

So Long '72!

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And good riddance, a lot will say. For many area farmers, it's been one of the poorest years on record.

Spring seemed to begin well, with enough rain to get crops off to a good start. But the rains seemed never to stop, and the resultant floods left in their wake ruined and stunted crops, downed buildings, drowned livestock and tons of mud and debris. Months after the flood, some farmers were still trying to dig out.

Then after a surfeit of rain in the spring, we had none to help crops through the summer. Tobacco farmers were among the hardest hit by both the floods and the drought.

Other trials visited on farmers here and throughout the nation were a hog cholera epidemic, rocketing feed costs, and the

ever-tightening vise of agriculture's profit-cost squeeze.

For many it's been a very bad year. But we've heard of no farmers locally who were forced out of farming in '72, and if anyone can weather a year like the one just past, he can probably handle just about anything.

Except for the feed cost situation, the new year starts on a definite upswing. Egg prices are once again at a profitable level. Beef and hog prices are setting records. The market for milk and milk products is extremely strong. And urban folks here and across the country seem to be sympathetic with farmers' concerns.

Let's hope '73 brings more smiles than frowns. It almost certainly can't be worse than the year just past, and that's something we can all be thankful for.

All You Can Expect

The US meat industry has proven that even in an inflationary era a free market can function in a way that assures both abundance and an equitable price level. During the past 20 years, while the farmer has seen his production costs rise an average of 50 percent, farm prices have risen only 6 percent.

Farmers have been able to survive, thanks largely to massive increases in productivity. The beef industry provides one of the best measures of that increased productivity in the manner in which consumers have benefited.

Per capita beef consumption in the United States amounted to 82 pounds in 1960. Within 12 years, it has grown by 34 pounds per person. Furthermore, experts predict that per capita beef consumption will rise another 22 to 27 pounds between 1971 and 1980, reaching 135 to 140 pounds. This amounts to an annual rate of increase of about 3 percent. Some 85 million additional cattle will have to be fed in 1980 to match this increase in demand.

What these figures all boil down to is that

Americans like meat. And they are able to buy it at free market prices, which in turn have given the incentives to the beef industry to step up productive efficiency and strive aggressively to provide the quality and quantity of meat demanded by the consumer.

Right now, according to a pamphlet published by the National Live Stock and Meat Board, the industry is endeavoring, with greater energy than at anytime in the past, to present the facts about the meat industry and meat prices. In the words of the pamphlet, it is working "... full time to tell editors, columnists, news writers and housewives the beef price story ... that beef is still a terrific buy ... that American cattlemen are producing to the hilt ... that in our society of free competitive livestock marketing, the price of beef is still set by supply and consumer demand."

In short, the industry is striving to show how the free market guarantees abundance at a fair price. No one can reasonably expect more.

WE'RE INAUGURATING



Grassroots Opinions

TERRE HAUTE, IND., TRIBUNE: "Litterbug" sounds cute, but there's nothing in the least cute about the litterbug. He - or she, for the female of the species is as deadly as the male - is rather a nasty creature who brings to mind the bird that fouls its own nest. More or less innocent carelessness plays a part in lit-

tering, granted. Is carelessness much of an excuse? We think not. A park or picnic ground or roadside blighted with people residue - scraps of paper, garbage, throwaway cups and cans and bottles - is no less so because the litterers were not vicious nor nasty, but simply careless. The results are the same."

NOW IS THE TIME . . .

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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To Continue Swine Sanitation Practices

Even though the ban on transporting hogs in Pennsylvania has been lifted, except the quarantined areas, there is still need for strict sanitation practices on every hog farm. Producers should be very careful to their animals from sales or other public livestock places. Visitors to the swine barns should be limited and under strict regulations. All stray dogs, cats, and wild birds should be kept away from the swine herd. Close supervision several times daily of the animals and prompt reporting to the local veterinarian of any sick animals is very important. The swine industry is a very important part of our agricultural economy and warrants very careful management at this time.

