



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Time to celebrate

It's that time of year again, folks. That special month of June, long recognized for such joyful events as graduations, weddings, Father's Day, and Dairy Month — well, at least for the past 45 years.

And, once again, Lancaster Farming is taking a special look at Pennsylvania's largest single segment of the farm economy, with facts and figures on dairying spilling off page after page.

It's our big chance to salute the state's 15,000 commercial dairy farms, 171 licensed milk dealers and 220 dairy plants which create jobs for about 80,000 Pennsylvanians. And, let's not forget those four-legged "factory workers" who supply the industry with billions of pounds of milk, whether through four "spigots" or just two

Amidst the glitter and glamour that goes along with celebrating Dairy Month, the state's statistics won't let anyone forget for a minute there are still unsolved problems confronting the dairy industry. It's hard to believe an industry can be doing too good a job and too efficient.

But, no matter how you flush out the facts, the numbers show fewer cows producing more milk on a smaller number of farms.

Last year, Pennsylvania milk production totaled 8.5 billion pounds, an increase of 5.1 percent from 1979's 8 billion pounds. As production went up, consumption went down so that now the state's dairy

farms produce 120 percent of our needs.

Too much milk — that's not news to anybody anymore. But what are we going to do about it?

A Berks County dairy farmer confided recently that he'd love to be able to quit milking for awhile — but how can he? With his investment in cows and equipment, he said, he can't afford to sell his cows and leave his barn empty. Dairy farmers don't have the flexibility that hog and cattle feeders have when the market is poor, he remarked.

The 'unfortunate' marketing system controlling dairy producers almost locks them into a dead-end road where they're caught in a vicious cul-de-sac of making more milk to get a bigger pay check. To get a premium, they keep the milkfat as high as they can, even though the diet-conscious consuming public is demanding lowfat foods, from milk to meat.

And round and round the milk carousel they go — who knows when the ride will end?

Some economists and dairy specialists (with investments of time and little capital) are full of suggestions on how dairy farmers can cure their ills. Culling cows, cutting credit, and jacking up grain prices are equally feasible ideas for farmers, bankers, and feed dealers respectively. Somehow nobody is thrilled with the ideas.

Others recommend more promotion. Catchy slogans and mass media commercials are dreamed up to make milk 'fun' to drink — who cares

about nutrition anyway? Maybe if the public saw Mean Joe barter his shirt for a mug of milk, more kids would down their daily requirement without a knock-down, drag-out fight.

Speaking of commercials and scenes from Hollywood, dairy farmers don't stand much of a chance at the "Washington, D.C. Corral." Taking their cues from the Reagan administration, the nation's legislators seem to be setting the stage for a showdown between dairy farmers and the free enterprise system, with the government taking the part of innocent bystander.

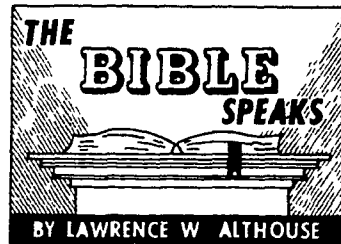
Well, in every old-time Hollywood production, the guys wearing white hats always win. And, everybody knows dairy producers always wear white in the show ring, so we'll keep our fingers crossed for a happy ending.

With more promotion and public awareness, consumers may buy more milk products to use in preparing delicious meals, like those featured in our Home Section this week.

Legislators will be more sympathetic to the problems and economic hardships confronting all farmers, even if they have to find it out from a walking, talking robot.

And dairy farmers will use their skills and ingenuity, pride and faith to solve their problems in order to give Dairy Month another 45 years and many, many more.

Happy June Dairy Month from the staff of Lancaster Farming.



REDISCOVERING THE WORD
June 7, 1981

Background Scripture:
2 Kings 22:22-23;
Deuteronomy 10:12-11:1.
Devotional Reading:
Acts 2:1-13.

A story in the newspaper the other week told of a local family who, in the process of having some extensive renovations made to their home, found a very valuable old manuscript. Although that kind of thing may not happen every day, it does occur frequently that the renovation of a building will bring to light some long lost documents, often quite valuable ones.

This is what happened during the reign of King Josiah of Judah according to the account of 2 Kings 22 and 23. During the 18th year of his reign, extensive renovations or repairs were being made in the temple at Jerusalem and some old scrolls were discovered and taken to Hilkiah, the high priest. Upon examination, Hilkiah, to his great delight and shock, found that these old scrolls were nothing less than the great scrolls of the law given to Moses to spell out God's covenant with his people. Apparently these scrolls had been missing for many years and the people of Judah had forgotten about them.

We Have Not Obeyed

The commandments of the scrolls (presumably containing portions of our present book of Deuteronomy) greatly disturbed King Josiah, because it was ap-

parent to him that the people of Judah were not keeping their covenant with God given to their forefathers. In the traditional gesture of deep dismay and repentance, Josiah ripped his clothes and sent Hilkiah to a prophetess, named Huldah, for counsel. Yes, she concurred, God was very angry because of the faithlessness of his people in fulfilling the covenant, but in light of the King's humble repentance, God's anger would not fall upon Josiah's reign.

That was the beginning of large-scale reforms made in the life of Judah. First, the King read the scrolls to the people of Judah and then he rededicated himself and his little nation to the covenant relationship with God. The pagan altars and vessels in the Jerusalem temple were removed and destroyed. Other pagan places of worship — which had multiplied greatly during the reign of Manasseh were levelled. The observance of the Passover — apparently many years neglected — was begun once again. Thus, the writer of II Kings described Josiah: "Before him there was no king like him, who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him."

No King Like Him

Two things were essential in this great religious reform: (1) the rediscovery of the word of God, and (2) the ready receptivity of Josiah. Countless lives have been changed the same way: people have suddenly rediscovered the word of God for their lives and have responded positively by entering into a new covenant or relationship with God. The rediscovery of God's word in Josiah's reign changed a nation. What could it do in your life?

OUR READERS WRITE

Oppose casein imports

With preliminary markup work being done on the 1981 Farm Bill by both Senate and House Agriculture Committees in Washington, D.C., dairy provisions are viewed with great interest by dairy farmers throughout the nation. Dairymen are unified in the realization that three key areas need to be addressed.

A minimum of 75% of parity as established by the Ag Act of 1949 must be maintained along with semi-annual adjustments as dictated by increasing production costs. Furthermore, limits need to

be placed on imports of casein, a milk protein brought in this country as an industrial chemical.

Historically, insoluble casein has been used for such industrial purposes as paper coatings, adhesives, paints and plastics. In recent years synthetics have replaced most casein used for industrial purposes. For these purposes, casein does not interfere with the U.S. price stabilization program. While industrial uses have declined, casein imports used in food and feed manufacturing

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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FOLLOW LABEL INSTRUCTIONS

I am sure you have heard us say, read the label and follow the instructions before using any pesticide. Well, it is still very important to all farmers and gardeners. Many different kinds of materials are needed to control the various insect, fungus, weed and rodent problems.

Every pesticide should carry a label with directions; these should be read and followed during the application of the material. Don't make the mistake of applying the material in error and then refer to the directions.

The labels are provided by law and should be respected by the user. All packages should carry the original label; and never transfer material into another carton. Pesticides should be stored in separate locations where children cannot get to them — preferably under lock.

TO REDUCE RURAL CRIMES

Rural crimes has become a sad fact of life. Most facts and figures that we read indicate an increase in rural crime. There are many things you can do to "make crime more trouble than it's worth". That would include installing and using locks, bringing your equipment inside, or putting it in a well lighted area at night. Also, do not keep loading chutes near gates. One of the most important things you can do is to establish "crime watch" with your neighbors.

You also may be able to borrow an engraving tool from your local police department to mark your equipment with your driver's license number.

TO KEEP COWS COMFORTABLE

All of us enjoy a cool breeze, a shady spot and a cool refreshing drink on a hot summer day, so do cows! If we expect cows to work for us this summer, our Lancaster

County Extension Dairy Agent, Glenn Shirk, reminds us that we should do everything possible to keep cows cool, comfortable and content.

A breezy, shady spot, close to a fresh supply of water, salt and feed helps to assure good production. If these conditions are not available out in the pasture area, then the next best spot for the cows during the heat of the day is a well-ventilated stable; they can be turned out to pasture at night.

If cows are housed in summer, it is essential that a lot of air be moved through the barn. This may be done with fans, or by opening up the barn. If fans are used, they should do more than just circulate warm, stuffy air; they should exhaust stale, warm, moist air and replace it with fresh air. Where natural ventilation is relied upon, a high roof or a high ceiling will help keep the "heat canopy" off the

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HAY HAWS



I see that you're pretty well loaded down today. This must be the Saturday for LANCASTER FARMING'S annual dairy issue.