

# Farm Commentary

by Dick Wanner

## The Importance of Estate Planning

One of the biggest threats to the family farm is, strangely enough, one of the easiest to deal with. Most farmers have at least one child who would like to take over the family farm. With careful planning, a farmer can insure that when he dies, all his children will share in his estate, and that at least one of those children will have a chance to own the farm.

Estate planning was one of the key elements discussed at the two-day ag lending meeting held in Lancaster last week. Some 135 farm loan officers were on hand to discuss their problems, and to talk about the farm outlook. Estate plans are important not only for the sake of transferring the farm to future generations, the bankers were told, but also for the

sake of protecting lenders' interests in farming operations.

Lenders may be increasingly interested in the wills and insurance plans of all farmers. Farm loan officers are interested many times not just in protecting their capital, but in seeing that farms remain with the family even if the head of the family should die.

Too many farmers have given very little thought to estate planning, it was pointed out at the banker's meeting. Virgil Crowley, a Penn State farm management specialist, urged the bankers to probe into farmers' estate plans when they apply for loans.

So the next time you see your banker, don't be too surprised if he asks you about your will.

## Red Meat Output Up Sharply in February

Red meat production up sharply during February - despite lower pork, lamb-mutton output. At 2.9 billion lbs., commercial red meat production during February was up 8 pct from a year earlier, 6 pct above that of February 1973.

Beef output, at 1.8 billion lbs, was up 15 pct from a year earlier, 10 pct. above that of Feb. 1973. Veal production, at 50 million lbs, was double that of a year earlier. But, pork production, at 954 million lbs, was down 5 pct. from a year earlier, 3 pct below that of February 1973. Lamb and mutton production totaled 31 million lbs. for the month, down 9 pct from a year earlier.

An added factor - Lower average

weights in all categories - except calves. The cattle kill, at 3,082,300 head, was up 21 pct from a year earlier, with the average live weight per head at 1,021 lbs - down 42 lbs. from a year ago. Live weight per head of calves slaughtered was 270 lbs, compared to 235 lbs. a year ago. Calf slaughter, at 329,600 head, was up 78 pct from a year ago.

Average weight per head was 236 lbs, 7 lbs less than a year ago. But, lard rendered per 100 lbs. live weight was 6.3 lbs, compared to 6.2 lbs. a year ago. Sheep and lamb slaughter totaled 586,500 head, down 7 pct. from a year ago. Average live weight was 107 lbs., 3 lbs. less than last year.

## World Wheat, Oats, Corn Output Off

World production of wheat, oats and corn down last year, but rye and barley output was up, according to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

World wheat output, at 346.8 million (metric) tons, was down 5 pct from 1973's record (366.5 million ton) harvest, but 7 pct. above the 1968-72 average. Reason for the setback: Lower yield. Though world wheat area increased 2 pct., yields dropped from 16.9 to 15.6 quintals per hectare (a quintal is 220.46 lbs; a hectare, 2.47 acres).

Oat production, at 50.2 million tons, was down from 53.7 million tons a year earlier. Reason for the decline: Lower area, lower yield. Output in the North American sector was off 12 pct., production in the Soviet Union,

at 15.3 million tons, was down 13 pct.

World corn production, now seen at 279 million tons, was off 10 pct., with lower yield the major cause for the decline. Output was off 17 pct. in North America (U.S. output was off 18 pct.) Over-all yield was down from 27.3 to 23.9 quintals per hectare.

Meanwhile, rye production was up 13 pct. - to 32.7 million tons, with world rye plantings up 14 pct. and yield unchanged. The Soviet crop, at 15.2 million tons, was up 41 pct. and the largest since 1965.

Barley output totaled 157 million tons, up slightly (from 156.1 million tons) a year earlier. Though plantings increased slightly, yield was down slightly. (FAS-FG-5-75).

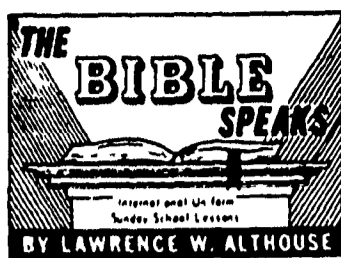
## Will U.S. Farmers Take Over Industry?

Over the years, there has been a lot of worrying about a possible takeover of U.S. farms by large industrial establishments. USDA issued a report about some of these industries last week. Industries that are so-called multiunit industries which are also engaged in farming.

Oh, they were big all right. They accounted for 7 pct of the total value of U.S. farm output in 1969, for example. And, that's only 410 of them

But, the report, makes another interesting point most of us probably never considered. That is that a lot of these multiestablishment firms got their starts as farms. This brings up the question: Will U.S. farmers takeover industry.

Single copies of "Farming and Agribusiness Activities of Large Multiunit Firms," ERS-591, available on request, of course.



### WHAT IS MAN?

Lesson for April 13, 1975

**Background Scripture:** Genesis 1:26-31; Psalms 8.  
**Devotional Reading:** Psalms 19.

There are really two ways of asking that question.

One of them is philosophic, inquiring about mankind in general: "What is man?"

The other is personal, inquiring about one man in particular: "Who am I?"

Basically, however, it is the same question viewed from different perspectives. **Man the creature**

It was the question with which the Psalmist and the writer of Genesis were wrestling. From that soul-searching there came several answers.

First, they saw man as a creature of God.

In the eighth psalm there is no question but that man sees himself in the light of God's greatness. The awe of the creature for the Creator is evident: "When I look at the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou has established, what is man that thou art mindful of him. . .?" (8:3,4).

A familiar hymn says much the same thing:

"O Lord, my God, When I in awesome wonder, Consider all the works.

Thy hands have made . . . How great Thou art! How great Thou art!"

If man is to know who he is as a creature, he must first acknowledge the greatness of the creator.

#### Man the steward

The Psalmist also sees man - and himself - as the creature who is the highest of God's creations. Despite his seeming insignificance, man, as the Psalmist puts it, is created to be a "little less than God, and thou dost crown him with honor and glory" (8:5).

This belief has far-reaching implications for both mankind in general and me in particular. For mankind it means being ranked at the top of the evolutionary scale. For me in particular it means that regardless of how I am esteemed by either myself or others, I am a unique, valuable creature.

Finally, the Psalmist sees man as a steward: "Thou hast given him dominion over the works of thy hands, thou hast put all things under his feet" (8:6). The Creation story in Genesis also speaks of man's dominion "over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

Man, as God's highest creation, is given dominion over all creation, but for a purpose: to manage it for God as a good steward, thus giving man both a high privilege and a great responsibility.

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## NOW IS THE TIME . . .

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### TO INSPECT PASTURES

Before livestock are turned to pasture it is suggested that farmers go over the entire area and remove solid waste that has been thrown there during the winter months. This is more important when pastures are along public roads. Even though it is against the law to discard junk and garbage along the highways, or on the property of others, it is still being done by thoughtless persons. In some cases this junk may contain materials that will be poisonous to livestock. Also, it will interfere with the clipping of the pasture area later in the spring. Be safe and inspect the pasture to remove possible hazards.

### TO PROTECT SOD

#### HEADLANDS

The spring plowing season is at hand when many acres of sod crops will be turned under. The practice of plowing right up to the highway right-of-way, or to other boundaries is to be discouraged. We have observed farmers that have plowed so close to the road that they had to come out on the road to turn around. This does not allow any vegetation to stop flood waters and as a result, the road becomes covered with silt. Along the same line, sod waterways should also be protected during the soil working this spring. Heavy sod with some width is needed to carry off the extra water without tearing into the topsoil. Protect sod headlands and waterways for best soil and water conservation.

### TO PRACTICE BETTER WEED CONTROL

The problem of weed control confronts every gardener and farmer. There are many methods of keeping weeds from har-

ming crops, but the major effort should be to kill the weeds before they get a good start. The application of pre-emergence sprays, in order to keep the weeds from sprouting or kill them as they come through the surface of the ground, is strongly recommended. If this is not done, then the best time to kill the weed plant is when it is small; (under two inches). After it gets well started and several inches high, it is more difficult to kill. With clean cultivation the very small weeds can be killed quickly, while larger weeds may take root again and keep growing. Weed control included proper timing and efforts of eradication when they are small. Don't let them get started.

### TO HANDLE MANURE PROPERLY

The month of April sees many tons of good organic matter returned to the soil in the form of barnyard manure; also, this is a very valuable fertilizer application that could reduce the amount of commercial fertilizer use. However, the big thing is to get the manure incorporated into the topsoil just as quickly as possible after application. This is especially true on open ground or on hilly fields. If the area can be disced or plowed soon after the manure application, there should be less run-off and less loss of fertilizer materials. Liquid manures that are injected into the topsoil at application time should include maximum benefits. When hauling manure over a public highway and chunks fall from the spreader, those might present a traffic hazard and be the cause of an accident; the highway should be kept free of manure spillage.

## Farm Calendar

Saturday, April 12

Pa. Nut Growers meeting at the Grange Hall in Kutztown from 10:00 - 12:00 noon.

Lebanon Valley Exposition Corporation square dance at the Lebanon Fair Grounds at 8:00 p.m.

Monday, April 14

Vegetable gardening clinic at the Central Chester County vo-tech school near Coatesville at 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 15

Ephrata Area Young Farmer's monthly meeting at the Ephrata High School ag classroom 7:45 p.m.

Wednesday, April 16

Vegetable gardening clinic at the Pickering Valley School on Byers Road near Eagle from 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 17

Pa. Holstein State Calf Sale at the Farm Show Building in Harrisburg.

Friday, April 18

Pa. Holstein Cow and Bred Heifer Sale at the Farm

Show Building in Harrisburg.

Saturday, April 19  
Pa. State Holstein Show at the Farm Show Building in Harrisburg.

Sunday, April 20

Dairy Goat Seminar at the Amyr Farm with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Stonebeck of Oxford in Chester County.

Monday, April 21

Eastern Lebanon County Young Farmers meeting at the Elco High School vo-ag classroom at 7:45 p.m.

Saturday, April 26

Lebanon Valley Exposition Corp. square dance at the Lebanon Fairgrounds at 8:30 p.m.

### Editor's Quote Book

We do not quite forgive a giver. The hand that feeds us is in some danger of being bit ten.

Ralph Waldo Emerson