To Prepare Farm Show Exhibits

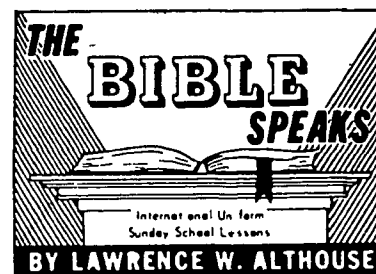
The 1973 State Farm Show opens on January 8 at Harrisburg. Lancaster County folks usually exhibit hundreds of items each year in dozens of departments. All exhibitors are urged to secure a Premium List booklet and follow the instructions carefully. Livestock should be prepared to meet the health regulations. Other exhibits require time and skill to be properly prepared and selected. The competition will be strong and anything worth doing is worth doing right. Don't be afraid to spend time in selecting and preparing the exhibit.

To Protect New-Born Animals

In many flocks of sheep and herds of swine the new-born lambs and pigs will arrive in cold weather and will need some protection. If a heated building is not available, we suggest small pens with heat lamps to warm the little animals quickly and get them dry. The heat lamps should be securely fastened out of the reach of the mother animals. Close supervision at farrowing or lambing time is very important toward the effort of saving a high percentage of the animals. A warm area, dry, and free of drafts will help the new arrivals get on their feet and beging to nurse from their mother.

To Evaluate Farm Records

Accurate farm records are very important for many reasons including Income Tax reporting; however, one of the most important uses of these records is to guide the farm operation in the future. In making plans for 1973 it is strongly advised that farm operators spend some time in studying their farm accounts to try to correct areas of poor return and high costs. Time spent at the farm desk during the winter months could be very important in doing a better job next year and a better job of farm management. Good management and planning must be done during the winter months in order to be ready for the growing season of the spring and summer months.



BEYOND RESOLUTIONS

Lesson for December 31, 1972

Background Scripture: Jeremiah 18:1-11, 32:1-25
Devotional Reading: Isaiah 64:4-9.

Someone has said that it is good that most of us do not take New Year's resolutions very seriously, for the frustration of finding that we do not live up to them would be too great. Actually, there is nothing wrong with New Year's resolutions — in fact, we probably ought to do this more often than annually. The problem is that we need to go beyond making resolutions. There is something more involved if we are



Rev. Althouse

ever to change.

"Thou art the potter . . ."

God used a very simple analogy to teach Jeremiah and the people a very important truth. Getting him to observe how, sometimes, despite the skill of the potter, the vessel is broken or spoiled, God is suggesting that men are like that clay vessel, capable of being broken and capable of being remade.

Like the potter, God shapes us and moulds us. If, however, we are resistant to him, we become like a spoiled vessel in the potter's hands. The people of Israel were a good illustration. God had

lovingly shaped this people according to his plan, yet Israel had not yielded completely to him.

Thus says the Lord, I am shaping evil against you and devising a plan against you. Return every one from his evil way, and amend your ways and your doings (Jeremiah 18:11). God does not want us to be evil, but he does not compel us to be good, either. We can choose to "return" and "amend" our ways, or we can be resistant, unyielding.

"We are the clay . . ."

Yet, if the potter needs co-operation from the clay, neither can the clay do it without the potter. The only thing the spoiled vessel could do was to allow the potter to reshape it.

... he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do (18:4).

It is an old story: a man cannot pull himself up by his own bootstraps. He can make a mess of his life without any help at all, but he cannot remake that life by his own efforts. He needs the touch of the Master Craftsman. That should not surprise us, for it is an every day experience: my television set can go on the blink by itself, but it cannot repair itself. Neither can I.

This is why we say that we must go beyond resolutions. A resolution is merely the expression of a willingness to change, but it is not the power to accomplish it. That is why so many resolutions fail: they are decisions without the power to bring them off. The resolution we must furnish, but the power, comes from God alone.

If you want to change, it takes both resolution and power. It is in yielding ourselves to his hands that carries us beyond resolution to change and growth in the direction of the person that God created us to be.

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