

## EDITORIAL COMMENTS

10—Lancaster Farming, Saturday, March 19, 1977

### Ag Day is every day

March 21 has been set aside as Agriculture Day . . . "a vigorous, unified effort to promote better understanding between rural and urban Americans."

Think about that for a second. Isn't that what's needed every day? I believe so.

Farmers farm 365 days of the year; we all eat every day. Anytime a farmer comes into contact — either directly or indirectly — with a city person, he should make an effort to promote agriculture. That's every day. And it should be done in a sincere, informative manner. Not in an arrogant or even angry fashion which is characteristic of many union bosses.

After all, how much do farmers really know about the city man's way of life? Too often we look at his salary and fringe benefits without paying attention to his disadvantages. Too often we remember only the messy cow tails which slapped us in the face, the long hours, the high investments, and bad weather, while forgetting the

rewards and blessings of farming.

This is not written in defense of the non-agricultural worker's attitudes and wage earning power, but to illustrate that the door to better understanding swings both ways. It shouldn't exclude the farmer, and that's why Ag Day is a terrific and laudable idea. Its only improvement would be for all farmers to participate in an every-day type of "PR" program with a positive attitude.

The National Agri-Marketing Association, which came up with the Ag Day idea and is donating creative and organizational talents valued at close to \$250,000, asks farmers:

"Who'll be heard . . . the people with the facts, or some group grinding its ax?"

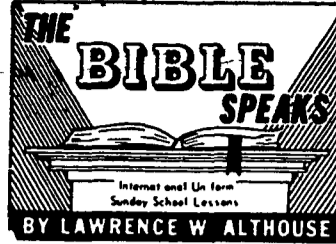
In the long run, it's the farmer's decision. Which is where it belongs. I hope you'll choose to do your part and that it's in the direction for better understanding on both sides of the fence.

### Public opinion needed

Right now the Barley farm issue is on everyone's minds and everyone's lips. We're all concerned for the outcome of the issue and what it could mean for us in the future. And, it's time to get involved.

The Lancaster County Poultry Association has done just that by buying space in this week's Lancaster Farming (page 13) and proclaiming their stand on the issue. Because they believe that their sentiments are shared by others around the county, they have included a coupon which can be clipped, signed, and sent to the Lancaster County commissioners.

They have also purchased space in two other Lancaster newspapers as well, and are hoping to have the greatest mail campaign in the county through a combined effort of concerned citizens. However, they can only achieve this goal if subscribers get involved, sign their names, and mail the coupon. Lancaster Farming, alone, has a circulation of nearly 30,000 which means the readers can flood the offices with mail if one coupon per paper is mailed to the commissioners. So, if you're concerned, this is the simplest way to get involved. We urge you to do it.



### BEYOND THE FATTED CALF

Lesson for March 20, 1977

Background Scripture: Luke 15.

Devotional Reading: Psalms 103:11-14.

The older brother in the Parable of the Prodigal Son was spiritually nearsighted: he was unable to look beyond the fatted calf - a very limited horizon indeed!

Of course, the same was true of the younger brother, at least in the beginning. As the story opens we see a willful young man who decides that he has had enough of the confinements of homelife and family. What he wants is "what is coming to him," his share of the family capital. As he looked over his father's flocks he knew that a certain portion of these animals were his by right of anticipated inheritance. But he didn't want to be a shepherd. Instead he wanted to cash in his share and take it to some "far country" where the action was.

"But he was angry"

We all know what happens next in the story: how the prodigal spends his inheritance in the wild pursuits of the "far country," how, reduced to poverty, he scratches out a bare existence performing a task no sane Jew would accept: feeding and tending the pigs! We know too that at last he "comes to himself," realizes what he's done and decides to return home, even though he has forfeited his status as a son. We know too that the father has been scanning the road and, seeing the returning prodigal, hurries down the road to greet him.

Many of us tend to drop the story at that point. But there is an important sequel or coda to the story that we must not miss. In the midst of the joyous celebration we see the older brother return wearily from the fields. Hearing the celebration and seeing the bright lights, he



### NOW IS THE TIME . . .

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#### TO INSPECT PASTURES

The disposal of junk and trash in the country continues to be a problem. I'm aware that too many fields contain bottles, tin cans, papers, and other forms of domestic trash. In pasture fields where livestock will soon be grazing, there is danger of poisoning from this trash. Producers should take the time to go over the pasture area, especially along roads, and remove the material before the livestock have a chance at it. I've known of paint cans and empty chemical cans that

learns that his prodigal brother has returned and his grateful father has declared a banquet.

The older brother does not join in the celebration. No, he is "angry," very angry. And can't we understand how he feels? After all, he didn't run away to a far country and demand his share of the inheritance. He stayed on and worked faithfully for his father - yes, even having to pick up some of his brother's work in his absence. He did all the things a dutiful son is supposed to do, but there was never any celebration for him.

"These many years. . ."

His problem is that he cannot see beyond the fatted calf on the banquet table. Both had wanted what they thought was theirs by right, although they pursued it in different ways. The younger brother had learned that there is more to life than one's share of "what is coming to you." The older brother by his words and actions reveals that he still does not understand that. In other words, it does not appear that the older brother remained and loyally served his father because he loved him, but because he had his eye on the "fatted calf."

Some of us are the "prodigal son" and some of us are the "elder brother," but both of us must look beyond the "fatted calf."

are dangerous to livestock that have been found in the rural areas. When removing this material farmers are urged to report any means of identification of the material to township officers or supervisors; thoughtless persons who continue to dispose of their trash in this manner should be prosecuted.

#### TO SHEAR SHEEP

When warm Spring weather arrives, the sheep flock should be removed of their fleeces. Too many times the sheep are not sheared until late May or June when they have been hampered by the wool in hot weather. The ewes will milk better and be better mothers to their lambs if they are sheared during March or April. The fleeces should be dry when sheared and stored in a dry, clean place until marketed. We suggest the nearby wool pools as a good means of selling the wool on the merit basis; the wool will be graded at these pools. Both the Berks County pool at Reading and the Cumberland County pool at Carlisle will take Lancaster County fleeces. Details are available. The other day at a livestock meeting, Ben Morgan from Penn State reported that 80 percent of the wool produced in Pennsylvania is sold through one of the cooperative wool pools.

#### TO MAKE STRAIGHT ALFALFA SEEDING

Local growers who have open ground and want to establish a new stand of alfalfa could be getting their ground ready for this new seeding. Many growers have been very successful in recent years by making a seeding of only alfalfa late in March or early April. By making the seeding very early in the Spring, one or more cuttings can be made during the first season. The band seeding method is suggested where the seeds are carried down under the drill and dropped in a row over a band of complete fertilizer. Band seeding attachments are available for most drills. When making the straight alfalfa seeding, some form of chemical weed control is needed. Please refer to the 1977 Agronomy Guide for details.

#### TO SAVE FUEL - PLANT A WINDBREAK

The planting of trees for a natural windbreak is suggested at this time in order to save fuel and energy. Many folks in the rural areas experienced very cold winds last January and high fuel consumption. Several rows of evergreen trees planted on the windy side of homes and farm buildings will give considerable protection and reduce heating costs. In line with energy conservation and the reduction of fuel costs local farmers are urged to give windbreaks some consideration. Information on the kinds of evergreen trees and the spacing is available upon request from any Extension office.

## Farm Calendar

**Today, March 19**  
Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers annual meeting, Hunt Valley Inn, Cockeysville, Md. 10 a.m.  
York County 4-H Baby Beef Banquet, 7 p.m. at the Shrewsbury Firehouse.  
**Monday, March 21**  
Lancaster County Sheep Meeting, 7:30 p.m. in the Extension Training Room of the Farm and Home Center. Ben

Morgan of Penn State is guest speaker.  
Second pesticide applicator training session, CORE exam at the Hunterdon County, N.J. Extension Center, 8 p.m.

Conrad Weiser Adult Farmers have tour and seminars at New Holland Machine Co., New Holland.  
Red Lion Area Young Farmers meet, topic:

"Engineers look at Farm Machinery."

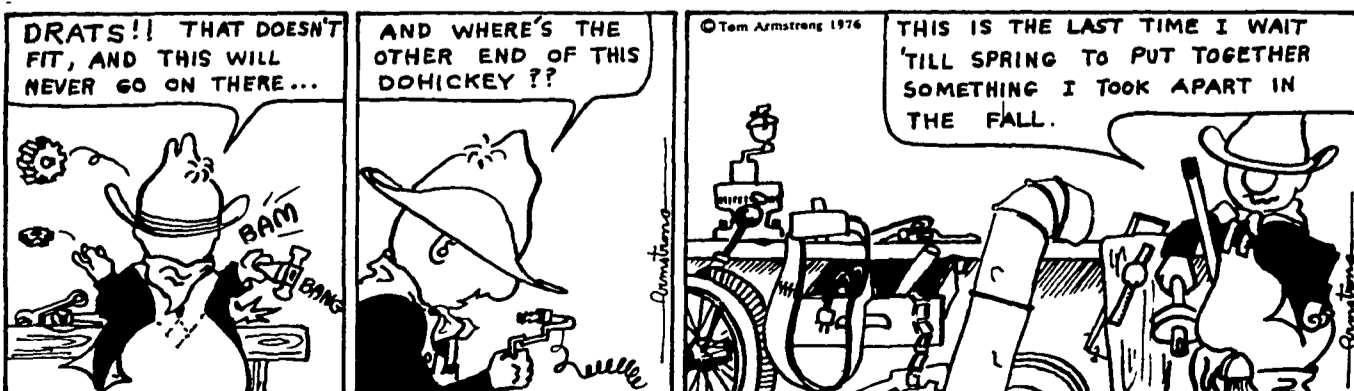
**Tuesday, March 22**  
Hunterdon County, N.J. Home Garden Clinic, 8 p.m. at the Extension Center in Flemington. Lawns are featured.  
Willow Street Fire Company holds barbecue for benefit of building fund for new firehouse.  
Penn State seminar on gardening at the Lan-

caster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.  
Young Farmer Volleyball Tournament at ELCO High School, 7:30 p.m.  
Annual Spring meeting of Eastern milk producers, 7 p.m. at the Ono Fire Hall in Lebanon County.  
York County Guernsey Breeders' banquet, Shrewsbury Fire Hall, 7 p.m.  
Lancaster County Holstein Club tours Centre County

farms and related dairy facilities at Penn State. The group leaves from the Farm and Home Center parking lot at 8 a.m.  
**Wednesday, March 23**  
Penn State seminar on gardening at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7:30 p.m. A.G. Lueck in charge.  
Lancaster County 4-H Expo begins today and runs through Saturday at Park City Mall.

**Farm Financial Management Clinic** at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Program repeated same time tomorrow.  
**Land-use Planning meeting** in the ELCO High School vo-ag room. Four speakers dealing with the preservation of farmland, floodplane management, tax reform and rural development.  
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### RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong