

BY CURT HARLER, EDITOR



Lancaster Farming says...

Let's take ag's EKG

"Agriculture: it's your heartbeat, America" is the theme for National Agriculture Day 1981

Every politician worth his salt either has signed or voted in favor of National Ag Day, to be celebrated this year on Thursday, March 19

The U.S. Congress last fall passed Resolution 560 proclaiming National Agriculture Day. Ronald Reagan will host ceremonies in Washington this week to make it official

In Pennsylvania, Governor Dick Thornburgh signed a proclamation similar to the national one

While farmers take all the bows, it may be a good idea to sit back, turn on our heart machine, and find out just how strong is agriculture's heartbeat

Farmers will bask in the glow of speeches telling them they do a better job of providing food for a

hungry world than ever before in history

They'll listen to that as they wonder whether they'll be able to meet the next payment on their own feed bill

Farmers will be told they each now feed 58, or 60, or 64 other people in the United States and abroad. Little or no mention will be made of the supporting services and industries which help the farmer and lower that proportion considerably

They'll hear that the week after returning from a meeting where they were a grain mill operator said a rail car shortage means their grain can't be moved, or hours after being told the equipment they ordered is tied up someplace between here and Chicago

Farmers will be congratulated on their ever-increasing grain yields

They will try not to think about what would happen if we have another dry year, a repeat of the corn leaf blight infestation of a decade ago, or a combination of the two

Farmers will be assured the future for American farm goods is bright, that the hungry world will buy all the American farmer can produce

No one will dare raise the question of yet another embargo, but it seems America's diplomatic and military arsenal has been reduced to two weapons: threats of devastating nuclear devices, and food

Farmers will be told how important they are as the backbone of this nation

In the roar of cheers, requests by farmers and their lobby for greater help will go unheard. It's easier to pass a bill praising farmers than it is

to pass one which will do something for them

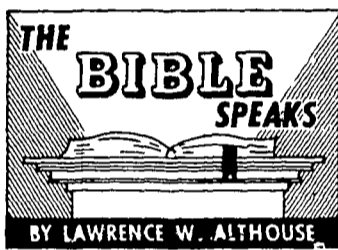
Farmers will be assured the other 96 percent of America is behind the farm community, and supports farmers' activities 100 percent

Speakers would see it as unkind to suggest that most farmers' problems today come from farmers themselves, their lack of political planning, their tendency to fight change rather than bend with it, their living with an outdated image of themselves

Yes, our EKG finds agriculture's heartbeat is strong and the patient is doing well despite adversity

But the life support systems which keep agriculture alive are many, and they are being stretched farther and farther from the farm

Agriculture needs action in addition to adulation if it is to continue to be healthy.



A HIGHER AUTHORITY March 15, 1981

A former powerful state legislator in the Senate of Pennsylvania used to boast that he never allowed his religion to interfere with his politics. Many of his constituents often wished that he had, for his politics usually seemed quite lacking in religious values.

This old question of mixing religion and politics — powerfully affecting the Presidential candidacies of Al Smith and John Kennedy, as well as the more recent contest between Jimmie Carter and Ronald Reagan — has been with

civilization for a long, long time

Caesar's Share

It lay at the heart of the dilemma with which the Pharisees tried to entrap Jesus in Matthew 22: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" There was nothing unique in their asking him this, for it was one of the burning issues which divided many of the Jews in that day. Some, those who most resented Roman rule, held that the payment of the tax was not compatible with Jewish religious law. At the other end of the spectrum, the Sadducees, believed that they must comply with any

law the Romans enforced. In the middle were the Pharisees who believed that a Jew's first loyalty was to God, but that the tax was not infringement of that loyalty.

Apparently, the Pharisees assumed that Jesus would, because of his previous conflict with governmental authority, deny the payment of such a tax. With this subversive answer anticipated, they knew they would trap him into making a statement that would cause him great trouble. Teacher, we know that you care for no man, for you do not regard the position of men (22:16)

What Belongs to God

The answer that Jesus gave the Pharisees was probably rightly understood by them, for Matthew says:

When they heard it, they marveled. Essentially, his position was the same as theirs on this question. But many people since that time have misinterpreted what Jesus said. Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. From this statement which is hardly ambiguous, some interpreters have inferred that Jesus was proclaiming that some areas of life belong to the state and some to God. They have

often gone further to indicate that, whereas the body belongs to the state, the spirit belongs to God.

What is wrong with this interpretation is that it fails to recognize that EVERYTHING belongs to God: body, mind, and spirit. There is no corner of life upon which he does not have the prior claim. When our loyalty to God conflicts with our loyalty to secular authority, it must always be God who is acknowledged as the higher authority.

So it is never a question of whether we should "mix" politics and religion, but how

Background Scripture:
Matthew 21:45 through 22:46
Devotional Reading:
Psalm 119:169-176

NOW IS THE TIME

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TO BEWARE OF MANURE PIT GAS

This is the time of the year when many liquid manure pits will be emptied and taken to the field for fertilizer purposes. The liquid manure pit is a modern method of storing livestock waste, especially in the larger operations. However, this system is not without potential health danger for both man and beast. When the liquid manure is disturbed, or agitated, we get various kinds of gases released; these may be highly explosive and lethal to everyone. I'd strongly urge that farmers emptying their pits to be sure of sufficient ventilation in the building or area above the pit. Also, no smoking or open flames near the area. We often read about men and animals being suffocated with these gases; also, the gases will explode and burn the building. The pit should not be entered after emptying without a gas mask or some type of respirator. Don't take chances in and around manure pits that have been disturbed or emptied.

TO CULL DAIRY COWS
Dairymen have expanded their

herds to the extent that we now have more milk than the demand can consume. This is taxing milk marketing concerns and depressing prices. The one practical suggestion from dairy authorities is for every herd owner to cull out several of his lowest-producing cows. Some dairy cooperatives are now paying farmers a bonus to cull out these poorer cows. I realize that it is difficult to do this for fear of reducing the amount of the monthly milk check; however, due to high feed costs and other inputs, the loss of several poorer producers, and the use of this feed into higher producers, might not hurt so badly. We support the idea of culling at this time.

TO CREEP FEED LAMBS

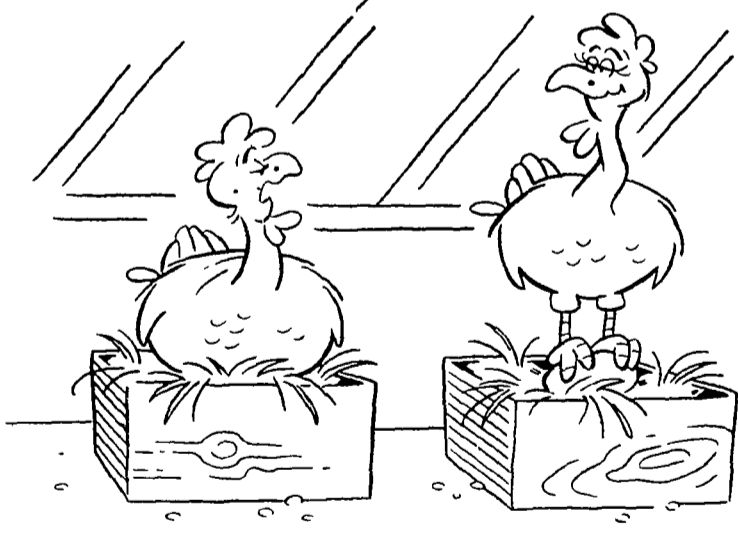
Easter is just a month away and one of the best times of the year to sell spring lambs. Sheep producers who are planning to market lambs on or near Easter might consider some extra grain for these lambs at this time. A creep feeder can be used to permit the lambs this extra grain while keeping out the ewes. A mixture of cracked corn and oats

can be used. This extra weight will increase the pounds of lamb to be marketed at very favorable prices. Also, the milk flow of the ewe flock can be increased by feeding them the extra pound of grain per day to add additional weight to the lambs before marketing. The Easter season is one of the most favorable prices for lamb producers. I'd urge shepherds to take advantage of these prices, if early lambs are to be marketed.

TO TOPDRESS WHEAT

The practice of applying extra nitrogen to winter wheat is one way to increase both grain and straw yields. The present outlook is very good for wheat prices this summer. Growers are urged to give this practice some attention at this time. The application of 30 to 50 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre during mid to late March, when vegetative growth is starting, will give good results. The higher rates may be applied to lighter soils such as sand, gravel, or shale. The lighter applications on wheat where it has been seeded down to clover or alfalfa, or where there is more danger of lodging.

HAY HAWS



Don't be afraid, dearie. You're allowed to sit down on the job.

Farm Calendar

Today, March 14
Adams County Beef Producers Beef Ball, 6 p.m., Irishtown Fire Hall.
Lancaster County FFA poultry contest, 9 a.m., Weaver Quality Eggs.
Delaware 4-H horsemanship clinic, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., De! State Fairgrounds, Harrington

Hunterdon County, N.J., 7th annual bakeoff, 10 a.m., Extension Center, Flemington
Sunday, March 15
Intercollegiate Horse Show, Thorncroft Stables, Malvern
Monday, March 16
Home vegetables gardening, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., Farm & Home Center, Lancaster.

National DHIA annual meeting, Fresno, Calif., continues through March 21.
Northwest Jersey vegetable growers meeting, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Clarendon Hotel, Hackettstown, N.J.
Cumberland County Baby Beef Club, 7:30 p.m., Silver Springs Township Building.

(Continued from Page A12)