

LIFE on the farm

By Peter Krieg, Editor

"Have you ever stopped to count the number of heifer calves you raised since 1960," I asked my mother recently.

"Nein," she replied while holding a couple of buckets in front of a pair of calves which were happily slurping up the mixture of water and milk replacer contained therein.

I had never stopped to really think about it either, but I couldn't help wonder. "I believe it's way over a thousand," I said, "and quite possibly close to two thousand."

"Ja," my mother replied, acknowledging that she might very well have raised that many since the family starting farming in the United States 15 years ago. Rather than pause briefly to reflect on her monumental accomplishment, my mother just brushed it aside while focusing her attention on the hungry calves in front of her.

Her enthusiasm for the work which takes a minimum of four hours per day - and sometimes 10 or even 12 - was obvious. She pointed to a couple of them and told me who their dams were. Any which were born under unusual or difficult circumstances became the subject of conversation.

On our way back to the feed room, my curiosity about my mother's achievements returned. Knowing that up to 600 calves are born on my parents' Florida dairy farm annually, and figuring half of them to be heifers, I knew she had a very commendable record.

Mom dipped into a large container

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"I can't take your milk today," the milk truck driver said.

Something inside me sagged instantly as the words registered in my ears and I was left speechless for a couple seconds.

Before I had a chance to ask "why," the driver explained that the milk had a slight sour odor to it.

We walked back to the milk house together. The hose connecting the bulk tank to the truck for loading was already connected. Everything was ready. But a last minute routine check for odors, which is required for all farms every time milk is picked up, cancelled the sale of more than 500 gallons of milk.

Asking me to put my nose up to the opening at the end of the tank, the driver asked me if I could detect the odor. I couldn't, but neither could I argue because the driver had a much better than average chance of being right.

Before disconnecting the hose and hopping back into the cab of the tractor and trailer, he posted the rejection slip on the wall and said he would let a laboratory test determine whether the milk was fit for retailing.

The next couple of hours were spent worrying. All of the milk in the tank represented an investment of expenses, time, and labor. "What is to become of all this milk if it doesn't get

and refilled the buckets to exact proportions. Occasionally a capful of medicine was mixed in also. She knew what she was doing - she certainly had lots of experience and knew each calf as an individual and what it needed.

It's with this kind of devotion, patience, hard work, and loving attention that she has raised practically every dairy cow that has been in the Krieg herd during the past decade and a half. What's more, her performance has been so exemplary and spotless that during some years there were no casualties.

Mom and I walked back out to the calves. A full moon was making its way through a cloud cover in the eastern sky. Conservatively, I estimated that she has raised 1,800 heifers. That's not counting an equal number of bull calves which were also under her care for various lengths of time.

Calves - and the work involved in raising them have never received much attention nor glory by either dairymen or the farm-oriented press. Yet the fancy-pedigreed and high-producing cows make all kinds of headlines. By that time it's the men who are taking care of them (mostly). But their responsibilities and achievements are by no means any more important or commendable than the job done by my mother and others like her.

Without people like my mother there would be fewer great cows, - fewer great dairymen, and less life on the farm.

picked up?" I thought. Having to let it all go down the drain was unthinkable - I'd rather give it away to anyone who might be able to use it for hogs or calves.

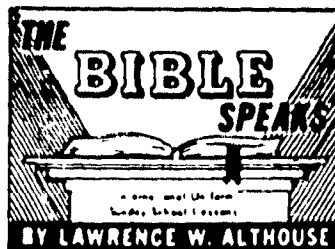
It was almost time to start the afternoon milking when the news about the milk arrived. The laboratory examination had indeed revealed that the milk was slightly sour and that was cause for rejection.

The problem now became a little more complicated: The tank was full of rejected milk, and the cows needed to be milked. In order to start the milking, we had to have an empty bulk tank.

Numerous cheese processing plants were called to find out if they could take the milk. One discouraging response led to another. The cows began to bawl louder, and I began to feel lower than ever.

Finally, a processor answered the phone who said he would be able to use the sour product. Still, a hauler had to be called. A friend of mine volunteered to take care of that problem.

At long last the afternoon milking could begin. And this time I made real sure the compressor was turned on to cool the milk. Forgetting to do that at an earlier milking is what caused this frustrating experience of life on the farm in the first place.



ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

Lesson for December 7, 1975

Background Scripture:
Matthew 1:1-17; 4:23-25; 9:9-13.

Devotional Reading:
Psalms 9:1-8.

Have you ever wondered why there are four gospels in the New Testament instead of just one?

One of the reasons that there are four is that there were four different writers or editors who wanted to portray Jesus from four different perspectives. Each of the gospels portrays the same man, yet each has a somewhat different flavor of point of view.

The writer of the Gospel According to Matthew paints a portrait of Jesus in which certain features stand out boldly.

For one thing, the writer of Matthew makes it clear that the "Good News" is particularly intended for the outcasts of society. If the writer of this gospel is the Matthew who became an apostle, then his own case is an example.

Not for the righteous

The Matthew we find in Matthew 9 is very definitely an outcast. His profession is that of tax collector, an office despised by all respectable Jews. For one thing, many of the tax collectors were corrupt and the whole profession had a bad name among the populace. Secondly, since the money collected was for the support of the hated Romans, respectable Jews regarded the Jewish tax collector as a traitor.

So despised is the tax collector that he is often lumped together with all other sinners: "tax collectors and sinners" (9:10). Yet, through these people as hated by the respectable Jew, Matthew makes it very clear that much of Jesus's ministry was spent with these people. Jesus himself was castigated for associating with these people, but his reply left no doubt as to his own sense of rightness: "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.'" For I have come not to call the righteous, but sinners" (9:12,13).

A troubling thought: How much does the church today have to do with outcasts?

Behind the genealogy

The writer of Matthew also wants to demonstrate that the coming of Jesus was all part of a great plan. Thus he begins this gospel with a genealogy of Jesus, a family tree. The purpose of it is to show that Jesus is the culmination of God's plan that began far back in Israel's history.

So, he is saying that "God has a purpose!" and that purpose we see fulfilled in the coming of Jesus. In fact, we are still working out that purpose today as Christ is born anew within us.

Finally, the writer of Matthew wants to emphasize what he considered to be



NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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To Mulch Strawberries

Freezing weather will soon arrive when strawberry plants need some protection from the weather. We suggest that growers cover their plants with 3 to 4 inches of clean straw or marsh hay. This will keep the ground from freezing and thawing alternately during the winter and prevent heaving of the plants. Also, the mulch cover will protect the crowns of the plants and keep them from winter-killing. Growers should not use materials that pack down too hard such as leaves and saw-dust. The time to apply the mulch would be when the ground starts to freeze and stay frozen.

To Insulate Buildings

The saving of energy is a nation-wide effort. This should be a personal and local effort because in most cases it will reduce fuel costs. Proper insulation is one of the best methods of reducing energy needs. This has always been true and is more so a fact now that energy and fuel costs are increasing. Storm windows, both wall and ceiling insulation, and any practice to reduce the heat loss and keep the cold air out will be a saving. Many barns need extra insulation to prevent condensation on walls and ceilings. This may only be a 6-inch layer of hay, straw, or chopper corn fodder, but it will serve the need. Extra insulation in walls and ceilings, especially in older buildings, will reduce fuel costs and save energy. This is the time to focus some attention of reduced heating costs for the winter.

To Put It In Writing

Many farm leases and agreements are being made this time of the year. The opportunities for misunderstanding and argument are much greater when only a verbal agreement is reached. We continue to stress the importance of a written agreement and all interested persons having a copy. All details of the agreement should be listed so there is little doubt as to the responsibilities of each party. If there is a chance of a misunderstanding, there will be one. It is doubtful if a written agreement will make an honest person out of one who

Jesus' central message: the kingdom of heaven is at hand! The healing he does is a kind of evidence of the breaking in of that kingdom and its meaning: to heal men's brokenness.

The Gospel of Matthew is basically a gospel of healing - healing understood in its widest context. Wherever there is brokenness in men's lives - broken bodies, broken minds, broken spirits, broken lives, broken families, broken communities, a broken world - that is where the power of Christ's kingdom is intended to heal the brokenness... according to Matthew!

wants to be dishonest but it will make it more difficult for him to treat the other person unfairly. Put it in writing and have a full discussion including all parties.

To Check Stand-By Generator

Electric power is a daily need on most farms and homes. As we face the winter season, there is more danger of snow and ice storms disrupting this service leaving power units helpless. We strongly urge the purchase of a stand-by generator that can be attached to a tractor or gasoline engine to give the needed power. With many modern farms, and considering the size of the operation, it might be impossible to continue without electric power. Also, many confinement buildings include ventilation, water, and feeding equipment that will stop and cause severe losses without electricity. Good farm management suggests that such emergencies be anticipated and plans made to cope with them.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, Dec. 6

Thomasville 4-H Club banquet for parents and members at the 4-H Center near Bair in York County. Covered dish supper begins at 7:00 p.m.

Monday, Dec. 7

Manheim Young Farmers meeting 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Dec. 9

Garden Spot Young Farmers meeting and Christmas Party at the Garden Spot High School 7:30 p.m.

Ephrata Young Farmer's meeting at 7:45 p.m. Ephrata Senior High School

Lancaster County DHIA Banquet at the Farm and Home Center.

Lancaster County Conservation District meeting on the Chickies Creek area at the Manheim Boro Office 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Dec. 10

Manheim Young Farmers deer hunt.

NFO Convention in Kansas City, Missouri continuing through the 12th.

Eastern Lancaster County young farmers meeting at the Hinkletown Alternative School for a program on income tax 7:30 p.m.

Lancaster County ASCS Committee meeting 10:00 a.m. Farm and Home Center.

Thursday, Dec. 11

E-town Young Farmers meeting for a program on milk marketing. Guest speaker will be Boyd Gattley, Interstate. E-town senior High School 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 12

Manheim Young Farmers banquet at Historic Strasburg 7:30 p.m.