

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

Stop erosion of state's mushroom industry

It wouldn't be too difficult to get to know every mushroom grower in the United States on a first-name basis. There are fewer than 700 of them in the country. At their current rate of demise, they may join the Golden Eagle on the endangered species list.

Monday the U.S. International Trade Commission heard testimony on the current status of the U.S. mushroom industry. A sad report it was.

Foreign mushrooms now represent 55 percent of the processed mushrooms consumed in this country. Eight years ago the figure was 19 percent.

Unless action is taken, it seems likely the Peoples Republic of China and the Dominican Republic will join Korea and Taiwan in exporting mushrooms to the United States.

Square foot for square foot, domestic growers are more efficient than overseas producers, but they

are hamstrung by minimum wage guidelines, workers compensation and unemployment compensation taxes, restrictions on growing materials they can use, and a host of other problems.

What the growers asked the ITC on Monday was for a recommendation to the President that they be given both temporary and long-term relief from overseas competition.

A tariff rate quota would fit the bill nicely. As Senator John Heinz pointed out in his testimony, "Voluntary restraints by South Korea and Taiwan have been ineffective, in some years simply exceeded, and more recently circumvented through the Hong Kong channel."

Under Section 201 of the Trade Act the ITC can recommend the President take such action. In fact, the ITC made just such a recommendation twice in the early 1970s, only to have the president turn his

back on the proposal.

Meantime, imports grew and voluntary restraints asked of the other nations became no more valuable than the paper they were written on.

While we continue to believe in the principle of free trade, it would be well to point out that mushrooms do constitute a somewhat special case.

Take the auto industry and its much-publicized import woes, for example. While car makers can change their product, mushroom growers can't.

There's no difference between a U.S. or Korean mushroom.

Auto makers made themselves non-competitive because they put out inefficient products; U.S. mushroom growers are the most efficient in the world.

While big auto firms wheel and deal around the world, mushroom growers depend on local markets

and canneries.

In Chester County, for instance, there once were 30 mushroom processors. Today there are six and some growers say half of them are ready to close.

There is precedent to aid the mushroom growers. The beef industry has a quota. The textile industry has one. There is no reason why the mushroom industry should not have a measure which would limit imports to a specific percentage of domestic production.

There also should be a duty on all processed mushrooms imported.

The President must take the necessary steps to assure the erosion of Pennsylvania's \$160 million mushroom industry is halted.

It's not just for the 700 mushroom growers, but also for the millions of Americans who can't imagine a steak without mushrooms or a plain-topped pizza.

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

PROPHET OF THE YEAR!

Lesson for June 15, 1980

In our society there are annual awards in many endeavors. Academy Awards for motion picture people, Emmy Awards for television, Drama Critics Awards for the legitimate stage, Pulitzer prizes for literature, Nobel prizes for a whole spectrum of human achievement, "Most Valuable Player" in most sports, Miss America in feminine beauty, and the list seems endless.

But, no one has ever proposed — or is likely to — an award for "Prophet of the Year." The reason, of course, most awards are popularity awards and the

prophet's role is usually the antithesis of popularity. In fact, if there ever was such an award, it would probably have to be given to the prophet who is most unpopular.

Maybe They'll Listen

That doesn't mean that the prophet's purpose is to make people angry and himself unpopular — it just usually works out that way. The purpose of the prophet is to speak for God to his people. People usually react to the message with anger and hostility because they don't like the message God has sent. There are exceptions in the Old Testament, but Jesus

summed up accurately the prophetic experience when he said: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, killing the prophets and stoning those who are sent to you!" (Luke 13:34)

Still, when God sent the Prophet Jeremiah to the Temple, it was not intended to be an exercise in futility or symbolic gesture to a lost cause. The doom which Jeremiah was to proclaim was not inevitable, for the prophecy was preceded by a very important "if": "If you will not listen to me, to walk in my law which I have set before you, and to heed the words of my servants the

prophets whom I send to you urgently, then I will make this city a curse for all the nations of the earth" (Jeremiah 26:4-6). The doom could be avoided if the people would respond and repent. The people, not Jeremiah or even the Lord, would determine their fate. "It may be they will listen, and everyone turn from his evil way, that I may repent of the evil which I intend to do to them because of their evil doing" (26:3).

What Hezekiah Did

The response to Jeremiah's prophecy was not unanimous. To be sure, the majority of the nobles called immediately for the

prophet's death. But after Jeremiah reminded them that his death would bring "innocent blood upon yourselves and upon this city and its inhabitants," (26:15), there was with some a change of heart and some warned: "...we are about to bring great evil upon ourselves" (26:19), and Jeremiah escaped death — for a time.

If you are really interested in naming the "prophet of the year" or even just concerned about bringing "great evil" upon yourself, look to the prophet who makes you angry. It easily could be that person who is speaking for God.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
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too much of the grain is being left in the field.

I fear that too much speed with the combine might be the reason that grain is thrown out with the straw. The recommendations of the manufacturer should be followed in this respect. Also, at times the grain may be too tough to combine. This is often the case when the crop is quite weedy. The big thing is to have the combine adjusted to the best of your knowledge and then drive at recommended speed. Producers need every bushel of grain and every bale of straw that they can get from their winter grains.

TO FEED DRY MATTER ON PASTURE

Pastures are very lush this spring due to favorable growing conditions. This means that livestock can utilize some dry matter while on pasture. This can be hay, straw, or silage. When the dry matter is present they will often consume a moderate amount along with the fresh grass.

The dry matter slows down the passage of the lush forage through the digestive system. Also, it reduces the danger of bloating when there is clover or alfalfa in the forage mixture. If the animals are out all of the

time, then a portable hay rack would be the way to feed hay or straw. Dry matter intake is important when pastures are lush and high in water content.

TO CLEAN PESTICIDE SPRAYERS

The use of various kinds of spray materials in one sprayer is risky. This is especially true when you are using any type of weed killer. In too many cases the sprayer carries sufficient weed killer material to injure a susceptible crop. Farmers who are spraying corn fields with weed killers one day and then spraying alfalfa or tobacco plants the

next day with the same equipment had better do a real thorough job of cleaning the sprayer.

The degree to which the weed killer will stick in the material. Most chemicals can be cleaned by using warm water and soap detergent. However, materials such as 2,4-D had better be cleaned with one pint of household ammonia in 25 gallons of hot water. Allow this mixture to remain in the sprayer overnight and then spray it out through the system on the lane or driveway. Don't be guilty of harming good plants. One of the best practices is to have one sprayer for weed killer chemicals and another sprayer for other purposes.

TO ENCOURAGE WATER CONSUMPTION

In the managing of any type of livestock or poultry it is very important to get maximum water consumption. Some animals such as a heavy milking cow will drink 30 gallons of water per day. All animals should have free access to water at all times. In the summer the water should be as cool as possible, and in the winter

warm water will increase consumption. Open troughs might be kept covered unless the water is flowing through the trough.

One way to encourage good water intake is to provide access to loose salt and minerals. These items will not only help water consumption but will balance the ration and help promote more complete digestibility. When the weather gets warm and humid, we humans drink more liquids. Livestock and poultry will do the same when given the chance. This is good management and will increase efficiency in production.

Farm

Calendar

Today, June 14
Adams Co. Dairy Princess Pageant; 8 p.m.; Biglerville High School, Biglerville.
Pa. Polled Hereford Field Day; 10 a.m.; Jesse Terry Farm, Douglassville.
Berks Co. Basic Sheep Skills Clinic; Leesport Auction.

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RURAL ROUTE

By Tom Armstrong

