

Guest Editorial

Editor's Note: The guest editorial for this week was submitted by J. B. Shaffer, farm specialist with PP&L.

Electric Check-Up Pays Off for Farmers

With the intensified livestock operations in Southeastern Pennsylvania, farmers are using more electricity than ever before. In fact, most farmers are finding they have increased their electric consumption faster than they thought possible just a few years ago. Because of this growth, farmstead wiring can be inadequate within several years.

One symptom of an overworked and/or inadequate electric system is fuse blowing. Fuses or circuit breakers act like a safety valve. They shut off electricity when the flow of current is too great. When a fuse blows, disconnect all electric attachments to that circuit. Replace the fuse or set the breaker. If the circuit is again broken, there is a good chance that there is trouble in the wiring that will require an electrician.

When fuses blow or circuit breakers trip time after time, while equipment is in use, it probably means that too many appliances are connected to the same circuit. Connect some of the load to a different circuit, or install heavier wiring. Above all, warn safety experts, don't replace a blown fuse with a larger one. This only creates a fire hazard.

Another sign that some adjustments are needed in the electric system is the dimming of lights. Most electric motors draw several times as much current when they start as when they are running, so some light dimming is to be expected when starting a motor. However, if the lights stay dim while the motor is in use, heavier wiring is probably needed.

There may also be too much distance between the electric distribution point and the equipment. Long runs need heavier wiring. In some cases, it may even be worthwhile to relocate the point of electric distribution closer to larger motors.

Proper Grounding of Buildings is a Must

Proper grounding of farm electric systems protects lives -- safeguards animals and poultry and assures dependable operation of the system.

One of the big trends in farm construction is the all metal building. Its durability and convenience features give the all metal building broad application in agriculture. The dairy farmer, for example, can use them in nearly every phase of his program and the same is true in beef, poultry, and swine operations. Grain farmers, too, use metal buildings to store their harvest and machinery.

For the safe use, the all metal building must be given special attention when it comes to grounding. When other types of buildings obviously contain metal parts, none conduct uncontrolled electric energy as efficiently as the all metal building.

Farmers who are thinking about constructing an all metal building should make sure that plans call for adequate grounding. Those who have recently constructed metal buildings, and are uncertain about the grounding systems should have their electrical contractor check the system thoroughly.

One system of grounding that is being used on many farms is bonding -- or the tying together of all electric equipment and metal parts to one ground circuit.

By bonding the building and equipment, any fault current automatically has an easy exit to the ground. Also, the chance of voltage build-up in any single piece of equipment or in metal is minimized.

Even so, for added safety, individually



J. B. Shaffer
PP&L Farm Specialist

grounding certain items such as gutter cleaners and other equipment that is likely to be used under damp or wet conditions is necessary.

Portable Power Tools Great if Used Safely

Power tools are great time savers and you can do so many things with them. There is an important safety factor to observe and that is the grounding of all power tools.

This safety feature is the reason manufacturers supply three-pronged grounding type plugs with most portable tools and appliances. The ground wire "siphons-off" fault current that may be caused by a short, poor insulators or dampness. If the tool has no ground, then the operator becomes the conductor of a current and he receives a shock.

For those receptacles accepting only two-pronged plugs, there are adaptors which permit use of power equipment with a three-pronged plug. The pig tail wire on the adaptor should be grounded to the metal cover plate screw which connects to the already grounded wall outlet box. In older buildings, a third wire from the ground box to the receptacle will have to be added to make this work.

Another kind of "shock proofing" is double insulation. Tools that have this safety feature have two layers of insulation. The top layer or outer covering of the tool is made of high impact plastic, which is a poor conductor of electric current. Double insulation is generally more expensive than the three-prong plug ground. Users should remember that only the tool, not the cord, is protected with double insulation.

A third, and the newest kind of shock protecting device is called a circuit interrupter. This device stops the current flow. If the tool or appliance plugged into it develops a shock causing fault, the circuit interrupter detects an electric shock by the imbalance of currents in the two wires supplying power to the tools.

Another factor in safe use of power tools is proper use and handling. Manufacturers are required by law to make a safe tool. Never use tools when safety shields are out of place or the tool's cover is missing, broken or cracked. Take time to read manufacturers' instructions.

Safety experts say that common sense is also an important factor in use of tools and appliances. For instance, never stand in water while using an electric tool. Keep tools in good repair. Always have spare grounding adaptors and finally, make sure that the electrical wiring in your building and on your farmstead meets safety standards.

