

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

Food for thought on Ag Day

The coincidence of Ag Day on March 20 and the 100th anniversary of the New Jersey Experiment station this month is a bit much to ignore.

What better way to mark the First Day of Spring than by saluting farmers?

Ag Day's purpose is to make the 96 percent of the American population aware of the four percent which provides its daily food and fiber needs.

Non-farmers and farmers alike may be surprised to learn that American agriculture has assets nearly equal to the \$790 billion in total worth of all the stocks listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

Ag Day promotions will say that because America's agriculture is the most scientifically advanced, efficient, and plentiful in the world, food in the United States still is a bargain.

The centennial of our neighboring research station underscores the many advantages farmers and farm researchers bring to this nation as a whole.

What gardener hasn't planted Rutgers tomatoes in the family patch? A tip of the hat to New Jersey research here, please.

Does the name Selman Waksman ring a bell? Trivia experts will identify him as the Nobel Prize winning soil scientist who discovered the antibiotic streptomycin — while working at Rutgers.

Almost all land grant schools have similar bright spots in their history.

Ag Day, then, provides an opportunity to put such achievements into the limelight.

Ag businesses will sponsor advertising aimed at the general public. One fine theme says the best way to keep peace is to have the most

tractors, feeding the world rather than fighting it.

One explains the need for farm chemicals. Another points out how well Americans are fed as compared to people elsewhere.

But among the themes there is one which will raise a red flag in front of most farmers. It highlights the relatively low cost consumers pay for food.

In some nations people don't complain about high food prices because there is no food available at any price.

If U.S. egg prices had increased at the same rate as transportation costs since 1958, eggs would run over \$3.40 per dozen.

Similarly, if milk prices increased at the same rate as housing costs in the last 20 years, milk today would cost about \$4.50 a gallon.

While all of that makes for good, breast-beating public relations with

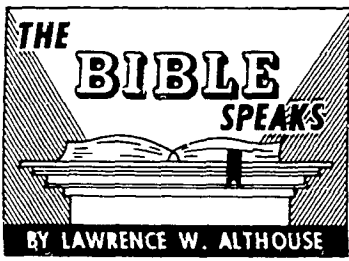
non-farmers, it should raise the hackles of every person who's ever run a tractor.

Is it fair for farmers to accept anywhere from one-third to one-fourth of the price they might get for their goods? Should the 96 percent be allowed to thrive on the belt-tightening of the other four percent?

When labor unions accept major wage cuts for work they do in the public sector, when politicians work for the public rather than as paid promoters of special interests, when public employees forgo the right to strike, then we can begin to accept for a time the sacrifices made by the farm community. Then we will agree the burden is being borne equally by the many rather than a few.

Until then, farming deserves all the recognition it can get in any form.

That includes Ag Day, the first day of Spring. March 20 is our day. Enjoy.



ANNAS & CAIAPHAS

Lesson for March 16, 1980

Background Scripture:
John 11:45-53; 18:12-24.
Devotional Reading:
John 15:18-27.
After the Romans invaded

and occupied the Jewish nation, the only Jewish leader with any kind of authority remaining was the high priest, and he ruled only at the sufferance of the occupying authorities. In the year A.D. 15 Annas, the high priest, was deposed by the Romans, apparently because he had not co-operated fully with the conquerors as they desired.

But this was not the end of Annas' power, for his son-in-law, Caiaphas, was appointed to succeed him and through him he continued to wield a great deal of power. Thus, in the Gospel According to John, we find both of

them referred to as "high priest" — Annas still was referred to as "high priest" even though he no longer held that position, just as former presidents of the United States are still addressed as "Mr. President." In the case of Annas, however, he was more than just an ex-high priest.

The Romans Will Come!

These two men, then, Annas and Caiaphas, were the religious and, in some ways, secular authority of the Jews under their conquerors. Their objective was clear: to maintain their authority without earning the disapproval of the occupying

forces. So long as they were able to maintain this status quo, their power would remain intact. Thus, we can understand their concern in reporting of Jesus "If we let them go on thus, every one will believe in him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation" (John 11:48). Jesus was clearly a threat to their power.

Yet, Caiaphas, the ruling high priest, was clever enough to see that this man Jesus could be used to bolster his position. "You know nothing at all," he said to his fearful compatriots, "you do not understand that

it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people and that the whole nation should not perish" (11:50).

It Is Expedient

Caiaphas used a word most translators render as "expedient". Expedience may mean one of two things. (1) that which is fit or suitable to the purpose, and (2) conducive to advantage as opposed to right. In other words, an expedient is a means to an end. But it is the second meaning that fits Caiaphas' use of the word. He was not concerned with whether the death of Jesus was "right", but rather that

it served his and their own selfish interests.

How often do we stand right there with Caiaphas and Annas, choosing the expedient rather than the right or just? How often do we choose dubious means for the best-intentioned purposes? These two men would fit well into our contemporary society — as we do.

But Caiaphas had not spoken the last word, nor even later when Jesus stood before him as a prisoner condemned. Because even in his cynical words, he spoke more than he knew and God would take his terrible act and make of it a redeeming reality for humanity.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
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TO CONTROL WILD GARLIC

Many of us may like onions on our hamburgers, and in other food, but very few of us like onion-flavored milk. This can easily happen on dairy farms where wild garlic plants are allowed to grow. Many pastures are infested with wild garlic. One of the very best times to start control methods on this weed is early in the spring when the young plants are 4 to 8 inches high. An ap-

plication of 2,4-D low-volatile ester will knock them down; when this is done around the middle to latter part of March little damage is done to any legumes in the area. If garlic plants are allowed to mature each year, the pasture area will be so contaminated that milking dairy cows cannot utilize the grass.

TO STORE FIREARMS PROPERLY
What have you done with your shotgun, or your high-

powered rifle, since hunting season? I hear too many of us allow them to stand around where youngsters can get to them. Our safety experts inform us to urge hunters to clean up their firearms and store them in a gun closet, or cabinet, out of reach of children. Store the ammunition separately from the guns in order to prevent serious accidents. Our National Safety Council reports that nearly half of the firearm accidents occur in the home — not in the field.

TO PRODUCE MORE ALFALFA
This "Queen of the Forage Crops" is widely used in all parts of the country.

However, not very many producers are getting the yields that are possible. The top growers in the alfalfa growing contest last year got 7.3 tons of hay equivalent per acre. Our Lancaster County average for alfalfa hay is only 3.6 tons per acre. It appears to us that if more attention is given to fertilization, weed and insect control, and to other cultural practices that we should be getting higher yields. Alfalfa may not have the high market value of several years ago, but it is still a very good feed for livestock. Growers are urged to check their alfalfa growing practices toward the goal of

increasing yields. It is possible.

TO BEWARE OF "BARGAINS"

Every spring we are aware of the increase in the number of traveling salesmen working our county. No doubt this is true in many other areas. I have nothing against salesmanship as a career, however, farmers are urged to be careful about buying from a stranger who is promoting an item at a

reduced price. Some of these may be all right, and be as represented, however, in case the product is not satisfactory, too many times the salesman is gone and you are "stuck" with the materials. The best practice is to deal with concerns that are established in the area, that have an interest in giving good service, and one who will stand behind the product. Many "bargains" turn out to be very expensive.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, March 15

Penna. Guernsey Breeders, Blue Halter Extension Service Bake-off, Hunterdon County Extension Office, New Jersey; 10:00 a.m.
Calf Sale; Lancaster Guernsey Barn; 12:30 p.m.
County Demonstration Contest, Ag Hall, Newark, Del.; 9:00 a.m.
Part-time Farmers Seminar, Lancaster Farm and Home Center; 9:00 a.m.

Monday, March 17

Elm-Penryn Community 4-H

Club; 6:00 p.m.; Penryn Fire Hall.
Manure Management Seminar; all day; Farm and Home Center.
Adams County Poultry Banquet
Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers Annual meeting; Adult Education Center, University of Maryland; 10:00 a.m.
Maryland State Grange Sewing Contest; 10:00 a.m.; Bethel Church, Madonna, Maryland.
Chickies Creek Watershed; (Turn to Page A32)

RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong

