

First in Agriculture - Last in County Fairs

In the space of two short years, the total of all agricultural products produced in Lancaster County soared \$100 million, from \$211 million in 1971 to \$311 million last year. Some of this increase, it must be said, is due to inflation. And certainly a large portion of farmers' increased incomes has gone to pay for ever higher costs of production.

But inflation alone doesn't account for the increase, and not all the increase has been soaked up by higher input costs. The plain truth is that agriculture in Lancaster County is bigger than ever. In 1973, there were more cows, more broilers, more steers, more hogs and more sheep than in 1971. The only two declines in animal numbers were in layers and other poultry, turkeys, ducks, geese, etc.

Agriculture is Lancaster County's number one industry. Lancaster County is the leading farm county in the state, and in the Northeast, and 12th in the nation in terms of the value of farm products. It is first in the value of farm products among non-irrigated counties. If you'd expect any place in the country to have a county fair, you'd expect Lancaster County to have one of the best. And yet we don't have one at all. Why?

Well, we do have five community fairs. They're well run, they attract a lot of people, and they each have their supporters. But let's face it. Only two of those fairs are strictly agricultural - the Solanco and the West Lampeter fairs. New Holland's agricultural exhibits are crammed into one tiny tent. The New Holland fair is a carnival. A nice carnival, but a carnival. Ephrata and Manheim do have very good farm exhibits and contests, and

the Ephrata folks have strengthened their ag program tremendously in the past few years. But the Manheim fair leaders are questioning the wisdom of continuing their annual event, and in both Ephrata and Manheim, ferris wheels and teddy bears seem more important than the farm exhibits.

Community fairs are nice, whether or not they have agricultural exhibits. As a child, for example, this writer eagerly anticipated every Ephrata Fair. The sight of the stands going up on Tuesday of Fair week, the parade, the clam patties at the Farm Women's stands, the crowds, the cotton candy, the octopus -- all were events to be anticipated, savored, and remembered until next year. It was like Christmas every September. And we would be the last to say that fairs like Ephrata's or the others in the county should be sacrificed for a county fair. We think the community fairs could coexist with and even cooperate with a county fair, and we'd like to see it happen.

Reading has a fair, York has one and Bloomsburg as well as others. If they can do it, why can't we? Why can't the county with the state's largest farm population have the best county fair?

This is not to say that our fair should be modeled after the Reading or York fairs, with their sideshows and speedways. We think a county agricultural fair, especially in Lancaster County, can get by without sideshows, big name entertainment, rides and thrill shows. Lancaster County agriculture is itself a good enough drawing card to support the most successful county fair in the state and the Northeastern U.S.

The Editor's Almanac

The Lancaster Farming editorial staff got a boost this week with the addition of Melissa Piper. Melissa graduated June 1 from Penn State with a degree in agriculture and a minor in journalism. She's going to be getting around to lots of 4-H, FFA and other youth events, taking care of the women's section and doing more chores to help make the paper bigger and better. Melissa was a 4-H'er herself for 11 years, so she's got a lot of solid background and insight into the workings of youth groups.

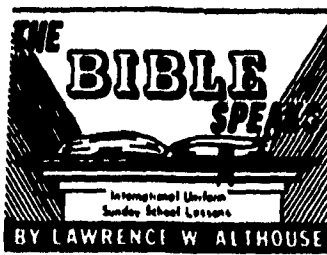
This column is another new addition this week. Here we plan to air gripes, lavish praise, share thoughts and make pertinent comments that just don't seem to fit into the rest of the paper.

We heard this story so long ago, we forget where we got it. But it's supposed to be true. A pair of local dairymen were driving somewhere in the Midwest when they pulled up at a traffic light behind a van with a bumper sticker on the back that said, "Honk twice if you love Jesus". So, our friends and neighbors honked twice, eager to communicate their shared feeling with the man in the vehicle ahead. The van's driver responded with an angry look and an upraised, clenched fist, obviously forgetting the message on his

bumper, no doubt fed up with the fools who kept blowing their horns -- honk! honk! -- twice. Maybe he should add a sign below the first one saying, "I dare you!"

For many years, Lancaster County's monthly DHIA figures have appeared in these pages. It's been an informative and very popular feature since it first started. So much so, in fact, that we felt it might be interesting to also carry the DHIA figures from the four neighboring counties, since we have many readers there. We've been carrying Lebanon County results for a few months, just started with Chester and will be adding Berks and York in the weeks ahead. Hope you'll enjoy keeping tabs on the top dairymen in this five-county area.

There are so many pros and cons on the idea of a Lancaster County Fair, and emotions in some quarters are running so high on the subject, that the June 24 meeting at the Farm and Home Center should be more than a little interesting. We plan to be there, and hope you'll be too, to contribute your opinion or just to listen. If you'd like to share your thoughts with Lancaster Farming readers before the meeting, we'll be glad to print any letters on the subject in next week's paper.



COME BACK HOME!

Lesson for June 16, 1974

Background Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4 through 5. A number of years ago while our family was vacationing in Maine and Nova Scotia, a popular song played repeatedly on the car radio caught our attention. It was called "Come Back Home" and was sung by popular vocalist Bobby Goldsboro.

It was only after I heard it a few times that realized its religious significance and recognized that the anonymous person to whom the plea was addressed was Jesus Christ. The song was a compelling plea for Jesus to "come back home" because the world is in bad shape and only Christ can save it.

When and how? The return of Jesus Christ has always been one of the teachings of the Christian churches. Although they may vary in their sense of urgency, most Christian groups agree that Christ will "come again." Where they are not in agreement, however, and seriously at that, is on the questions of "When?" and "How?"

Most standard brand denominations regard the return of Christ as a cardinal focus of the Christian hope, yet say little about it and seem to regard it as so far in the future that it is not a very timely question or consideration. Other Christian groups speak of the Second Coming as immanent and there are many who believe that our world is in its "last days."

Why all of this confusion? For one thing, the Bible itself gives us no clear-cut answer. For some Biblical writers, like Paul, the Second Coming is Christ's coming, both living and dead, will be caught up with Christ into the heavens. In the Gospel of John, however, the Second Coming seems to be equated with the coming of the Spirit of the Risen Christ in the believer's heart (John 14:18-20.) In the Gospel of Luke, furthermore, life after death seems to be the immediate entrance into Paradise (23:43). "You have no need..."

The Bible seems not to want to give us precise data about the time and manner of Christ's Second Coming. In fact, this confusion may be purposive for Paul himself says: "But as to the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need to have anything written to you" (1 Thessalonians 5:1) and Jesus himself had counseled this: "But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32). Note: not even "the Son"! Then what?

Paul's advice is similar to that of Jesus. The Lord had said: "Watch therefore... lest he come suddenly and find you asleep" (Mark 13:35, 36). And Paul: "So then let us not sleep... but let us keep awake and be sober" (1

NOW IS THE TIME...



Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
Telephone 394-6851

To Recognize June As Dairy Month

The most important agricultural enterprise in this county and in the state of Pennsylvania is the dairy business. Nature's most nearly perfect food is produced by the dairy cow; very few people live without consuming some type of dairy product at one time or another. The dairy cow grazes the hillsides and meadows, eats corn and hay plus all kinds of grains and converts them into milk and beef for human consumption. Dairy farming is vital to the over-all economy of our country and contributes greatly to the income of thousands of farm families. The dairy farmer is to be commended for providing a quality food essential to the well-being of everyone.

To Alternate Insecticides

The use of one insecticide to control a special insect over a number of years can lead to a resistance to the chemical. This is known to be true in the case of the house fly in barn and buildings. Now we are told of this same danger of resistance to the Japanese Beetle Grub in lawns to Chlordane. During the past several decades one application of Chlordane applied and watered into a lawn has given protection for 4 to 5 years; there is evidence of poor control now for more than one or two years. We suggest the use of Diazinon or Dursban on lawns for grub control where Chlordane has not killed the grubs. These grubs are

responsible for cutting off the grass roots and in some cases, bring about a heavy infestation of ground moles.

To Prepare Combines

The winter grain crop is maturing and soon the barley harvest will be starting; at this time the crop looks good and the barley is needed as a feed grain. Every producer should plan to get all of the grain from the straw this year; this required good equipment, put in good condition, and operated properly. Too many times improper adjustments and too great speed leaves too much of the grain in the field. Also, due to the price of straw and other bedding materials, I'd suggest that all straw be stored for livestock bedding. Good barley and wheat straw are in strong demand and bring good market prices.

To Select Good Sires

This is the season for many sheep and hog producers to be buying new rams or boars; the selection of the proper sire is always a major decision and one that required considerable time and evaluation. We urge local producers to try and buy performance - tested, purebred animals in order to improve their offspring. The difference in first cost between a superior sire and a poor one might seem great at the start but many times is very profitable later in the production efforts. A good sire can add dollars to each of his offspring. Don't pinch pennies when buying a replacement herd or flock sire.

Farm Calendar

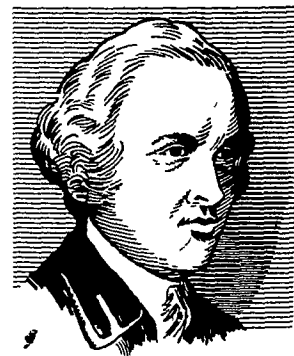
Sunday, June 16
12:30 p.m. - Manheim Young Farmers Family Picnic at Marium Hess' Pavilion
June 16-19 American International Junior Charolais Foundation Conference, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma

Tuesday, June 18
June 18-20 FFA Activities Week at Penn State

Thursday, June 20
Annual Meeting of Pennsylvania Poultry Federation at the Sheraton Motor Inn, Harrisburg.
Chester County Dairy Princess Contest, 8:00 p.m. Russellville Grange.

Friday, June 21
June 21-27 - Delmarva Chicken Festival and Cooking Contest, Seaford, Delaware.
June 21-22 - Pennsylvania Spring National Tractor Pull, Buck Tractor Pull Track.

American Viewpoints



Burn Boston and make John Hancock a beggar if the public good requires it
—John Hancock

Thessalonians 5:6). Our ignorance of the time and the manner of his coming does not release us from the responsibility of vigilant, faithful discipline. (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.)