We Need the Labs

Rumors, even false ones, often force us to look more closely at the obvious. Such a false rumor is the one about closing the

State's Animal Industry Laboratories. The rumor has made a lot of people realize just
(Continued On Page 16)

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent



To Control Alfalfa Weevil

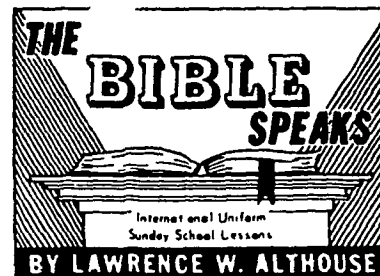
We have often heard of "comebacks" and it seems that the old alfalfa weevil might just have done this in some areas of the southeast. We have reports of very serious eating of the alfalfa plants before they get to the bud stage. The decision must be made whether or not to spray and wait the seven to 14 days before harvest, or cut as soon as possible without any spray. We are advised that it is practical to spray a field if at least 75 per cent of the plants are being eaten before it matures to the bud stage. Less infestation would mean to let it get more mature, then harvest the crop and spray the stubble; growers will have to keep a close watch on their fields; hot weather will develop the buds and blossoms rapidly and soon the alfalfa may be cut. Materials to be used are the same as in the last two former years; parathion, or a mixture of parathion and malathion or methoxychlor are recommended.

To Wait for Blossoms

New stands of alfalfa should not be harvested until at least 10 to 20 per cent of the plants are in blossom; we have had several phone calls on this subject and feel that the new stand should be a bit more mature for this first cutting. If it is cut in the bud stage, the plants may be weakened resulting in lower yields for the remainder of this year and weaker plants this winter.

To Beware of Soybean Seed

We continue to get warnings



IS CHRIST SPECIAL?

Lesson for May 28, 1972

Background Scripture: Colossians 3:1-17, Peter 4:12-19, Revelation 2:1-7, 3:14-22

Devotional Reading 1 Peter 2:1-6

"God I believe in," said a parishoner candidly, "but I've never understood why we make such a fuss over Jesus."

The statement bothered me; not that I thought she shouldn't have said it—I was glad she had—but that the church had somehow failed to convey its fundamental truth about Christ. If she had been the only one ever to have said that, I wouldn't have taken it quite so seriously, but she wasn't. I have heard many ask the same question or state the same belief in one way or another.

On things above

Strangely, this was the same question that occasioned Paul's letter to the church at Colossae. People in the church there were being besieged by strange religious teachings that tended to combine Christianity with other religious faiths. The end result was a watered-down version of the gospel and a Christ who was but one of a number of divine revelations.

So Paul wrote his letter to help

from our Agronomy Extension Office at Penn State regarding the poor quality of soybean seed this year. Growers are urged to use only Certified seed from a dependable dealer; we get reports of germination being as low as only 14 per cent on some samples with unknown background. All seeds should be treated with a recommended fungicide such as Arasan 70 R in order to prevent various diseases. Soybean planting time is at hand and growers are urged to give some attention to seed quality. The beans should be inoculated and the fertilizer should be drilled into the ground prior to seeding unless the drill or planter has a special fertilizer attachment that keeps the fertilizer and the seed separated. The use of some herbicide for weed control is suggested; the 1972 Agronomy Guide gives additional information.

To Manage Forage Harvesting

The harvesting of a forage crop for either hay or silage is worthy of considerable planning and attention. The feed nutrients in the crop are very important if they get harvested and not lost in the field. The proper stage of maturity, the right amount of wilting, and the careful harvesting to avoid field losses are all important. Careful management of the harvest will reduce feed costs this winter. Quality forage does not come easy and takes planning throughout the entire year in order to make the most of it.

the Christians at Colossae to find an answer to the question: "Is Christ one Lord among many, or is he unique?" Paul's response was unambiguous: "He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth . . . He is before all things and in him all things hold together . . . For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell . . ." (1:15, 17, 19).

But Paul was concerned, not only that they resist erroneous beliefs, but that they also resist the practical results of those beliefs as well. Among those practical results of a watered-down Christian faith were the practice of useless rituals and regulations. "Why do you submit to regulations?" Paul wanted to know. "These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting rigor or devotion and self-abasement and severity to the body, but they are of no value in checking the indulgence of the flesh" (2:23).

And whatever you do . . .

This brings us to another practical consequence of their watered-down faith: immoral behavior. Because their practice of the faith was diluted by many pagan practices, the moral life of the church had suffered. Strange ideas had produced strange behavior.

So Paul gives them a standard by which they can sort out confusing beliefs and practices. "If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is . . . Set your mind on things that are above, not on things that are on the earth . . . And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus . . ." (3:1, 2, 17).

It is Christ, then, who makes the difference.

(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.)