



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

Time to cooperate

We must admit, we're prejudiced

We're prejudiced about soil stewardship and soil conservation, and can't believe that there are still those farmers who can't understand the value of this natural resource.

We can't see how a certain farmer we'll call Sam the Skeptic can farm the same field year after year, winding up with gullies almost a foot deep by fall, and come around the following spring and plow the whole field again — smoothing up and filling in the ditches as best he can only to have the ditches wash out again

The reason this farmer's stubborn resistance to the conservation message is so appalling is that this particular field is located close to a high school where future farmers are learning the principles of agriculture.

After these students leave the classroom where they've learned the benefits of crop rotations and strip cropping systems, they board a school bus and drive past one of the worst examples of field crop management this farmer could possibly set.

Not only do the students drive by and see this annual ritual of erosion, but other farmers and nonfarmers can watch every inch of topsoil as it's carved out by spring and summer rains. They also can get a big chuckle as they watch the farmer bounce a foot off the tractor seat in the fall as the combine crosses the 'baby grand canyon.'

Now we're not trying to pick on just this one farmer, for we know there are countless others whose erosion abuses would match or surpass his. But, it points out to us just how much soil stewardship and sound cropping practices are in the public eye

As the National Association of Conservation Districts points out, soil stewardship is a national concern:

"There was a time, in the early history of our country, when it could be said that stewardship of resources was a personal matter for a major part of the population. People lived under their own 'vines and fig trees,' as it were, and each was responsible for his or her holdings. The role of government in those days when the population was widely dispersed,

was small and the restraints were few.

"Those who farmed carelessly on the steep hillsides might destroy their soil and waste their own resources. Their actions were not regarded as significant to society as a whole. After all, land was plentiful and new fields could be cleared when old fields were eroded.

"With the growth of population and the world demand for food and with the clearing and development of most land that is suitable for cultivation, we must turn our attention to the task of saving every acre.

"Now it must be understood that the obligation of stewardship, which once rested on the individual, has been broadened to include all of us. Erosion, once regarded as a 'private' matter, has become a subject for national concern."

We know that farming with soil conservation in mind may not be the most economical or convenient farming practice in the short term, but it's essential to ensure there will be soil to farm in the long term. If farmers don't voluntarily see the light of conservation and soil stewardship, the public may assert their opinion and demand a curtailment of man-made erosion.

In observing Soil Stewardship Week, May 16-23, we must agree with NACD that now is the time for cooperation.

"The task before us is so great and the time for its accomplishment is so short that we cannot afford to waste effort in emphasizing our differences. Those who would exercise an effective stewardship over God's resources are seeking a common goal. Their difference over details deserve to be discussed with open minds and with the objective of seeking a common ground.

"The threat to the future welfare of the human race originates with the uninformed, the careless, and those who seek immediate gratification at the expense of long-range benefits. If there are those among us who have a genuine interest in the wise management of our soil, our water, and the human habitat, they deserve our fullest cooperation, for we are traveling the same road and all are seeking the same goals."

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Check Weevil In Alfalfa

We are right into the decision making period for alfalfa weevil control. The question comes up, should I spray or cut it? This depends on the degree of damage and just how far your alfalfa is along. If your stand is getting along in maturity, then it would pay you to cut it early. If you decide to spray, then it should be applied only when 60 to 70 percent of the plants show slight feeding damage at the tips. In most cases, spray application will not be necessary. The economic threshold line based on the loss of 1/10 ton of alfalfa hay per acre. At \$100 per ton of hay, a loss of 1/10 ton equals \$10. If the cost of spraying is 9.50-10.00 per acre, you are at the break-even level.

The two major problems with spraying is the physical damage by running the tractor over the growing plants, and secondly, the tolerance time from the time of application until the residue is "off" the plants. Be sure to read

the label for the tolerance periods for the different chemicals and follow the directions.

To Control Flies

Flies are a continual problem to keep under control in most poultry laying houses. Well, we received some good news this week. Our egg producers have been granted an emergency exemption from the State Department of Agriculture to use the insecticide Larvadex to control fly problems in their poultry houses.

Considerable research has been conducted over the past several years on this feed through pesticide. All tests have shown it to be a very safe and effective fly control material. It is expected that Larvadex may soon receive full registration from the Environmental Protection Agency.

To Check Farm Ponds

Many farm ponds are showing both algae and weed infestation build-up and as the weather gets warmer, these pond plants will

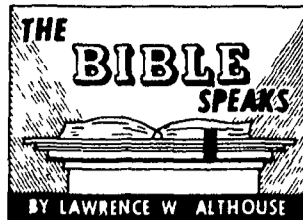
begin to grow. Permits are needed in order for the owner to use the proper material, and to protect livestock downstream from the pond. Before any ponds are treated in Pennsylvania with any chemical or fertilizer, the owner should get a permit from the Pennsylvania Fish Commission. Application for the permit is available from the Pennsylvania Waterways Patrol Office or from our Penn State Extension Office.

To Be Prepared to Identify Swine

The new Pennsylvania swine health rules become effective May 19, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. The rules require that feeder pigs, market hogs and breeding swine be identified with a herd number that is registered with the Department. Identification can be in the form of an ear tattoo, back slap tattoo, ear tag or other methods approved by the Department.

Application forms for herd

(Turn to Page A12)



THE COST OF WHITE ROBES May 16, 1982

Background Scripture:

Revelation 6 through 7

Devotional Reading:

1 Peter 1:3-9

My son, Todd, called me yesterday from work to tell me that *A Man For All Seasons* would be "the late movie" for last evening. Inasmuch as I had already seen the stage play on Broadway and the motion picture at least twice, I had not the slightest intention of staying up to see it again, for I am no longer a "late night."

Nevertheless, I did just that. Intending to watch the first few minutes, I quickly found myself engrossed in the depiction of Sir Thomas More and his Christian martyrdom. Once again I watched the story of this gifted man who neither sought to be a hero nor a martyr and eventually personified both. Again I was struck with the timeliness of his dilemma, for he was not challenged to give up his Christian faith, but simply to compromise a little.

OPENING THE SEALS

In the drama we see him struggling to maintain both his integrity and his relationship with King Henry VIII, whom he served as Chancellor. All he would need to do, as family, friends and foe alike reminded him, was to agree with the King's plan to terminate his marriage with Queen Catherine. Many were claiming that the

marriage had never been legal in the first place, let alone moral. According to the drama, More desperately wanted to accommodate himself to this demand. In time, however, it becomes obvious that he simply cannot without forfeiting his very soul.

The most poignant scene is that when his family is allowed to visit him in prison, all knowing that, unless he relents, it will be the last time they will see each other. They demand, they plead: *You've proven your point, Thomas More; we've all suffered enough; sign the king's paper and come home to us!* With all his heart, More wants to give in to them, wants to survive. But he cannot. God speaks to him more loudly and clearly than even those whom he loves.

So, on a warm July morning in 1535, Sir Thomas More, a kindly yet determined Christian man, was executed in the Tower of London and thus earned his white robe.

"WHO ARE THESE IN WHITE?" In John's great revelation he saw an immeasurable multitude who stood before the Lamb "clothed in white robes." "Who are these, clothed in white robes, and whence have they come?" John is asked in his vision. And the answer that is given for him: "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them in white in the blood of the Lamb" (7:13,14).

None of us are likely to be called to martyrdom for our faith today, but, like Sir Thomas More, we may be challenged to remain loyal to Christ at the price of some personal cost, be it great or small. Like him, we may not feel cut-out to be heroes or martyrs, but, as he did, we are called to remain loyal to Christ and pay the price of our hoped-for white robes.

OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

Are we good stewards

The week of May 16 to 23, 1982 has been set aside as 'Stewardship Week'.

It is to call attention to our need to use wisely the natural resources which our Father has given us in trust to not abuse, destroy, or squander — only loaned us for our lifetime.

Will they be passed on to future generations in as good condition as we received them?

This is not only a responsibility of individuals who directly use a natural resource but an obligation of all of us every day of the year. Erosion, pollution of our streams, waste of fertilizers, and other elements are not private or in-

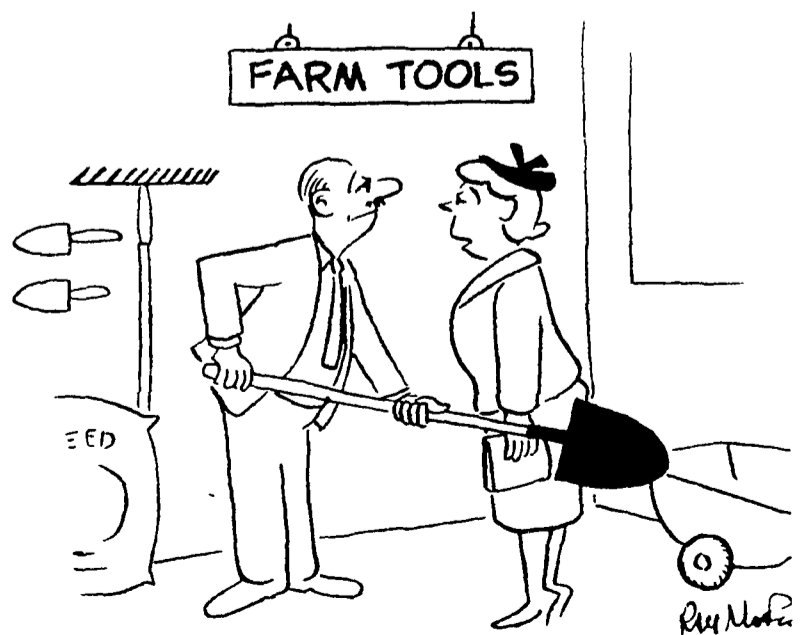
dividual problems but yours and mine and the nation's concern.

Our presidents, governors and community officials issue proclamations calling attention to the problems but leadership at all levels is essential. Clergy and teachers of religious groups are offered reference material for 'Stewardship Week' each spring through county conservation district — material that can be used for sermons or talks at any time of the year.

This year's theme, "A Time for Tenacity," is explained in a 16-page, 4 color soil stewardship reference booklet. A litany is also

(Turn to Page A12)

HAY HAWS



"Do you have one with a motor?"