

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

Who wants a farm promotion package?

What was showmanship and ceremony just a month ago today is reality.

This weekend when the state's millions of homemakers head to the grocery clutching supermarket advertisements, for the first time they may notice a tiny map of Pennsylvania with the words "Pennsylvania Agriculture — We're Growing Better"

Weis Markets, in its many ads in Central Pennsylvania newspapers carries the logo. Appropriately enough, they are using it to promote the crop that Pennsylvania produces more of than anyone else: mushrooms.

Ginny Thornburgh, the Governor's wife, kicked the program off Wednesday afternoon at a Weis store.

Other food stores and chains, including Giant Foods, Kessler Meats, the Potato Growers Co-op, and some canneries, indicate they will be using the logo in the near future.

In addition to mushrooms, honey, apples, peaches, and vegetables should be ripe for promotion.

The success of the program is going to depend to a large extent on

the willingness of firms and farm groups to use the logo

In the past, many Ag Department promotions have been detrimental to the processor and the retailer. However, this new promotion is designed to help them as well as the farmer.

In Pennsylvania there is no appropriation for the program other than existing funding for the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Markets. And that may not be available forever.

Tight funding isn't the rule everywhere. In Texas — where they like to do everything up big — there was a \$1,000,000 budget approved to promote Texas products within the state.

As usual, Pennsylvania is a bit late getting into the act. But it's better late than never.

New York, Massachusetts, and New Jersey also have major campaigns to market their own products in their states.

In fact, the lucrative Philadelphia market has been flooded with Garden State promotion for years. It's to the point where hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians need to be re-convinced that Pennsylvania

produce really is as good as New Jersey produce.

Still, studies show there is an instinctive loyalty to state-grown goods

Back in the late 1960s when producers first began talking about an agricultural products promotion program, studies were conducted on how the consumer views Pennsylvania products.

A bin of peaches from a single orchard was split into two lots. One was labeled as a Pennsylvania product, the other simply as fresh peaches

Although picked from the same trees, peaches labeled as Pennsylvania products outsold the others five to two.

That study was one of several which encouraged formation of the fledgling Pennsylvania Certified Farm Market program, now moved to PFA from the Ag Department and a great success.

But despite the obvious financial advantage of short-haul shipping of local produce, we still find stores catering to shoppers who look for Maine or Idaho potatoes. The Washington state Red Delicious

(somewhat bland tasting for snacks and mediocre for cooking) still sets the standard for eating and baking because of colorful promotion from Washington

And so, the shopper's dollar travels thousands of miles away, to be spent on an inferior product, at a higher price

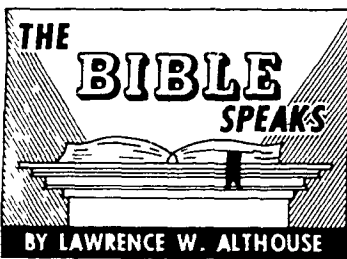
It's the kind of consumer rip-off many big city papers should tell their readers about

In the meantime, the question arises to how long the Ag Department will regard the program as its political darling. Over the next several months new companies will join the program with much fanfare.

At present budgeting is no problem. But it may not always be so. Thus the question. Who wants a farm promotion package?

Like the Certified Farm Market program, the logo program needs to be picked up by a grocers' or farmers' group, or a federation of the two.

With a successful, non-government run program, Pennsylvania growers can boast to their Texas friends that they saved, rather than spent, a million dollars a year on promotion.



THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

THE PARALYTIC
Lesson for February 10, 1980

Background Scripture:
John 5: 1-24.
Devotional Reading:
Psalms 40: 1-8.
The runs of the Pool of

Bethesda (or Bethzatha) are impressive. Adjacent to the lovely Church of St. Anne honoring the Virgin Mary's mother, the ruins even today testify to the grand scale of the pool and its five porticoes.

Nevertheless, each time I have stood there, my mind has been dominated by the one recorded historical event that took place there; Jesus' healing of the paralytic. What makes this event so striking to me is, not simply that a man was healed there — for Jesus healed many people — but the seemingly strange question Jesus asked him:

"Do you want to be healed?" (John 5:6).

Belaboring The Obvious

It almost seems a cruel question. Didn't Jesus know that this man had been lame for thirty-eight years — a lifetime for many in that day? Crippled, helpless and dependent solely upon others, of course he wanted to be healed! What a ridiculous question!

The very fact that Jesus encountered him by the pool of Bethesda was evidence that he had certainly tried to get help. From time to time there was a disturbance in the waters of this pool and it was believed that an angel of

the Lord was responsible. The first person to enter the pool after the disturbance of the waters, it was believed, would be healed of any disease or infirmity. So it was a popular gathering spot for "invalids, blind, lame, paralyzed" (5:3).

For thirty-eight years the paralytic had lain by the pool and waited for the healing moment, but he had never gotten into the pool on time. But it wasn't a lack of desire: "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going, another steps down before me"

(5:7). It is more than an explanation, it is a complaint, a bitter one: no one will take the time to help him and others have taken advantage of his infirmity and cheated him of his chance. His bitterness is wrapped around him like a cloak: paralysis, injustice and no one cares!

Take Up Your Pallet

Yet, Jesus' burning question is much more relevant and insightful for both the paralytic and ourselves than may first be apparent. What Jesus is really asking is: Do you really want to be healed, or do you want to spend the rest

of your life bitter and blaming others, escaping the responsibilities of life and nursing an inner bitterness that is more crippling than any physical disease? Are you sure you aren't unconsciously clinging to your disease because you are literally and figuratively afraid to stand on your own two feet?

Shaken loose of his spiritual paralysis, the man surrendered his bitterness, his excuses, and his crutch and chose the gift of wholeness: "at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked" (5:9). So can we.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
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To Adopt Soil-Saving Practices
This is a good time of the year to be making plans for the 1980 cropping season.

Along this line many more farmers need to take a look at their soil erosion problems. The topsoil is a very precious resource on all farms and should be preserved to the highest degree.

Before the current crops are planted farmers might consider contour strips,

terraces, diversion ditches, and others. All of these practices will help keep the soil and the water on the farm.

Assistance is available through the local Soil Conservation Service.

All land owners should evaluate their soil saving practices to be sure they are

doing everything possible to conserve soil, water, and fertility.

To Inspect Alfalfa Fields For Weeds

Winter-time weeds have not had much of a chance to grow under the snow this winter. However, some fields may still have a heavy infestation of chickweed.

Late winter or early spring spraying can be done while the alfalfa is still in the dormant stage. Our herbicide authorities inform us that both Paraquat and Sencor will do a pretty good job on chickweed.

Growers are urged to read and follow the label and instructions very carefully. Control is usually more

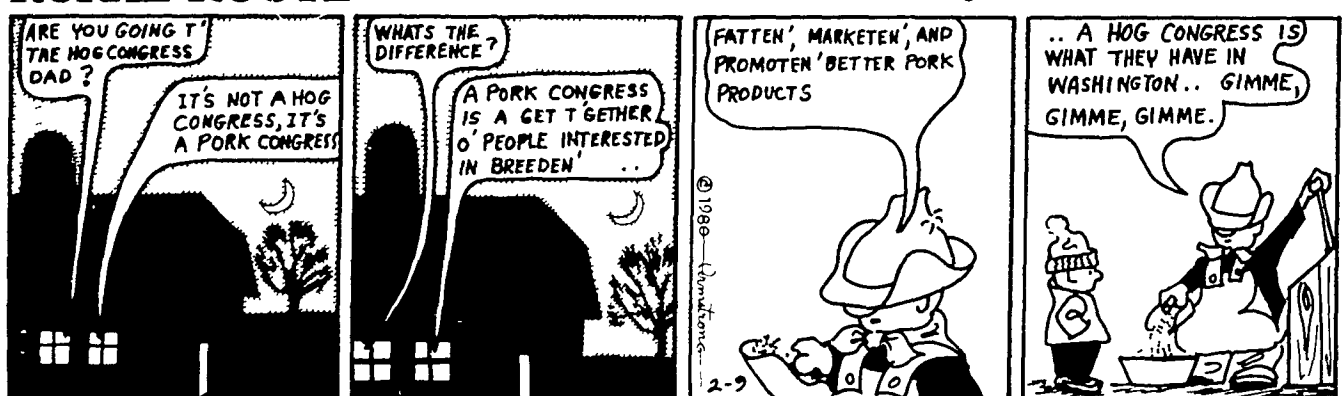
successful when the herbicides are applied in the late fall or winter. However, in fields now showing chickweed infestation, these herbicides may be used.

To Plan For Quality Forage Crops

To most dairymen, cattlemen, and sheep producers a good supply of quality

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RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

Farm Calendar

Monday, February 11
Red Lion Area Young Farmers Meeting; 8 p.m.; Vo-ag shop; topic, Swine Management
Pa. - Md. Roadside Marketing Conference; 9 a.m.; Sheraton Inn, Gettysburg; continues through Tuesday.
Dairy Management Workshops: Shenango

Inn, Sharon; continues through Wednesday.
Tuesday, February 12
Small Grain, Soybean and Forage Meeting; 9:30 a.m.; York 4-H Center.
Dover Young Farmer; 7:30 p.m.; ag shop; topic, Farm Crop Records.
Orchard Management School; 9 a.m. Penn State
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