

Conservation Deadline is Pushed Back - But the Need Still Exists

It looks like we no longer have a July 1, 1977, deadline for the installation of conservation practices on all Pennsylvania farms. In hearings before the Pennsylvania House Agriculture Committee recently, Department of Environmental Resources people told the representatives that the deadline would be extended. But Walter Lyon, director of the state's Bureau of Water Quality Management, didn't say how long the deadline would be extended. Nor did he say for sure how much farmers would have to do to meet the Clean Streams Law requirements.

Farmers locally and throughout that state have been most concerned with two questions: Will they have to install expensive cropland terraces to stop erosion from their fields? and Will they have to fence off their streams to keep their cattle out?

The answers to both questions, in most cases, appears to be, "No", according to Afton Schadel, a Schuylkill County farmer who heads up DER's erosion and sedimentation control efforts. Schadel said he doesn't think streams will have to be fenced off. And he said he feels the state would not compel farmers to install terraces unless their cropping practices were the kind that could create a lot of sedimentation. An example might be continuous corn on land with more than a three percent slope.

Schadel was in Hinkletown on Wednesday evening to talk to a group

of Eastern Lancaster County farmers at the Hinkletown Alternative School. He took a lot of abuse from one or two vocal members of the audience. They insisted that Schadel and the state of Pennsylvania were trying to tell them what to do with their farms, even if it meant spending more money on conservation measures than they could possibly afford.

Schadel denied the charges. He said one would not say anything to a farmer unless erosion from his fields became a serious problem. He pointed out that there are other, less expensive ways of controlling erosion than terraces. Contour strips, good cropping practices and proper tillage can all help solve erosion problems, Schadel said.

The gist of Schadel's message was that farmers aren't going to get into trouble with the law if they make reasonable efforts at controlling erosion.

But the legal issue is really irrelevant, as Schadel pointed out. There are two reasons for controlling sedimentation. One is to keep our streams clean. The other reason, more important to farmers, is to keep the soil on their fields. Soil is the farmer's most valuable resource. It only makes sense to husband it as carefully as possible. Conservation practices can help preserve the thin layer of topsoil on which human life depends.

That fact, not the law, should be all the impetus anybody needs to do the best job he can of conserving soil

Order 4 Expansion Seems Certain

Eleven counties in Pennsylvania and two in Maryland will probably be added to the Federal Order 4 Milk Marketing district sometime after June 1. This action will result from an order signed this week by assistant U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Richard Felkner. But the order can become effective only if it is approved in a referendum vote by a two-thirds majority of all dairymen in the present Order 4 boundaries as well as a two-thirds majority of all dairymen in the counties which would be added.

The effect of the addition would be an eight- to ten-cent per hundred increase in the blend price for all Order 4 shippers. The increase for producers in some areas might be even higher. Locally, most dairymen already ship to Order 4 markets and they are paid at or above the Order 4

minimum. With the expansion, independent dairies would also be required to pay Order 4 minimums for the milk they buy. Previously, independent dealers in Pennsylvania had been governed by the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board minimum, which has traditionally been lower than the federal order price.

Most observers feel the new ruling will get the two-thirds vote necessary. Milk cooperatives can vote their members in a block, and the cooperative managements are reportedly very much in favor of the expansion. Pennsylvania counties to be added include Lancaster, York, Chester, Lebanon, Bucks, Montgomery, Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Juniata and Perry.

More on Planting Intentions

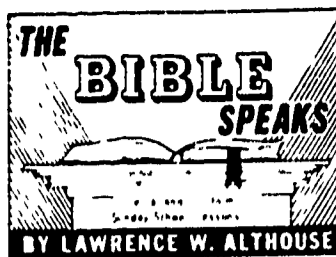
On the one hand, it appears that farmers cut back their planting intentions. On the other hand, maybe that cutback isn't so much as it seems. In any event, the USDA's March Prospective Planting Report indicates farmers now intend to plant less corn, sorghum, wheat, and soybeans but more oats and barley than they originally planned to back on Jan 1.

CORN plantings now seen at 75.3 million acres, down 3 pct from a year ago, and 3 pct below Jan 1 indications. SORGHUM acreage seen at 18.9 million acres, up 6 pct from a year ago, but well below the 10 pct increase seen in January.

But, OAT plantings are now seen at

18.2 million acres, 5 pct. above Jan. indications, though only 1/2 of 1 pct. above a year ago. BARLEY acreage now seen at 10.2 million acres, up 8 1/2 pct from January intentions, 12 pct more than last year. Over-all FEED GRAIN acreage (corn, sorghum, oats, barley,) seen at 122.5 million acres, down 200,000 acres from a year ago — but 300,000 acres above the Jan. forecast.

SOYBEAN acreage seen at 56.6 million acres up 6 pct from a year ago, but below the 8 pct increase indicated in January. DURUM WHEAT plantings seen at 4.3 million acres, up 5 pct from last year, but below the 10 pct increase forecast in January.



