

Guest Editorial

Editor's Note: Lancaster Farming begins a new series of articles this week as guest editorials. Featured will be agribusinessmen, farmers, farm organizations, and youth.

We urge any or all of you to contribute your thoughts, ideas and opinions. Maybe your past experience with a problem and how you successfully solved it may be the key to another's problems and the answer, or the partial answer.

The first article this week is contributed by Dr. Emmett I. Robertson, director of nutrition with John W. Eshelman & Sons Lancaster.

Feed Additives

Much has been said and written about feed additives during the past two decades. These technological tools — or man-made hazards, — depending on one's point of view — are again in the news. Now Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has proposed eliminating feed use of a sizable number of antibiotics and combinations unless their safety and efficacy are re-established. Otherwise, such compounds may be used only on prescription of a veterinarian. This is the gist of the FDA Task Force Report that was released in February of this year.

FDA commissioner, Dr. Charles C. Edwards, appointed a 15-member Task Force Committee with Dr. C. D. Van Houweling, director of Bureau of Veterinary Medicine as chairman. After 20 months of study, this committee rendered its report early this year.

To render judgment based on facts rather than fears or prejudices that have been created by the uninformed or the misinformed, let's review about 20 years of history and worldwide experience of using these technological tools in animal feeding.

Prior to 1950, coccidiosis was the bane of every chicken raiser. Losses in broilers usually were 10 to 20 per cent, sometimes higher, and lowered performance of survivors also. It took 12 to 14 weeks to get broilers to marketable weight. Replacement pullets often were permanently injured by scar tissue, preventing sustained egg production after housing Sulfaquinoxaline, developed by Merck & Co., was approved by FDA and feed manufacturers obtained new drug applications (NDA) after submitting data showing effectiveness of the compound and the feed manufacturer's ability to accurately mix one-fourth pound of compound in a ton of feed.

Since this breakthrough in preventive medication, there has been a series of effective coccidiostats and other compounds that have permitted broiler production to become our most efficient industry in converting feed to food to provide quality meat within means of all consumers. While there have been tremendous advances in genetics and nutrition, maintaining health by preventive medication from antibiotics and



Dr. Emmett I. Robertson

other compounds has provided benefits to all consumers.

Questions Raised

The conclusions of the Task Force Report to limit use of antibiotics in feeds and to require safety and efficacy of compounds to be reestablished on criteria not yet established by FDA, yet permit such compounds to be added to feed by veterinarians' prescription, has raised many questions. Scientists in academic institutions, industry, and in government service question the reported imminent danger of developing drug resistance in bacteria from continuous feeding of low level of antibiotics to animals. Instead, drug resistance in bacteria may more likely be caused by their use in hospitals.

The American Feed Manufacturers Association, through its antibiotic committee of which the writer is a member, has filed comments voicing its concern on the "apparent intent of a bare majority (eight of the 15) of the Task Force to eliminate without sound documentation a long-established and successful approach of using disease prevention in preference to disease treatment as a means of promoting animal health and the economic production of high quality foods of animal origin."

More than 20 years of widespread experience have demonstrated that present practices of preventing disease, promoting growth, and improving feed efficiency (documented in the Task Force Report) is more efficient than allowing disease to develop before action is taken. It was pointed out that therapeutic administration of antibacterial agents directly to humans or animals could be the greatest and possibly the only significant source of any antibacterial resistance that might pose a hazard to human and animal health. It appears unwise to abandon a system that has proven itself over a period of 20 years of disease prevention in favor of a system with inherent problems that may result in less supervision than at present.

Follow Recommendations

What are present safeguards on use of antibiotics and other feed additives (collectively termed "drugs") that feed manufacturers and feed users must follow? Before any new compound can be included in feed, the feed manufacturer must submit and obtain approval of a new drug application from Food and Drug Administration. This in essence is a permit to manufacture a medicated feed and the feed manufacturer must describe the procedure used in purchasing drugs, maintaining a "drug room" under supervision of a mill superintendent, accounting for the use of the compounds, maintain laboratory facilities for testing, and prepare medicated feed tags showing the purpose of the compound, the active drug ingredient, feeding directions and withdrawal of the medicated feed before marketing, if that be required.

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NOW IS THE TIME . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Plant Proper Corn Population

The corn planting season is at hand and when weather permits many acres of this important grain crop will go into the ground. Growers are urged to take time to study the planting rate wanted on their fields and be sure the planter will drop the right amount. Allowance should be made for some mortality from birds, insects, and poor germination. The idea should be to plant thick enough to get the number of matured plants per acre and not the number of kernels dropped per acre. (10 to 15 per cent seed loss can be expected). The corn population should be matched with the fertility of the field. The 1972 Agronomy Guide gives some very useful information regarding corn planting rates. Planters should be operated slow enough to permit the corn to be dropped accurately.

To Cut Forages at Proper Maturity

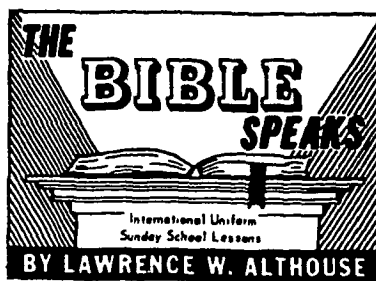
One of the most important things to do in order to get quality hay or silage is to cut the forage crop when it is at its peak of feed nutrients. This will vary according to the crop but growers are urged to obtain data regarding the best time to cut. Winter rye is growing rapidly and if it is to be made into silage, it should be cut at heading time; other small grains are best in the blossom stage. Grasses are best at heading time. Most all forage crops should be wilted to get rid of excess moisture.

To Prevent Soil Erosion
Every land owner should adopt

practices that will prevent the soil and water from running off of the land. This is not only true for farmers but for developers, builders, and contractors. We often see areas of land that are left open for several months after all construction is finished. The effort should be to get a ground cover (sod) on the land just as soon as possible. Many tons of silt are washed into our streams, which is pollution, that does not come from farm land. Steep slopes should be covered with sod, crown vetch, or honeysuckle plants. When water is allowed to run down slopes that do not have any vegetative cover then we have soil erosion and eventually stream pollution.

To Be Careful With Lawn Mowers

The lawn mowing season has arrived and everyone should realize the danger of mowers and especially rotary mowers. These sharp blades are turning very rapidly and can pick up objects and throw them through windows or into human beings. All owners are urged to clean up their area of all objects every time before they mow in order to prevent accidents. Children should be warned about the dangers of these rotating blades and to keep all parts of the body out of reach. On steep terraces or banks the rotary mower should be used carefully in order to keep toes and feet out from under the blades. Riding mowers should go up and down steep slopes rather than risk upsetting from going across the slopes. Be very careful with all rotary mowers: haste and carelessness will result in possible injury.



EXPENSIVE LOYALTY!

Lesson for April 30, 1972

Background Scriptures: Luke 24:45-49; John 17:6-23; Acts 13:1-3
Devotional Reading: John 17:18-26.

In Foochow, China, according to E. Stanley Jones, there are three graves side by side all bearing the same last name. Two of these mark the burial place of two daughters of an Australian widow. They came to Foochow as Christian missionaries and were murdered to stop the work of Christ in that area.



How much is "enough?"

Can you imagine the feelings of this mother when she received the news that both her children had been killed in a senseless crime? There was nothing more left of her family but herself. Surely she had given enough to Christ!

Apparently the Australian widow did not think so, for at the age of 62 she sold all she had and went to Foochow, not for revenge or even justice, but to learn the language and give the remaining years of her life teaching school for Jesus Christ in that

hostile land. She had given him a great deal already, but because she was committed to Christ without reservation, she thought in terms of Christ's need, not her own loss.

The widow knew that her life was committed to the Master. Therefore she sent her daughters to China instead of her good wishes and intentions. Later, instead of money, she sent herself. Her loyalty to Jesus Christ was expensive. The three tombstones in the Foochow cemetery offer mute testimony to that fact.

The cost of sending the gospel into the world is high. Jesus paid with his life and he warned his disciples that they should be prepared to pay the same cost. Jesus prayed: "As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (John 17:18). There is no cut-rate bargain-basement way of spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. There never will be.

"While they were worshipping . . ."

The writer of Acts tells us that "While they (the disciples) were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (13:2). You might say, "How wonderful that God spoke to them in that way!" Yet that experience is not so rare as we might think. Don't you think God speaks to us that way while we are worshipping him? He does, you know, even though we may not listen to him. He is speaking to you, but you may not want to pay the price.

(Based on outlines copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Released by Community Press Service.)

LANCASTER FARMING

Lancaster County's Own Farm Weekly

P.O. Box 266 - Lititz, Pa. 17543
Office: 22 E. Main St., Lititz Pa. 17543
Record-Express Office Bldg.
Phone: Lancaster 717-394-3047 or Lititz 717-626-2191

Subscription price: \$2 per year in Lancaster County; \$3 elsewhere

Established November 4, 1955

Published every Saturday by Lancaster Farming, Lititz, Pa.
Second Class Postage paid at Lititz, Pa. 17543.

Members of Newspaper Farm Editors Assn., Pa. Newspaper Publishers Association, and National Newspaper Association