

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

They do understand us

Many campaigns are mounted in the farm community to gain the respect of urbanites for rural living.

But often the communication is rather one-sided. What do farmers really know about the way city people feel about agriculture?

The Louis Harris pollsters recently did a survey to find out how non-farmers compare with farmers in their appreciation for and outlook on agriculture and conservation.

The survey found more than 80 percent of Americans adhere to an ethic of conservation. And they do not equate conservation with strict preservationism, which is rejected by a majority of Americans.

Farmers, understandably, take a stronger pro-conservation position than does the public as a whole.

The surprise comes, though, in how knowledgeable the general public is about soil conservation problems and practices. Both formal education

and practical farm experience appear to be effective in teaching about conservation.

The Harris people found better than half of Americans are concerned about the loss of good farmland. The public said its second highest concern in all agricultural issues is to "help make sure that our best farmland isn't used for other things."

That's an impressive showing for the importance of farmland to city folks. And in recent years they've shown willingness to put their money where their mouths are.

The Clean and Green amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution passed by a three to one majority, even in urban centers. The tax break to help keep land in agriculture was an impressive commitment by urbanites to keep the State's farms alive.

Americans indicated their preference for agriculture in

allocation of scarce resources by giving food production a disproportionate share of land and water resources compared to industry and jobs, energy, housing, or recreation.

The public favors conservation strategies that involve a partnership between government and the farmer, based on mutual interest. Only a tiny segment of the public said mandatory programs which require the farmer to pay conservation costs are fair.

On the other hand, most favor depriving farmers and landowners who do not protect soil and water of any public help for any phase of their farming operation.

Over three-fourths of Americans feel we should be more concerned about getting the conservation job done than in pinching pennies.

As might be expected, farmers would allocate more federal money to

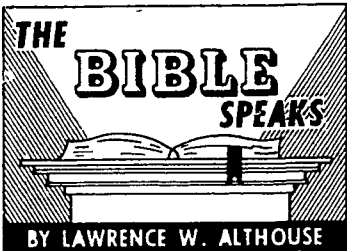
agriculture than would non-farmers. Farmers asked \$30 out of \$100 for increasing crops compared to the general public's \$24.40.

Urbanites agree that most years farmers have a difficult time staying in business.

Overall, the Harris people concluded, the American people have a good grasp of the realities of contemporary American agriculture. They support the concept of the small, family farm and the federal policies aimed at preserving and increasing the number of small family farms in the country.

We'd agree with that conclusion. The general public seems to be on the farmers' bandwagon. It seems all of the work farmers have done is paying off.

City people seem to understand our position better than we might think they do. Let's not let them down.



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

NICODEMUS

Lesson for March 2, 1980

Background Scripture:
John 3:1-21; 7:32-52;
19:38-42.
Devotional Reading:
Ezekiel 36:26-32.

We often associate the name of Nicodemus with timidity. We remember well that "This man came to Jesus by night..." (John 3:2). And we know why: he was a Pharisee, "a ruler of the Jews," in all probability a member of the Sanhedrin. We smile somewhat cynically when we think of this powerful man coming to Jesus secretly so that no one would know of his interest in the Nazarene.

Born Anew
We remember also that he was slow to comprehend what Jesus was saying to him. Told that he must be "born anew," Nicodemus

replies, "How can this be?" And we love Jesus' reply that puts him in his place: "Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand this?" (3:9,10).

The writer of John's Gospel becomes so intent upon Jesus' response that he fails to tell us anything more of Nicodemus until Chapter 7. Here we find the Pharisees and chief priests - probably the Sanhedrin - discussing charges against Jesus and Nicodemus challenging them: "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" (7:51).

It is hardly a ringing

confession of faith in Jesus as the Christ, yet we begrudgingly admit that at least Nicodemus spoke up in public for justice. Even that took some courage, although we would like to have seen courage enough for Nicodemus to testify for Jesus. That's what we would have done, had we been Nicodemus, isn't it?"

Are you sure?

Nicodemus Also

There is but one more mention of Nicodemus in John's Gospel and it is very brief. In John 19 we are told that Joseph of Arimathea, another prominent Pharisee,

asked for Jesus' body and placed him in his own newly-cut tomb. And John adds: "Nicodemus also, who had at first come to him by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes" (19:39). And that is all the mention there is of Nicodemus in the New Testament, although some legends tell us that he was subsequently baptised by Peter and John and was banished from Jerusalem as a Christian after the martyrdom of Stephen.

Whether or not the legends are true, if we think about it, we find that there is more to admire in this man than

most of us might have suspected. For the truth of the matter is that his story could easily be our story. Although we like to think that we would have been courageous spokesmen for Jesus had we lived then, it is more likely that our witness would be, at first, timid like his. And in the three passages in John's Gospel we can see a line of steady growth from a man who timidly comes to Jesus by night to a disciple who publicly honors the martyred Nazarene. It has taken some time, but Nicodemus has surely been "born anew"!



