



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Looking to 'big brother'

There's a wave of anticipative excitement surging through the pipelines of Maryland Milk Producer Cooperative members these days. At a time when other milk cooperatives are gazing with some skepticism at the future, these foresighted dairy producers are contemplating a move that will help to insure a brighter, more stable market for their milk sales.

The Maryland Co-op members, counting many Pennsylvania producers in their ranks, have been actively seeking a method for improving their options during the past year. They seem to have found what they've been looking for in a possible merger with Dairymen, Inc., a progressive co-op boasting 6,800 members and a strong Class I marketing plan.

If the Maryland Co-op members elect to tuck themselves under the wing of Dairymen as a proposed Mid-Atlantic division, this would bring the membership of dairy producers up by 1,200. The old adage of strength in numbers will allow the producers to spread their assessment costs across a larger base. Of course, profits, too, would have to be dealt out to more members.

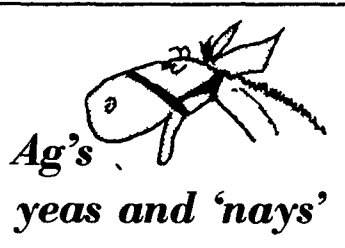
For all immediate purposes, this seems to be the shot in the arm the doctors called for in the case of this viable Maryland co-op. By teaming up with Dairymen, what was a seemingly 'insignificant' co-op would now have a stronger voice and more impact on policy making on a national basis.

The cooperators would also have the advantage of the larger co-op's technological advances—the production of sterile milk for a potentially significant international market. Here at home, they continue to peddle large quantities of milk to the growing population in the sunny south—Dairymen's main marketing area.

Although not every small milk cooperative has the chance or the desire to link up with 'big brother' co-op, this appears to be a beneficial move for this particular group. Unfortunately, in this day and age, bigger does equate better.

The larger the team, the greater the force behind its plays. Legislators tend to sit up and take more notice to a group that speaks for thousands of dairy producers.

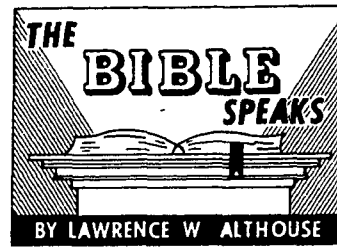
What also is encouraging for the Maryland Co-op members



is that Dairymen is a young, innovative organization—not tied into the "way things used to be" thinking. This co-op initiated the cull cow program in an effort to reduce the milk glut experienced this year, asking its members to unload those old grain guzzlers whose milk output helped keep milk tanks near to overflowing.

It is anticipated that the Maryland Co-op members will benefit greatly from the increased marketing area and the more widespread production season. While fellow members in Florida and Alabama are experiencing the spring flush around March, Maryland and Pennsylvania cows will just be gearing up for their top production period of April-May.

Maryland Co-op members should be congratulated for planning ahead even when things are running relatively smoothly and the pocketbook isn't being pinched. Whether or not the proposed merger will come to pass depends on the yeas and nays of the producers.



HOW COME?
July 19, 1981

Background Scripture:
Deuteronomy 6:16 through 7:26; 9:4,5

Devotional Reading:
Nehemiah 1.4-11b.

"How come we have to go to that old church again?" a teenage son, summoning courage at last, demanded of his father. With a withering look that the teenage son could have misinterpreted, the father replied: "I'll show you 'how come' if you want!" The son's chin sank to his chest to hide his clenched teeth as he turned and walked away in defeat. The father also turned away, having prevailed once again, he put the question from his mind.

When Your Son Asks

But the father's "victory" was actually a "defeat," for he missed a golden opportunity to help his son to understand and appreciate the reason behind the seemingly repetitive and meaningless ceremonies of their church life. He forgot—assuming that he once knew—that when we explain some of the "whys" of our religious life, we can remove some of the barriers to understanding and motivation.

In Deuteronomy, Moses lays it out with beautiful simplicity when he instructs the fathers of Israel:

When your sons ask you in time to come, "What is the meaning of the testimonies and statutes and the

ordinances which the Lord our God has commanded you?" then you shall say to your son, "We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; and the Lord showed signs and wonders... (Deut. 6.20-23).

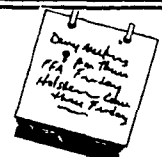
The question "why?" is a natural one for our youth, so, instead of feeling threatened or challenged by it, seize the opportunity to put some reasons to the faith we follow. Tell them what God has done for his people. For the Jewish faith this question has become an integral part of the celebration of the Passover in the home. The whole purpose of the Passover meal and ceremony is a structured answer to the Jewish youth's anticipated question of "why?" Thus, at each Passover meal, the outline of God's saving acts in history are recounted to remind the elders and inform the youth of the reasons that lie behind their Jewish heritage.

A God Who Keeps Covenant

The question of "why?" is also an opportunity for us to tell, not only what God has done for his people as a whole, but ourselves in particular. I go to that "old church" Sunday after Sunday—despite the fact that the sermons don't always interest me, the music's not what I'd like it to be, and the ritual is sometimes obscure—because of what God has done for me in my life. And I read that "old book" because—although I sometimes don't understand it and some parts leave me "cold"—because my own experience in life confirms its major themes: that of all the things I can depend upon is the faithful love of God. That's the kind of answer we can give when we take our responsibility seriously.

When your children ask you, "How come?" what will you say?

Farm Calendar



Today, July 18

Penn State Horse Field Day, 10 a.m., Old Horse Barn, main campus

Conservation Bus Tour, Hunterdon Co., New Jersey, for more information call Extension, (201) 782-3915.

Shippensburg Community Fair, Shippensburg, until Saturday
Dairy Goat Field Day, 1-4, Jacob Fisher Farm, Manheim

Monday, July 20,

8th National Junior Polled Hereford Heifer Show, Kansas State Fairground, Hutchinson, Kansas, continues through Friday

Kimberton Community Fair, Kimberton, until Saturday
Jefferson County Town and Country Fair, until Saturday

Tuesday, July 21

Shippensburg Fair FFA and 4-H Show and Sale, Show 10-2, sale 6 p.m.

Jefferson Township Fair, Mercer, until Saturday

Dover field days, continues through Wednesday, York plowing contest

Delaware Irrigation Field Day, Louis O'Neal farm, Laurel 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Lancaster Co. Ag. Council 7:30, Lan. Chamber Office

Wednesday, July 22

Lancaster County 4-H Roundup, Solanco Fairgrounds

1981 PA state plowing contest, Dover

Conneaut Township Fair, Conneautville, until Saturday

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Be Aware of Farm Safety Week

National Farm Safety Week starts July 25 and runs through July 31.

This week is set aside to remind us of the importance of safety. The most recent Pennsylvania safety estimates show at least 53 state residents died in farm accidents in 1980.

Tractor accidents resulted in the most fatalities last year. In many cases, the operator overturned the machine in the field or was thrown from the tractor and run over. Other cases involved small children as extra riders and injuries from equipment trailing the tractor.

There were fewer fatal accidents involving machinery other than tractors last year than in 1979. In 1980 there were three fatal accidents reported which involved a combine, silo conveyor belt and corn dump.

The total number of fatal accidents reported so far this year is lower than it has been in the last four years. We hope this continues. Let's develop safe habits and practice them everyday.

To Graze Sudan and Sorghum Grasses Carefully

Some livestock producers plant sudan grass or one of the hybrid

sorghums for extra summer pasture. These grasses have the ability to grow well during the heat of the summer. However, they should be managed carefully in order to prevent livestock poisoning.

When the sudan grass is grazed or green-chopped before it is 18 inches high, and if the sorghum hybrids are used before they are 24 to 30 inches high, there is danger of prussic acid poisoning. There is greater danger with the sorghum hybrids.

After the herd or flock has grazed the area, it should be clipped high, and then the regrowth allowed to reach the same length before using as fresh feed.

Horses should not be allowed to graze or eat either of these two forage crops. It has been blamed for causing urinary bladder infection in equines.

Manage sudan grass and sorghums carefully for best results.

To Be Careful With Sprayers

Chemical herbicides are used quite commonly these days when trying to control weeds. This requires our sprayers to be used for a number of purposes.

We have seen several cases of herbicide damage on tobacco this year. Most were due to improper sprayer cleaning before treating the tobacco field.

Chemical weed killers such as 2,4-D will stick to the sprayer equipment for years, unless soaked and washed with ammonia water and other strong detergent.

It is best to flush the sprayer and hoses with clean water before filling and finish with the ammonia water.

To Feed New Grains Carefully

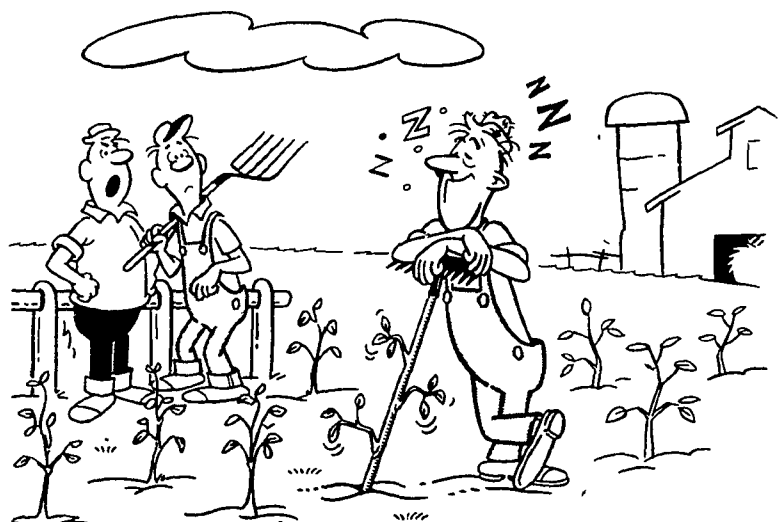
The winter barley and wheat crop is now in the bin on most farms.

If these grains are to be fed, it is suggested the feeder go easy at first in order to prevent scours or bloating in animals. If the grain is allowed to "cure" or go through the sweat period for two to three weeks, it will be safer to use.

A small percentage of the feed mixture (10 to 20 percent) would be a starting place and then gradually increase the amount. In the case of wheat, use a smaller amount because of the nature of the cracked grains and the danger of digestive trouble.

Make changes in any ration gradually for best results.

HAY HAWS



I'd say that old Tom has been there for some time now.