

LIFE on the farm

By Dieter Krieg

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Life on the farm columns are written not only for entertainment, but to bring about a better understanding of rural life to people in town. Originated more than a year ago, their prime purpose was — and still is — to describe the joys, problems, responsibilities, frustrations, and rewards of farm life to people who are not closely related to agriculture. I am pleased to acknowledge that this column has received favorable response from readers of Lancaster Farming as well as several other newspapers in the state in which it appears each week.

It's 5:30 a.m. — the beginning of another day, even though the night does not appear to have gone

Silence and a light frost cover the countryside. The stars are sparkling in a cloudless sky, and there's only a faint hint towards the east that a sunrise will occur in another hour.

I walk into the barn, take off my jacket, flick on the lights, and begin the day's activities. The push of a button starts the silo-unloader, which throws down silage for the morning feeding. Most of the cows are lazily beginning to get up as they anticipate their forkful of silage and portion of grain. Some, like Cindy and Bosco, who are forever hungry, voice their anxiety without hesitation.

While the silage accumulates at the base of the silo, just in front of the cows, I take a broom to sweep the feed alley, and then a scraper to clean the litter alley. By the time that's done, there's enough silage down to begin feeding. The whole barn soon smells of corn silage as the material is spread out in front of 40 cows. It's a pleasant odor.

A grain ration is fed according to each individual cow's production level, body condition, closeness to calving, and age. A few, like Cindy and

Bosco, get an extra pinch to keep them friendly. The truth is they're both too friendly — they're spoiled and my favorite pets.

Nearly 20 minutes have gone by since I walked into the barn, and another 10 will pass before the milking starts. I have already walked a couple of miles — back and forth, back and forth — in a barn which is 160 feet long. There are plenty more miles to come. This barn is not equipped with pipeline milkers.

Strainers are set on top of the bulk tank, an udder wash is prepared; the milking machines are carried to the far end of the barn, and I'm ready to milk. The noise of the vacuum pump drowns out most of the sounds from the radio, which has been on since I walked into the barn.

The pulsing of pulsators — the "heart" of a milking machine — soon fills the air. The cows are up and eating; their neck chains occasionally jingle; and periodically there is the hollow sound of two empty buckets being set on the floor after having been emptied in the milk house. Sometimes I get greeted with a nice sloppy tail in the face, which makes me wish I had cleaned the barn before milking. What a way to wake up if a fellow is still sleepy!

The milking procedure goes on for an hour and a half: wash udders, put the milking machine on the cow, periodically check on the machine's progress to avoid overmilking and resulting udder injury, take the machine off, dump the milk into a carrying pail, and take it to the milk house where it will be cooled and agitated in a bulk tank.

That's how the day starts on a dairy farm — when things go smoothly. As with any business, it's not all bad if things work out right and the income meets expenses.

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Farm Commentary

By Dieter Krieg

Remove the parasites

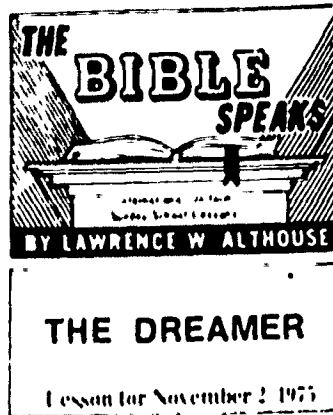
Anyone able to work — and with a job available — should get off the welfare roll and earn his own living, rather than have it handed to him by taxpayers. That, to my understanding, sums up a proposal made by the Pennsylvania Grange this week while that organization held its annual meeting in Lancaster. The resolution is right on target. Get the loafers off our backs. This country was built on the principles of free-enterprise, self-sufficiency, and hard work — not food stamps, welfare rolls, and incentives for laziness, which is about all these programs amount to.

Helping a person who truly needs assistance is noble. Helping an in-

dividual who refuses to help himself is destructive — not only for the giver, but for the taker as well.

What's apparently missing in millions of people nowadays is self-respect. There was a time when people would have been too embarrassed to be involved with the "take side" of a hand-out program.

A respectable person does not steal. Nor would he accept a hand-out unless all avenues for self-help are blocked. This country's welfare programs have promoted a new kind of thievery, and it's about time a law is passed to bring it under control. Good luck, Grangers, in trying to accomplish this monumental task.



NOW IS
THE TIME...

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Background Scripture:
Genesis 28:10-22:32 1 through 33:4.

Devotional Reading:
Galatians 1:10-17

A British psychiatrist tells of an Anglican clergyman and a rough profane sailor who shared adjoining beds in a London hospital. Both the clergyman and the sailor were in comas. The surprising twist to the story is that while they were unconscious, the clergyman cursed and the sailor prayed.

To the psychiatrist it meant that there may be a considerable difference between what a person appears to be in terms of their conscious behaviour, and what they may actually be in their unconscious mind. The clergyman, for example, was not quite as pious as he appeared to be and the sailor was not quite so opposed to religion as he appeared to be.

And he dreamed

Sometimes there is better stuff within us that we know. We work so hard sometimes to build a hard veneer about our lives that often the finer qualities have little opportunity to show through. Thus, the image of ourselves that we present to the world may be only a shadow of what we can be.

This hidden nature sometimes finds ways of coming out into the open. One way this sometimes happens is through dreams. When we are in the dream state, the conscious mind no longer stands guard and the unconscious begins to bubble up to the surface.

We see this in the case of Jacob.

From all appearances, Jacob was hardly a spiritual man. As a matter of fact, he seemed utterly conniving and unscrupulous, the last man in the world you might expect to find favor with God. If there is a finer side to Jacob, he doesn't allow it to show.

But, twice, while he is sleeping and dreaming, we catch a glimpse of the man God created him to be.

No more Jacob

The first of these is while he is on his way from Canaan to Haran to find and settle with his uncle Laban. Stopping probably at Bethel, a holy place, Jacob has an inspiring dream that helped to change his life. In it, this selfish, cynical man sees a great ladder or staircase reaching up to Heaven. The dream tells us that unconsciously he aspired to change and grow, to ascend that stairway to a higher level of being.

In response to this dream, Jacob hears God promising him to continue the covenant of Abraham with him, to be his God and go with him wherever he went. These promises from the foundation of a new Jacob.

The second experience takes place on the trip back from Haran to Canaan many years later. He is a changed man, yet, perhaps he has some more changing to do. Although the writer of

**To Plan For Winter
Weed Control**

Chickweed ... yellow rocket ... shepardspurse ... henbit ... are the most common and equally most troublesome winter annual weeds in hay fields, particularly alfalfa. Other weeds which can be problems are the biennial and perennial docks and dandelions, respectively.

In open winters, such as experienced the past two, these weeds will thrive while the alfalfa is dormant. By early spring farmers will suddenly ask, "Where did all these weeds come from?" The answer is these weedy pests were all there in the fall.

Several effective herbicides are available to control weeds in hay fields. Know what the main weed pressure is before deciding which one to use. Then make the decision as to what and when.

Be informed of what's growing there now. A walking "tour" of alfalfa stands here in early November will pay big dividends when it comes time to remove that weed-free first cutting next year.

**To Be Aware of
Fire Dangers**

Fire is always a constant threat to farmers. A new indoor work season is about to be with us again. It becomes necessary to take appropriate safety precautions in all farm buildings, old and new.

Combustible materials like hay, straw and gasoline, plus heat-producing machinery, sparks from engines, smoking and matches, combine to increase the danger of farm fires.

Three things make a fire possible: air, heat, fuel. Take away anyone of the three and no fire can get started. Fight fires by breaking the fire triangle. Work with the threat of fire in mind.

Place fire-fighting equipment in the home, barn, repair shop, machinery shed, garage and on the tractor or other power equipment. There is no one extinguisher than can be used on every type of fire. Know how to operate the one you have.

**To Consider Adequate
Cover Crops**

For the small cost of

Genesis doesn't call this experience a dream, it is a dreamlike experience in which he sees himself wrestling with a messenger from God.

Seeing Jacob's ardent desire to be a man of God, the messenger tells him: "Your name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and men and have prevailed" (32:28). The new name of Israel will be a sign that old conniving, plotting Jacob is dead, and in his place, a dedicated, obedient dreamer whose dreams will give birth to the people of Israel.

protection, no field should lie open to the ravages of wind and water erosion over the winter months. On the average farm most corn fields harvested as silage and tobacco fields qualify in this category.

Cover crops widely used are the winter small grains. Of these, rye is the most winter hardy if sown in November. They'll do the job only if plants are thick enough and attain adequate size to cut down on erosion. The later the planting, the thicker the seeding needed. Seed sown should be of frasonable quality.

Fall plowed fields become an exception. The ridged furrows, however, serve well to keep soil losses to a minimum.

**To Identify
Dairy Calves**

If a calf is worth raising, it is worthy of time and effort needed to properly identify this future member for herd replacement. A short name or number may serve for a quick, easy identity, but certainly does not adequately identify animals for permanent records.

Acceptable numbers are eartags and breed association numbers in addition to birthdate, sire and dam identity. Properly identify animals and record the information. This could be time well spent with the dairy herd.

Farm Calendar

Monday, Nov. 3
Manheim Young Farmer's meeting at the ag classroom at the Manheim High School 7:30 p.m. - program will be a meeting on the storage of farm machinery.

Tuesday, Nov. 4
Lancaster Junior Holstein Club will meet at the Farm and Home Center 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 5
Lancaster County Conservation District meeting at the Farm and Home Center 7:30 p.m.
Pa. Young Farmer's Convention at Mechanicburg Penn Ram Motor Inn.

FBLA and Lancaster production Credit meeting 11:45 a.m. Plain & Fancy Rest.

Thursday, Nov. 6
Lancaster County's Poultry Association dinner at Historic Strasburg 6:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Holstein Association banquet at the Harvest Drive Restaurant Intercourse.

Friday, Nov. 7
4-H Dairy Club of Lancaster Banquet.

Saturday, Nov. 8
Beginning of the Keystone International Livestock Show in Harrisburg.