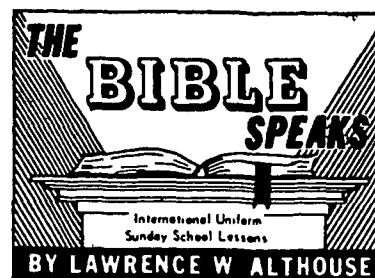
Nearly 20 per cent of our Lancaster County farms are operated by tenant farmers; this means there is some kind of a lease arrangement between landlord and tenant; it may be a share lease or a cash agreement. There are many ingredients in a good lease and not one arrangement will be suitable to all farms; however, one common suggestion is that the lease terms be put in writing and that both parties have a signed copy. We realize that verbal agreements are very common and easy to make, but they are also more likely to result in misunderstandings and poor relations. Written leases should include the responsibilities of each person and the timing of important transactions.

### To Be Careful With Aerosol Cans

You can buy most anything in an aerosol can these days, but these empty containers can be real "bombs" unless they are handled carefully. Never leave an aerosol can on a stove, radiator, or in direct sunlight; never discard it in a fire or incinerator. Some gas may remain in the can and the heat causes expansion and it may explode. Also, never puncture an aerosol container, because there may be more pressure than expected. Before discarding the container, hold the valve open until all gas has escaped.

### To Protect Drains and Spots

Electric heating cable can be a very helpful piece of equipment around any home or farm. Many farmers use this cable to keep exposed water pipes from freezing. Now the engineers suggest that these cables can be used to keep ice from forming in downspouts and roof drains. It is recommended that the cable be zig-zagged along the edge of the roof and then down into the downspouts. Make sure the cable is safely grounded and fastened with wire clips. On some slate roofs the melting snow will turn into ice along the lower edge of the roof and cause the water to back up under the slate; heating cables may be used to keep this from happening and allow the water to enter the roof drain and down the spout. Homeowners can buy a roof cable kit that will include all the materials needed to install the cable along the edge of the roof.



## TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER!

Lesson for January 30, 1972

Background Scripture: Luke 16:1-15, 19-31; 20:45 through 21:4.  
Devotional Reading: 2 Corinthians 8:1-9.

The Covenant Players have a play in their repertoire about a man who dies and finds himself in a luxurious room. By his side is an attendant who has the power to give the man whatever he wants. After a while, however,



Rev. Althouse

no meaning."

The attendant says nothing, but with a curious expression on his face, the man goes on to say to him, "I want to go to the other place; I want to go to Hell!" The attendant looks puzzled as he replies: "Why Mr. Smith, I thought you understood: this is Hell!"

### His concern for our money

Jesus didn't mind talking about money, to people (just count up all the times he spoke on this subject!). He was concerned about their money because he wanted to save them from a Hell of their own making.

Jesus knew that a man's use of money was a good measuring-stick of his faith. For example, he realized that the failure of men to share their material possessions was not just a lack of generosity, but a lack of faith. He advised men to go ahead and share freely with one another. They need not be afraid that if they share they will not have enough for their own needs. God himself will supply the needs of the person who shares what he has with others.

Thus, if we are afraid to share what we have for fear we will not have enough for ourselves, our problem is not that we don't believe in giving, but that we don't believe in God and his promise to take care of our needs.

### A substitute for God

Jesus was also very much aware that money, though neither good nor bad by itself, could be an evil influence in people's lives whenever they prized it too highly. "The Pharisees," Luke says, "... were lovers of money..." (16:14). God gave men physical possessions so that they might use them to "be fruitful and multiply." Men were to be the masters of all material possessions. But when men loved "things" too much, they were mastered by the objects they loved.

So "money" became the master of some men and Jesus was led to say, "No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other."

It is a choice all of us have to make: "You cannot serve God and mammon" (16:13). Only one of these can be your Leader.

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