

# Good News For All

The rich black soil of America's farmlands produced a harvest in 1973 the likes of which has never been seen before -- a healthy sign for the economy and a blessing for the farmer, who is now realizing some of the highest prices in U. S. history.

Since economic stability ultimately hinges upon the success of our agricultural industry, the implications of this situation are far-reaching. One farmer explains it this way, "If the farmers have it good, then the nation is going to have it good." He has a point. All things considered, Americans have never experienced such prosperity as now. True, there have been occasional, temporary food shortages, and inflation persistently nips at the heels of the consumer. But our stores are still brimming with well-stocked shelves; and, though the percentage may rise, the average American family devoted only about 15.6 percent of its disposable income

for food in 1973.

As "Time" magazine sees it, "... the improvement in the farmer's lot will probably last for many years. Prospects are strong that world demand for food will continue to grow rapidly, auguring a good return for farmers ... Simultaneously, farm output will rise because the government, in a historic and long-overdue policy shift, will no longer pay farmers to hold down production." This is, indeed, good news for our international balance of trade, not to mention the total world economy which leans so heavily upon U.S. agriculture.

Even an industrialized society like the U.S. must acknowledge the significant role free market agriculture plays in maintenance of "the good life." The farm community may have shrunk over the years, but its importance has not.

# 5000 Years of Failure

There is nothing new in endeavors to impose price controls on life's essentials. Fifty years ago, a paper was published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics Librarian, Mary G. Lacey of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, on "FOOD CONTROL DURING 46 CENTURIES." The paper reviews what is recorded in history on government food controls as early as 2830 B. C. in Egypt through the days of Confucius in China to the city-state of Athens, Greece around 400 B. C.

It is concluded that, "The history of government limitation of price seems to teach one clear lesson -- that in

attempting to ease the burdens of the people in a time of high prices by artificially setting a limit to them, the people are not relieved but only exchange one set of ills for another which is greater. Among those ills are (1) the withholding of goods from the market; (2) the dividing of the community into two hostile camps ... (3) the practical difficulties of enforcing such limitation in prices which in the very nature of the case requires the cooperation of both producer and consumer to make it effective." One thing can be said of attempts to freeze prices -- they have an unblemished record of unworkability.

# Rational Answer

All an argument usually proves is that two people are present. And that is about how effective angry confrontations between consumer "protectors" and businessmen are. A successful, lasting resolution of differences will come only when we tackle "the gap between business performance and consumer expectations" through constructive consumerism.

Constructive consumerism is defined as "rational, temperate, candid dialogue between business and consumers to solve a common problem." As one expert has noted, "Working together, business and consumers can at least partially solve the problems that arise from the complexities of modern life and make them less abrasive. The consumer movement can become creative and productive. It can be constructive consumerism."

In the quest for constructive consumerism, it is sometimes necessary to call upon an impartial third party to help resolve differences and spark productive dialogue and action. That is where the Better Business Bureaus come in. The BBB has been dedicated to maintaining ethical standards in the marketplace for six decades. Now, operating in 137 U. S. cities under the leadership of the Council of Better Business Bureaus, the BBB's programs of mediation and arbitration have settled many disputes satisfactorily.

The formation of the BBB as a self-policing force in the business world shows, as nothing else can, the sincere desire of American merchants to meet the needs of the consumers -- in a constructive way. And isn't that what consumerism is really all about?

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ONEONTA, ALA., SOUTHERN DEMOCRAT: "Oil companies say that a vehicle driven no faster than 50 miles an hour requires 11 percent less fuel than when driven 60 miles per hour. It would be an ironic twist of fate if highways should become safer places not because drivers are endeavoring to make them safe but are trying to save gasoline."

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YUBA CITY, CALIF., INDEPENDENT-HERALD. "Russian intellectuals are perfectly free to express dissenting opinions. And the government is perfectly free to make them wish they hadn't."

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As BARRON'S, Business & Financial Weekly points out, "The worldwide oil shortage is not limited to capitalist nations. Rumania, which imports no Soviet oil and depends on Arab, Iranian and Venezuelan fuel, is running short. Electricity and gas supply of households will be curtailed, public lighting reduced and automotive transport subject to lower speed limits. Bulgaria, which depends on Soviet oil, took similar measures."

# NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith  
County Agr. Agent  
Telephone 394-6851



**TO USE CARE IN BUYING LIVESTOCK**  
Due to the large amount of traffic in all species of livestock in this part of the state, producers should be very careful about the health of new animals. The purchase of feeder pigs and feeder cattle is very common, but there is always danger of buying another disease or contagious infection. Feeder pigs should come with health papers and assurance of no contagious disease. Severe losses have been experienced with "bargain" pigs with uncertain health backgrounds. The segregation of these animals for at least 30 days is still a very good practice. Strict sanitation and caution about buying or bringing home infections should be used at this time.

### TO BE CAREFUL WITH SUPPLEMENTAL HEATING UNITS

In our efforts to adjust to the energy shortages, extreme care should be used in the purchase and installation of supplemental heat units with which the owner is not totally familiar. The use of extra stoves, space heaters, fireplaces, or portable burners might replace some of the normal fuel demands, but could present additional fire and health hazards. All of these should be installed or inspected by a licensed heating contractor or fire company official before being used. Extra ventilation may be needed with some of these supplemental heat units. Barbecue grills should not be used indoors unless in a fireplace with flue open, or some special means of removing the carbon monoxide gas and smoke. Don't take chances with supplemental heat units.

**TO EXPAND CAREFULLY**  
The trend toward larger farm operations continues and in some cases may not be profitable. Larger units do not necessarily mean more net return. Good planning and management becomes more important. If additional structures or buildings are needed, then building permits and waste disposal plans are needed before construction begins. Local township officials should be consulted at the very start of these intentions. Observing and evaluating other similar operations and structures might be advisable before construction begins. It is much better to make mistakes on paper or on the drawing board, then to make them during construction. Complete planning and good foresight is very essential.

### RO DEVELOP FARM CONSERVATION PLANS

Pennsylvania now has soil erosion and sedimentation regulations; they were adopted in September 1972. The earth moving part of the regulations went into effect last July. The agricultural part is to be effective July 1, 1977. This means that all farmers should be developing a soil conservation plan, if they do not already have one. The Soil Conservation Service has been designated as the agency to help farmers develop these plans. To get started, the farm owner or tenant should request this type of assistance from the Soil Conservation office. Several meetings were held last fall throughout Lancaster County to present the details on this program. Farmers are urged to take action soon rather than to wait and be caught with the last-minute rush at the deadline.

# Letters to the Editor

Editor:

I read with interest the special report on the availability of farm credit in the January 19 issue of Lancaster Farming. One might conclude from reading it, however, that Lancaster Farming is not aware of the existence of the largest non-government related farm mortgage lender in the county -- Equitable Life.

Equitable has over \$8,000,000 worth of farm mortgages in Lancaster County, and over \$12,000,000 in the general area, and over \$850,000,000 in the United States. In 1973 alone, I personally processed close to \$4,000,000 worth of farm mortgages.

You may be interested in knowing that some lenders loan Equitable's money along with their own, because of the shortage of their own funds. One county bank is collecting payments on several million dollars of farm mortgages through Equitable, which the bank processed for their own customers.

I appreciate receiving LANCASTER FARMING and feel that it is doing a tremendous job of reaching the farming community.

Clifford B. Huffman  
Area Loan Manager  
Equitable Life

# Conservation is Important to Landusers

Conservation was an important part of many Lebanon County landusers activities during 1973 according to Karl Hellerick, US Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service. 40,000 feet of subsurface drains and 8500 feet of surface drains were installed during the year.

The SCS provided technical assistance for 150 acres of strip cropping, 1000 feet of diversion and 750 feet of grassed waterways. Landowners also installed three ponds.

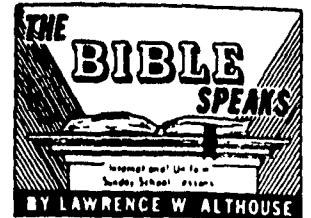
Agnes storm damages were repaired on Hammer Creek in cooperation with landowners and local county and state governments. 3500 feet of stream banks were protected.

A report on the Quittapahilla Creek flood damage was prepared and additional studies were recommended for a possible PL 566, small watershed project.

During 1973, thirty seven plans and reports were prepared for landusers for agriculture or subdivision uses.

Hellerick stated that January and February are the ideal times to plan conservation work for 1974. It is especially important with the current energy situation.

Landusers who want to schedule technical assistance should call 272-6621, Extension 407.



## THE SOURCE

Lesson for January 27, 1974

Background Scripture John 14:1-7  
15:1-17  
Devotional Reading: John 14:1-7

A British clergyman, J. B. Phillips, gained much acclaim and reknown for his New Testament in Modern English. Encouraged by public response to his writing, J. B. Phillips began to write a succession of books that were best sellers in the religious field.

Along with this sudden rise in fame there came an ever growing list of invitations to lecture and broadcast, not only in England, but abroad as well. He was constantly interviewed by the press and there was a steady stream of people coming to him for one thing or another.

### Cut-off from our source

There was, however, a terrible price to be paid for this success. There was being built an image of J. B. Phillips that was not really J. B. Phillips at all. People no longer regarded him as an ordinary human being. "Everything I wrote or said," he reveals, "had to be better than the last." The public image of J. B. Phillips "grew and grew until it was so unlike me that I could no longer live with it."

Realizing this, he found that his flow of creativity had been cut off. Writing, once a pleasure, now became an almost impossible drudgery. A painter by hobby, he also discovered that he was losing his acute sense of color, taking hours to mix shades that he had before done in seconds.

Then he made an important discovery that has been made by so many successful men who have suffered creative decay: some where in the process of becoming successful he had cut himself off from the source of his creativity and success. He had failed to remember the admonition of Jesus: "Apart from me you can do nothing" (15:5).

### "If you abide in me..."

It is in close day by day fellowship with Christ that we find the resources for daily living. Unfortunately, however, we frequently find ourselves too busy for that fellowship and we begin to grow further and further away from that empowering relationship. Until at last overextended in every direction we find nothing upon which to draw, only emptiness where once Christ lived.

A young man was enamored of Abraham Lincoln. He bought every book on Lincoln that he could find, made a collection of his speeches and committed to memory many of the great man's utterances. One day someone said to him, "Do you know what you remind me very much of, Abraham Lincoln?" The man replied, "That is understandable for I have lived with him many years."

So as we live closely with the Master we will become more like him. "I am the vine," said Jesus, "you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit." (15:5)

If our lives are to be fruitful we must continue to live closely to him who is our source. The branches need that living vine.

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