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
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TO INCORPORATE MANURE

The time is soon coming when my barns and feedlots will be cleaned out and the animal waste will be applied on the soil. This is a valuable source of fertilizer and we hope that all livestock and poultry producers realize it's value. However, the manner in which manure is stored and handled will determine the actual fertilizer content. After it is taken from the pit, or the barn into the field, it

should be incorporated into the topsoil as quickly as possible. Glenn Wissler of Ephrata R1, has often told me that his soil injector spreader is a good investment. The manure is injected into the topsoil and therefore, little leaching of the fertilizer elements. Also, fewer objections from nearby neighbors. Don't lose fertilizer values because of too much time between application and incorporation.

TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE VENTILATION

The proper ventilation of dairy and beef barns continue to be a problem. In the recent months I have been approached by several producers because of dripping of water from the roof or ceiling area. Too frequently this has happened when a lean-to shed was constructed against the main barn. Another case was a barnyard covered over with a roof and built solidly against the main barn. Lester Burdette, Livestock Specialist from Penn State, urged producers to leave a 6 to 8-inch slot

between the new construction and the old barn. This will allow the warm, moisture-laden air to escape. If this is not done, the air will be trapped at the roof and against the old barn; this causes condensation and rotting of the wood structure.

TO EVALUATE SEWAGE SLUDGE

More sewage sludge is becoming available for agricultural use. This by-product of sewage plants has considerable fertilizer value. Also, the organic matter is good for the soil. However, some sludges contain higher amount of heavy metals

such as cadmium, copper, and zinc. In these cases the rate per acre should be decreased. Too much heavy metals in the soil will be toxic to plants. Ray Shipp, our Agronomy Specialist at Penn State, reports that all sludge should be tested before applied to the soil; This test is available at Penn State University. The maximum rate per acre is then based on the heavy metal content. Details are available at any of our extension offices.

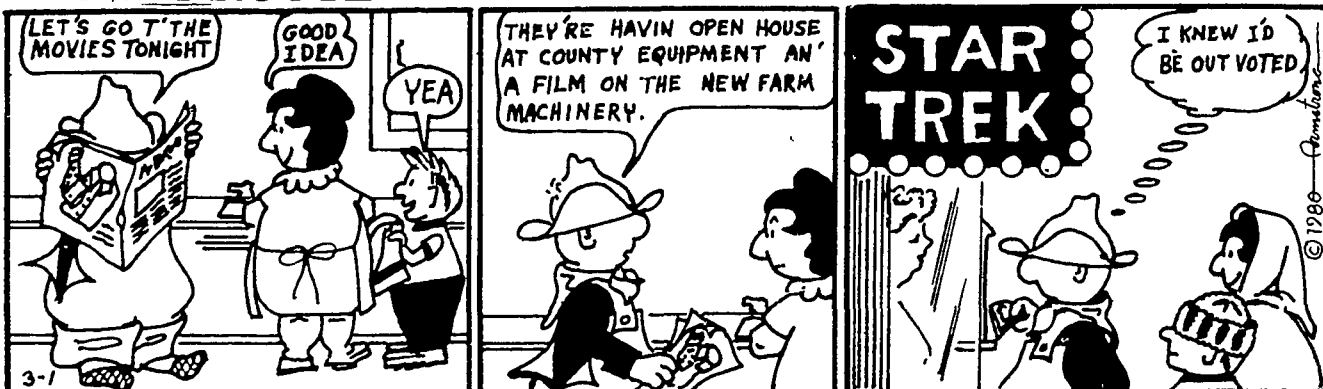
TO SAVE ENERGY WITH TREE WINDBREAKS

The spring months are a

good time to plant trees for windbreak purposes.

Homes, and other buildings, that are protected by a good windbreak will require less fuel for heating and cooling purposes. Several rows of trees planted on the west and northwest side of the building is one way to conserve energy. The trees should be from 50 to 75 feet into the wind from the structure to be protected. I'm aware of a few of these in the county. Elmer Lapp at Kinzers R1, has benefited for years from his windbreak and is considering to expand it larger.

RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

Farm Calendar

Saturday, March 1
Farm Equipment Expo concludes at Farm Show Building, Harrisburg.
York County Society of Farm Women 50th Anniversary, York College, York.
Eastern Shore Holstein Sale, 11:00 a.m.; Hunter's Sale Barn, Rising Sun, Md.
Adams Co. Fruit Growers Meeting; at Musselman's Cafeteria, Biglerville.

Sunday, March 2
78th Annual Convention, National Farmers' Union; Denver, Colorado through March 6.
Monday, March 3
Pesticide Training Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at the Extension Center, Flemington, N.J.
Maryland Ag Week, Frederick Towne Mall, Md.
Milk Marketing Workshop, (Turn to Page A37)