

Farm Commentary

by Dick Wanner

Sure Fire Beef Profits

Les Burdette told some 200 cattle feeders how to assure themselves of a profit even though input costs keep going up and live weight prices keep going down. Burdette's four-step secret to a sure profit are very simple:

1. Steal a truck.
 2. Steal some cattle
 3. Steal some feed
 4. Don't get caught
- The formula brought a laugh from

the audience, proving that cattle feeders can smile no matter how hard times get. He was speaking at a cattle feeders day in the Lancaster Farm and Home Center on Tuesday. Good as Burdette's formula may be, we think we've spotted a flaw. If the market drops much farther, there's no assurance the feeder would have enough return to pay for the gas it'll take to haul the cattle to market.

Think Small and Feed the World

One outcome of the World Food Conference in Rome last year may be that underdeveloped countries may stop trying to copy the large scale American farming operation, according to Washington columnist Richard L. Strout

In a recent column, Strout said the American ideal of enormous fields and big farm machines is simply not applicable to many underdeveloped nations. They can't finance combines, tractors or crop sprayers. The one thing they are rich in is manpower

And the latest agricultural thought heard at Rome was that farms as small as two acres can be made efficient producers of food. The need is critical, Strout pointed out

In a world whose four billion people will double in 35 years, the US obviously has an obligation to try to help, and to feed the hungry where it can - and no doubt it should do more than it is now doing. But the US cannot do the job alone, Strout asserts

Ag Day, 1975

A note from David Bennett marketing manager for Miller Publishing Co. in Minneapolis, tells us that the nation is getting ready to celebrate the third annual Ag Day on March 24, the first Monday closest to the first day of spring. Ag Day has been recognized in a resolution by the U.S. Senate, and is expected to be further recognized by a House resolution in the near future

The idea behind Ag Day is to

recognize the accomplishments of American Agriculture, and to commemorate the families who are the most efficient food producers the world has ever seen. According to Bennett, the movement to observe Ag Day is gathering steam in many areas of the country

Wouldn't it be nice if the Garden Spot of the world could play a part in this year's observance?

Fed Cattle Marketings Off

A couple of things in that Cattle on Feed report USDA issued last week. First of all, it showed that cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market in the 23 major States totaled 9,619,000 on Jan 1. That's down 26 pct. from a year earlier, 31 pct. below the Jan 1 1973 total - and the lowest for the date since 1965

Just in case the message isn't clear, the USDA Crop Reporting Board's annual survey of feedlots again showed the number of feedlots again declined - from 146,220 in 1973 to 137,732 last year. But, this time, it wasn't totally at the expense of the smaller lots. Those - in the under 1,000 capacity - did drop off, from 144,180 in 1973 to 135,810 last year. But the larger lots, those with about

1,000 capacities, dropped off too. From 2,040 in 1973 to 1,922 last year

Some other points in this report - The Number of cattle marketed through feedlots, at 23,224,000 head, was down 8 pct. from 1973 - and 13 pct. below the 1972 total

- Feedlots with over 1,000 head capacities accounted for 65 pct. of fed cattle marketings, the same as in 1973, and above the 61.7 pct. figure for 1972

- But, while the number of larger lots - those with a capacity of 32,000 head or more - increased (from 59 in 1972 and 69 in 1973 to 73 in 1974), the number of cattle marketed from those larger lots decreased from 4,833,000 head in 1973 to 4,458,000 in 1974

Grain Stocks Down

Jan 1 stocks of all wheat estimated at 29.9 million metric tons, were 19 pct. above a year earlier, USDA reported last week. But, stocks of the four feed grains (corn, oats, barley and sorghum) totaled 114 million tons, down 22 pct. from Jan 1, 1974 holdings

Corn, at 3.6 billion bu., was down 19

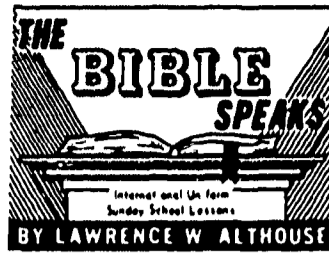
pct. from a year earlier, sorghum at 381 million bu., was down 41 pct. Oat stocks, at 511 million bu., were down 20 pct. Barley, at 229 million bu., was down 29 pct.

Soybean stocks at 271 million tons, were down 14 pct. from a year earlier

Japan Still Top U.S. Market

Japan, the top US farm export market for the past 4 years, will hold firmly to that No. 1 position in fiscal 1975, according to an article in the current (Jan 27) issue of USDA's Foreign Agriculture magazine

The reason: Higher prices. Though the volume of US exports to Japan is expected to be down as much as 10 pct., increased prices are expected to keep those exports at about the \$3.4 billion total it hit in fiscal 1974



MATCHED SET

Lesson for February 2, 1975

Background Scripture: Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 10:31 through 11:1; Colossians 3:12-17; James 2:1-4; 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Devotional Reading: Colossians 3:12-17.

Contemporary Christians tend to regard different facets of congregational life as optional activities which are strictly a matter of personal preference.

Some people come on Sundays to worship, but that is the extent of their involvement. Others are "Sunday school people," who come for Christian education but little else. Others seem to "major" in fellowship activities with little interest in anything else. Still others are service oriented, often with a faint aura of contempt for those who do not feel similarly motivated.

And the Lord added to their number

We get a much different picture of the early church in the Book of Acts. Here we see the whole congregation devoting "themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship to the breaking of bread and of prayers" (2:42). The early church was clearly not divided into those who worshipped, those who studied, and those who pursued Christian fellowship. The whole congregation was involved in each of these vital functions.

Nor were the early Christians limited to activities of personal input: "...many signs and wonders were done, through the apostles...and all who believed were together and had all things in common" (2:43, 44). There was output too! Their life as a congregation both strengthened them and equipped them to be of service to others as well. They worshipped, studied and fellowshiped so that they could also perform "signs and wonders" of service for others.

The results are obvious: "And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (2:46, 47)

Unfailing love

Obviously, worship cannot be divided off from nurture, fellowship, and service. If we are going to enrich our lives with worship, we will also need to grow in Christian love which requires fellowship and service. In writing to the early church, I Peter admonished Christians to major in all facets of Christian life: "keep sane and sober for your prayers" (4:7), "practice hospitality" (4:9), act as "good stewards" of what God has given us (4:10). In other words, whether we are worshipping, studying, fellowshiping or serving our fellowmen, it is all one response of love for God.

God is actually behind all of it, not just a portion



NOW IS THE TIME...

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To Run Hogs With Steers

One of the suggestions at the recent Cattle Feeder's Day was for cattle feeders to run hogs under the steers.

This was for the purpose of increasing returns from the cattle feeding operation by having the hogs more completely utilize the feed nutrients in the cattle rations. This is a very common practice in many cattle operations and is the opinion of Les Burdette that more feeders could increase their profits by running more hogs with the cattle. In most cases the hogs may need supplemental feed, but will be able to get part of their nutritional needs from the steer droppings.

To Evaluate Grain Storage

It is the feeling of many grain experts that now would be the time to be making a decision to market the feed grains that have been in farm storage since last summer or fall. Farmers in the livestock or dairy business may need their grains to continue their operation; however, those that are holding for market might give consideration to moving some of their grains. We have heard some forecasts indicating that the peak prices of grain for the 1974 crop may be behind us. Just a suggestion that warrants some consideration to those debating whether to hold or sell.

To Sell Based On Finish

Many cattle feeders are reluctant to sell when their cattle are ready because of the low price. They continue to feed the cattle and get them too fat for efficient gains and for the most desirable grade of "Choice". We realize it is difficult to sell cattle when the market price is unsatisfactory; however, to continue to feed them high-priced grain and get slower daily gains is also an expensive practice. Some

"...whoever speaks, as one who utters oracles of God; whoever renders service, as one who renders it by the strength which God supplies..." (4:11). The point is that "in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ".

The power of the early church was that it led a well-rounded congregational life in which worship, fellowship, nurture and service were all regarded as the believer's response to the grace of God as revealed in Christ. Jesus himself was an example. He had been a man who studied the scriptures. He had also demonstrated his own need for fellowship and his whole life was a life of sacrificial service.

Worship, nurture, fellowship and service for the Christian they are a matched-set.

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To Recognize Fertilizer Value of Manure

We repeat the thought that more attention should be given to trying to hold the fertilizer value in livestock and poultry manure through proper storage; also, the including of fertilizer contribution of manure when calculating the needs of a certain crop. Nitrogen is very expensive but is one of the major fertilizer elements in most kinds of manure, especially poultry manure. On some fields when a clover or alfalfa sod is plowed down along with a heavy application of manure (12 to 15 tons per acre), very little nitrogen may be needed from other sources. Poultry manure should not be used in these amounts (not over 4 tons per acre) because of the danger of burning seeds or plants. Producers should make an effort to learn the fertilizer content of their type of livestock waste.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, February 1

Ephrata Young Farmer's Banquet at Mt. Airy Fire Hall beginning at 6:45 p.m.

Pa. Yorkshire Swine Association Show and Sale at the Farm Show Arena.

Monday, February 3

Manheim Young Farmer's soil conservation meeting at 7:30 p.m. Manheim High School.

Tuesday, February 4

Dairy conference at the Guernsey Barn Pavilion beginning with coffee and donuts at 8:30 a.m. and concluding at 2:30 p.m. Eugene Myeyer, Managing Editor of "Hoard's Dairymen" will be the keynote speaker. Ephrata Area Adult Farmer's Dairy Cattle Management meeting at 7:45 p.m. at the Ephrata High School.

Wednesday, February 5

Dairymen Milking School at the Farm and Home Center beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Friday, February 7

Computer Workshop for Cattle Feeders at the Farm and Home Center. Garden Spot Young Farmer's annual banquet at the Blue Ball Fire Hall at 6:45 p.m.

Editor's Quote Book

There is a great man who makes every man feel small. But the really great man is the man who makes every man feel great.

—Chinese Proverb