OUR EASTER EQUIPMENT

Lesson for March 30, 1975

Background Scripture: 1 Corinthians 15:3-15, 58; Hebrews 13.
Devotional Reading: Psalms 118: 21-25.

One of the most inspiring passages ever written about life after death is I Corinthians 15. Lifting up both the resurrection of Jesus Christ and our own victory over death through him, Paul closes with a great shout:

But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ! (I Corinthians 15:57).

But there is more: Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. (15:58).

Because of Christ's resurrection through which we become like him, conquerors of death, we can therefore live victoriously. Easter, thus, is more than the "happy ending" to the story of Jesus. It is much more a "happy beginning" to new life through his power. It means, not only life after death, but life before death.

With everything good
So Easter is not just a celebration, it is time when we are given power to live victoriously in the midst of both life and death. The power that broke open the grave of Jesus and set him free is also the same power that enables us to meet the challenges and obstacles along life's way.

A well-known Christian benediction drawn from the Epistle to the Hebrews makes this point:

Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (13:20,21)

In other words, the resurrected Christ will give us the resources we need in order to meet the challenges and opportunities of life. Easter equips us to do God's will in our daily lives.

That you may do his will
In what ways?

The writer of Hebrews spells out some specifics:

"Let brotherly love continue . . ." (That certainly requires some good equipment.)

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers" (That also.)

"Remember those that are in prison" (Still another.)

"Let marriage be held in honor among all" (And another.)

"Keep your life free from the love of money" (Here too!)

There seems to be no end of opportunities and challenges through which we may make manifest the power of the resurrection with which God equips us. Just as the early disciples



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

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To Be Careful With Drugs

The use of drugs and antibiotics in the production of all types of food and fiber is quite common, and these materials can contribute to over-all production. However, extreme care should be used in every case to be sure the proper amount and withdrawal times are recognized. All users are urged to read the directions and follow them carefully. These items have been approved on the basis of proper use and with the following of the directions on the label. Quality products are a "must" for every producer, and consumers have a right to expect quality food and fiber products. The successful producer should make every effort to use materials as intended.

To Use Quality Seeds

The planting season is at hand and all farmers and gardeners are reminded of the merits of using either certified seeds or seeds of known purity and germination. The inputs into a crop are too expensive not to start with good seeds. If Certified seeds are not available of the desired seed variety, then local seeds should be tested for germination and purity. This service is available from the Seed Testing Laboratory, State Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron St. Harrisburg, Pa. The cost will run from \$2.50 to \$4.50 per sample depending upon the type of seed and the information needed. The important thing to keep in mind is not to use unknown, untested seeds.

Farm Calendar

Monday, March 31

8:30 a.m. - Lancaster County Guernsey Breeders Annual Tour. Leaving Willow Street Mennonite Church. There will also be a pick-up at the Mussers Store - Buck at 8:45 p.m.

Tuesday, April 1

1:00 - 3:00 p.m. - PSU milking School at Penn State.

American Egg Board Annual Meeting at St. Petersburg, Florida continues through April 2.

Pa. Poultry Sale and Service Meeting held at the Keller Conference Center at Penn State.

were empowered to turn the world "upside down," so the consequence of Easter in our own time must be equally evident in the world around us. For that same resurrection power is still available to us. As Hebrews assures us: "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (13:8).

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To Become Familiar With Weed Control

The growing season is starting and so are the weeds. According to a recent evaluation of some of the major crop problems in this part of the state, weed control rates at the top of the list. Even though most farmers and gardeners have been trying to control weeds for many generations, the job is far from accomplished. Therefore, every grower should become familiar with current weed control practices and make every effort to reduce the weed population this summer. Weeds decrease crop yields by using available moisture and plant food. Clean hand or mechanical cultivation should not be overlooked on small garden or flower plots. Weeds continue to reduce food and fiber production and increase costs; don't let them get ahead of you this season.

To Take Time To Be Safe

The greater use of tractors and farm machinery will be evident in the next few weeks. Farm equipment cannot be regarded as dangerous when in proper hands and operated at safe speeds. However, too much speed and careless operators can bring tragedy quickly. We urge all farm machinery operators to recognize the directions of the manufacturer and don't take chances. Youngsters are anxious to drive and ride on many pieces of equipment, but it is dangerous and unsafe to permit them to do so. Good machinery operated properly is vital to modern farming practices and should not be the cause of human injuries or fatalities. Operate with safety and good common sense.

Vegetable Gardening Clinic at the Devereux Foundation in Berwyn, Chester County from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 2

Lancaster County Conservation District Meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center at 7:30 p.m.

Pa. Ag Bankers Meeting at the Sheraton-Conestoga in Lancaster through April 3.

Vegetable Gardening Meeting at the Devereux Foundation in Berwyn in Chester County 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 3

United Egg Producers Annual Meeting in St. Petersburg, Florida continuing through April 4.

Vegetable Gardening Meeting at the Ware Center Building on the Lincoln University Campus in Chester County 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Young Farmers Volleyball Tournament at the Ephrata High School Gym at 7:45 p.m.

Saturday, April 5

Manheim Young Farmers and wives bowling night: