

# EDITORIAL COMMENTS By DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR



*The most essential ingredients for success*

## There's more to farming than money

Former U.S. Agriculture Secretary Dr. Earl Butz goes around making speeches these days telling audiences that he doesn't believe dairymen milk cows just because they like to associate with Holsteins. The former USDA chief claims farmers milk cows to make a profit.

While it would be true that every dairyman is in business to make money, that wouldn't be enough incentive for some.

For years there was nothing I enjoyed more about the dairy business than to work closely with production statistics. I wouldn't milk cows regularly if I couldn't have a reasonably accurate account of each animal's production.

Testing programs are a must, as far as I'm concerned. An investment in production testing pays for itself over and over again in a variety of ways.

The most important benefit, to my way of thinking, is that testing programs can inspire interest and enthusiasm for one's herd and each

individual animal. It's satisfying to know what Bessie and Bossie and the entire herd are doing from day to day and month to month. Along with that come the challenges. Combine the interest, enthusiasm and challenges, and the farmer is equipped with the most essential ingredients for success. Without such inspiration he's doomed to find his occupation dull.

It's a well-known fact that production statistics - not only with cows, but any agricultural commodity - are a big factor in demand and prices. Higher production figures command better prices. Good, documented productivity brings the buyers to the farmer's door.

And even though some production records are not reliable, and a portion of them are even a swindler's act, the worthiness of performance testing is beyond attack. They're not just a tool to help a farmer make money. They offer him everything he needs for that extra "spark" to keep his work interesting. All he has to do

is make use of available programs and then take a little time to analyze the incoming reports.

Mr. Butz declares that farmers are in their barns and fields simply for the money. I'm sure, however, that a good many are in it for the love of their land and animals.

Economic gains, whether it's with milking machines or typewriters, come easier when a true appreciation exists for the work involved. In the case of farming, those priceless, special qualities are multiplied through testing programs.

It's sad that a few individuals get carried away with the enthusiasm that comes along with performance testing programs. As with most any good item, production statistics can be abused. Each year a few individuals find themselves caught in the web of greed, glory, and dishonest dollars that become available through false representation of facts.

While we can't ignore or condone those who abuse testing programs,

we can't allow those negative points to cast a dark shadow over the entire concept.

In my opinion, if a farmer has found additional interest, enthusiasm and challenge in his profession as a result of production data he has at his fingertips, then he has gained the most important benefit of testing.

What's more, with interest, enthusiasm, and challenges, he has what it takes to make a success of himself.

Aside from the psychological and economic gains that can be had through performance testing, there is also the advantage of contributing to the common good of the industry. In dairying, for example, the more participation in testing, the greater the reliability of bull proofs as the sires' daughters enter the milking string.

So, while testing may be the most interesting on the individual and herd level, it carries advantages and benefits at every level. Farming just wouldn't be the same without it.



## NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

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### TO BE CAREFUL WITH ANTIBIOTICS

The use of drugs and other materials in the livestock business is a part of herd health; the use of these materials is not the problem - it's the mis-use of them that causes trouble. All livestock and dairy producers are urged to follow the directions in their use, and especially the withdrawal time.

The USDA Quality Food Services are on the alert for too high residues in both meat and milk. Most antibiotics include periods of time before keeping the milk and before slaughtering the animal. If these are not followed, the product and the market may be in jeopardy. Also, accurate records should be kept of the material used, the amount, and the exact time of treatment. Don't take chances.

### TO EXERCISE BREEDING ANIMALS

Many farm animals are kept in close quarters during

the winter months. This may work well with animals being fattened for market, but may not be suitable for breeding animals. The flock of breeding ewes should have access to an exercise lot daily; there will be less trouble with paralysis in the ewe flock and stronger lambs born with daily exercise.

When the ground becomes frozen, or snow covered, some shepherds will feed hay on the ground out in the exercise lot in order to force the ewes to exercise. Dairy cows need outside exercise to maintain good feet and legs, and to provide opportunity for heat detection.

Brood mares need the same daily exercise, if they are to remain in the best of health.

### TO BEWARE OF SURFACE WATER

The proper handling of surface water around the farm homestead is very important. With livestock feedlots the surface water should be directed away from the manure pack in order to prevent stream pollution. Wells should be protected from any kind of surface water because of the danger of pollution and of high nitrate content of water because of the danger of pollution and of high nitrate

content of the water. Many cases of high nitrates can be traced to surface water getting into the well, or from organic matter getting down into the rock layers.

For the good of farm buildings, surface water should be directed around them; otherwise, the building will be wet too much of the time and the timbers will rot. Be sure that surface water is not doing damage to farm buildings, and is not carrying materials into streams.

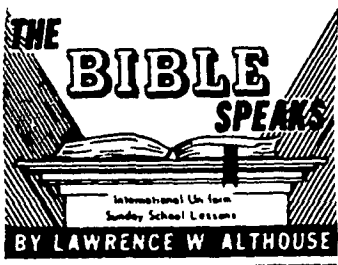
### TO ELIMINATE CHICKWEED IN ALFALFA

The month of December is a good time to spray the

alfalfa field for the control of chickweed. This winter-time weed will continue to grow until next March. In some fields it may get so rank that it will smother out the alfalfa plants.

Most weeds are easier to kill when they are small; we urge growers to give some attention to the control of chickweed control; the one to be used depends upon the age of the stand and whether or not any grasses are in the mixture.

The 1979 Agronomy Guide will give full details. Don't let chickweed take over the alfalfa field. Spray before the end of the year for best results.



### GOD'S "GAME PLAN"

Lesson for December 10, 1978

**Background Scripture:**  
Psalms 136; Romans 5:6-11; Ephesians 1:3-14  
**Devotional Reading:**  
Psalms 136:1-9, 23-26.

To me, it seemed a combination of luck, some skill, and "heads-up" football that had enabled the team I was rooting for to intercept three forward passes and win the game by 14 points. But the TV commentator said differently: it was my team's "game plan" to force their opponents to pass and set-up the interceptions. The average spectator was quite unaware of this strategy.

### He Destined Us

So it is with life in its larger and wider aspects, too. We realize that there is evident some skill, some alertness to grasp the op-

portunities as they come our way, and, it would seem, a lot of luck - either bad or good. "Luck," is largely regarded as a matter of chance: accidental, unplanned, unpurposeful. The world and life in general are sometimes likened to a runaway train without an engineer. Yet, just because we are unaware of God's game plan is no reason to assume that one doesn't exist.

In football most teams have a game plan, but that is no assurance that everything will go according to the plan. Individual

players may forget about it or become distracted from it. They may fail to carry out their assignments. They may lack the necessary perseverance and discipline to make the plan work. Thus, there is an intention, but the team may deviate from the intention.

So it is the larger and wider realms of life. God has a plan, but we may not always co-operate in making the plan work. The writer of Ephesians says, "He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will" (1:5). That is God's

plan, but we have the free-will to resist that plan. God does not compel us to accept our sonship.

### Behind The Mystery

Yet, says the writer, there is a timelessness about God's plan that indicates that, although we may temporarily delay or divert his purpose through out stubbornness, in time that plan will be fulfilled, with or without us! In this moment, I may refuse to heed his call to help my neighbor, but in the long run I cannot hold back the tide of his loving purpose which will some day fill the whole earth. My sin may carry the moment, but God's

purpose is linked to eternity and his grace will be triumphant, as Esphesians put it, in "the fullness of time" (1:10).

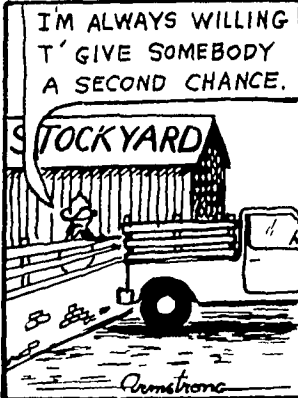
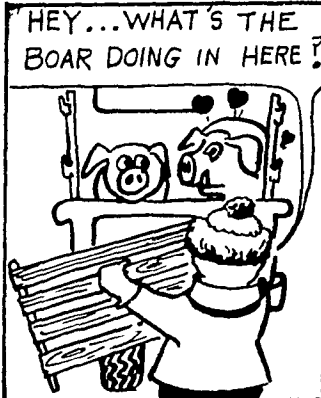
That's where God's plan and the football coach's "game plans" are different. The latter's plan is operative for barely an afternoon or evening, while God's plan and purpose are forever. It existed before the world began and it will exist when the world is over.

And what a beautiful and reassuring game plan it is! ... a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

## RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong

## Farm Calendar



**Today, Dec. 9**  
Maryland Cooperative Milk Producers District 1 meeting, 7 p.m. at North Harford High School, Pylesville.  
Thomasville 4-H Club annual achievement and covered dish supper, 7 p.m. at the 4-H Center, near Bair.  
Dance and hoedown sponsored by the Berks County 4-H County Council. At

Camp Joy (across from Berks Heim) at 8 p.m. to 11 p.m.  
Fifth annual Delmarva Corn Technology Conference, Ocean City Convention Hall, Ocean City, Md.  
Ephrata Arera Young Farmers meeting, 7:45 p.m. at the high school.  
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