

Erosion Still Big Problem

County farmers should stop and take a good look at the conservation needs for their individual farms.

Do these gutters in the corn field continue year after year and are some of them impossible to cross with the corn-picker? Does surface water come rushing through the barnyard during heavy rains carrying manure and sediment into nearby streams? If this is happening on your farm, maybe a change is needed.

Frank Lucas, with the U. S. Soil Conservation Service in Lancaster, says that soil erosion is a dominant problem on most of the sloping, well drained land in Lancaster County.

Lucas further states that soil erosion is something to cope with today, not next month.

Soil develops slowly. It is estimated that nature needs from 300 to 1,000 years to build an inch of soil. A single storm can remove more than this amount from an area that is poorly managed or protected.

Once this soil is washed away it is gone forever.

Soil erosion can also mean money out of your pocket and pollution to nearby streams. The soil leaving the farm carries play nutrients, pesticides, herbicides and other chemical pollutants. It has been estimated that each ton of soil per acre carries approximately \$2 worth of plant nutrients. This figure could be higher

where large amounts of fertilizer are applied each year.

According to Lucas, one ton of soil loss per acre annually is not excessive as many county soils can safely stand a loss of three to four tons per acre annually without harming productivity.

Soil erosion on Lancaster County's farmlands can be reduced by following conservation practices such as farming on the contour, no-till farming, contour strip cropping and establishing grass waterways so that surface water can flow off the farm safely. Diversion terraces and cropland terraces can be constructed across the field to reduce the length of slopes and to carry water off the field without erosion. Experiments have shown that cropland terracing can reduce soil loss as much as 85 per cent as compared to straight row farming.

Lucas says that the Soil Conservation Service, Room 4, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, can assist county farmers in establishing erosion control practices, but the request for assistance must be initiated by the farmer.

More and more farmers are coming to recognize that conservation pays. If your farm is not among the approximately one-third of local farms which have been treated for conservation, now's a good time to get started.

Don't Buy and Plant Weed Seeds

Recent news releases from the University of Maryland point out something about which farmers should always remain alert

It's the need to deal with reliable seed firms and to make sure that top quality seed is always used, no matter what the crop

In one release states that various Maryland governmental agencies acted to stop the sale of Ohio Certified oats which were contaminated by the noxious weed Quackgrass. The firm selling the seed was fined \$500 plus court costs

More than 300 stop sale actions were taken in Maryland in the past year on over 1,000 seed lots involving nearly a quarter of a million pounds of seed. One Maryland official stated, "Imagine what planting this seed over the state could have done to our weed problem"

Another Maryland news item refers to a "furore in seed trade circles" resulting from "heavy infestation of sorghum and sudan grass seed with seed from a Johnson grass type plant

The report goes on to note that the Maryland Crop Improvement Association

has already joined its Delaware counterpart in withdrawing recommendations on all varieties of sorghum and sudan grass seed. And county Extension agricultural agents in both states have been instructed to advise farmers not to plant any sorghum or sudan grass seed in 1972. Virginia agricultural leaders are expected to follow a similar procedure, while North Carolina officials have instituted an emergency germination testing program through which all samples of sorghum and sudan grass seed must pass in order to be approved. Finally, the Maryland Agricultural Commission has commended the State Board of Agricultural regulatory officials for taking action to join in a nationwide campaign to police the sorghum seed growing industry

Maryland farmers are being urged to rely solely on corn for silage in 1972, while oats and rye are deemed satisfactory for green chop feeding. Farmers are also being advised to increase their alfalfa acreage, because of the possibility that the sorghum seed contamination problem may exist for several years

The problem apparently stems from Texas and the Southwest where Johnsongrass grows wild. The Johnsongrass seed is reported so similar in appearance to sorghum and sudan grass seed that "it could not be readily separated, even by trained analysts in a seed laboratory." This difficulty of detection is apparently the major reason that the problem is so severe and will be so difficult to overcome.

While we have received no similar reports about seed problems in Pennsylvania, we suspect that the same general conditions would apply here as in neighboring states

It is extremely important that some of the more noxious weeds not be allowed to get established. While many new chemicals are very effective in controlling them, prevention still will prove to be a lot less costly on some of these weeds

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Provide Salt And Minerals

All types of livestock should have free access to both salt and minerals in different containers. The liberal consumption of loose salt will increase water consumption and in turn, increase both milk production in the dairy cow, or gains on fattening cattle. The lack of salt may cause poor appetites and slower gains or production. Some minerals may be in the commercial feeds, but it is doubtful if the amount is sufficient to supply the needs. There are many kinds and mixtures of minerals but in most cases the animals need larger amounts of either calcium or phosphorus. Trace mineralized salt in the mixture will usually provide all of the trace minerals that are needed. For efficient production all dairy and livestock producers should be sure of ample supplies of both salt and minerals at all times.

To Use Heat Lamps Or Brooders

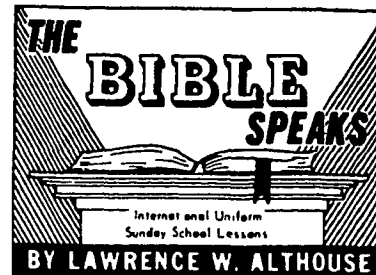
February and March are the times of new arrivals of many lambs and pigs. Under modern hog farrowing facilities there will be supplemental heat which provides the dryness and the warm temperatures for the newborn pigs. However, in some hog barns and most sheep barns the atmosphere might be too cold and damp for the new-born animals and they will get chilled the first few hours. The use of heat lamps or other brooders over the young animals for the first few days is strongly recommended. Don't let them get chilled.

To Plant Certified Seeds

In another month the 1972 growing season will be starting and some new seedlings of legumes, grass, and spring oats will be in the making. With the high cost of all inputs into a crop it is very essential to get the best quality seeds that are available. No doubt many seeds have already been ordered and delivered. If they are certified, they should give the best results and a good return for the additional inputs of labor and capital. I'm aware of the temptation to use other seeds because they are cheaper and may be in the hands of a neighbor. However, greater yields with less problems from insects and diseases will be experienced when certified seeds are used. Cheaper seeds might turn out to be far more expensive.

To Attempt Greater Forage Yields

Forage crops are very important to most Pennsylvania farmers and every effort should be extended to get the greatest yield per acre. Whether the crop is one of the grasses such as Timothy or Orchard Grass, or one of the legumes such as Alfalfa or Red Clover, the response from liberal lime and fertilizer applications should pay dividends. Some of the temporary forage crops such as sorghum or soybeans have a place on some farms and may be used as a double-crop following winter grain. A complete soil test is the place to start and then apply the recommended lime and fertilizer elements.



ON "SAVING YOURSELF"

Lesson for February 20, 1972

Background Scripture: Luke 23.
Devotional Reading: Romans 5:1-11.

"Save yourself . . .!"

That was the challenge hurled at Jesus on the day of his death. Some people believe that Judas' betrayal of Jesus was, in effect, a challenge to the Master to save himself, to force him to use his

powers to bring in the long-awaited kingdom

Pontius Pilate also challenged Jesus to save himself. Had Jesus co-operated with him, made some appeal to his authority, the Roman governor might have made a greater effort to spare the life of this man in whom he found no wrong.



Rev. Althouse

Herod too challenged Jesus to save himself. The Hebrew king was happy to see Jesus, having heard much about the Galilean. Luke says, ". . . he was hoping to see some sign done by him" (23:8). Oh yes, Jesus, save yourself and entertain me!

The value of survival

The officials at Calvary also challenged him. "He saved others; let him save himself, if he is the Christ of God, his Chosen One!" (23:25) The soldiers also took up the cry. "If you are the King of

the Jews, save yourself!" (23:37).

Last of all, there was the taunt of one of the criminals who hung on a cross next to him: "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!" (23:39).

Everyone seemed to assume that if he were really the Christ, he could save himself from death. What they seemed to overlook was the fact that if he were really the Christ, he would not save himself! If he were God's Anointed there would be something more important to him than preserving his physical existence. And because he was—and is—the Christ, Jesus held commitment and obedience to God's will as his highest goal.

Survival was not the supreme value for Jesus. This does not mean he was indifferent to it: in Gethsemane he had prayed with great emotion that the "cup" of death might be taken from him. When he realized, however, that he could save his life only by backing-down on the gospel he had been preaching, he accepted the cross rather than betray his commitment.

The right way of gaining life

Strangely enough, it was because Jesus was willing to die that he survived. Without the cross there would have been no resurrection. By laying down his life he saved it. (Hadn't he said this to his disciples?). Kenneth Boulding says: "It is by the willingness to risk death that both men and animals gain life."

What this means is that there is but one way to survive: by putting commitment to God ahead of everything else, including our fear of suffering and death. If we would wear the crown of eternal life we must first be willing, like Jesus, to bear the cross

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