



Off the Sounding Board

By Sheila Miller, Editor

That's not how it should be

As we say goodbye to another June Dairy Month, we have to confess this has not been the best anniversary celebration for the industry.

Faced with continued milk surplus production, increased competition from dairy imports and imitations, most dairy farmers admit they have had better months and years.

Next Monday, dairy leaders from across the state will be meeting with Secretary of Agriculture Penrose Hallowell to try to formulate some acceptable solutions to the dairy situation. Since dairy farmers voted down the dairy promotion program last month, the leaders will have to look for other ideas with more down-on-the-farm appeal.

And government leaders in Washington continue to hear testimony on proposed federal programs to solve the national dairy dilemma. Some, like Arlen Specter, have even called their own special sessions back home to get the farm industry's viewpoints on the problem.

But there are other problems in the dairy industry besides pricing and overproduction. One we find particularly aggravating is the regulations governing accreditation of herds for brucellosis and tuberculosis-free status.

Dairy farmers who wish to join the ranks of cattle breeders who can export their animals with the least red tape strive for accredited herds. With this state-endowed status, farmers do not have to constantly hire veterinarians to visit the farm for blood and skin tests for each potential sale prospect. Instead, one telephone call to Harrisburg's Bureau of Animal Industry sends the necessary paperwork to the farmer and the cow can be on her way.

Now, all this sounds fine. But, like any other government program which combines both federal and state regulations, things don't always go according to plan.

With automation to help handle all the herd and farmer records in the state, BAI has graduated to the modern world of the computer. But, this wonder machine is not infallible and has a tough time deciphering some of the information farmers send in.

For instance, take the case of a young dairy couple who were recently married, combined their accredited herds, and went into business on a nearby farm. Although both of the herds were deemed brucellosis and TB free when they were on separate farms, the young couple was shocked to learn they had lost their accreditation just by getting married and bringing the two herds together.

What had happened was the computer could not figure out how the newly-wed wife could have a herd under a maiden name. And the forms for filing the information would not allow her to fill in both her married and maiden

name. What was easily understandable to a human was totally incomprehensible to the machine.

Another problem with the accreditation system is the criteria which stipulates each herd must be tested annually for brucellosis — whether you have any animals of testing age or not.

Take for example the case where a young dairyman had the ambition and foresight to start building his herd while still in school. He had purchased dry cows from previously accredited herds and brought them to his parent's farm to calve. After freshening, the cows were leased out to nearby dairy farms while the calves stayed on the farm.

By the time the calves reached testing age, two years had passed. When the young man checked with the state concerning his herd status, even though the calves should have retained the status of their mothers, he learned his brucellosis-free status had been lost. Why? Because he had missed testing animals one year.

When he explained that he had nothing to test because the cattle were too young, the state veterinarians told him the federal code of regulations specifically requires that animals be tested every year.

Rules are rules, as everyone knows. But whatever happened to common sense?

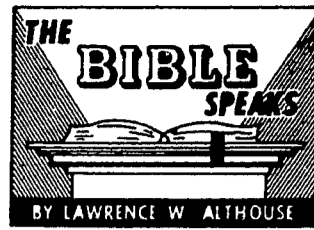
Lastly, we believe there needs to be more cooperation between states when it comes to issuing and monitoring health charts on cattle. What meets the requirements of one state's Department of Agriculture should also qualify in another.

Not like the case where a dairy farmer with an accredited herd purchased a heifer at an out-of-state sale. Although the heifer had a "clean bill of health" when she entered the sales ring and later boarded the farmer's truck, the farmer later learned his state vets decided she wasn't "clean" enough.

To the farmer's dismay, his entire herd was quarantined because he brought this heifer home. And now he must bear the expense of testing and retesting his cattle to requalify. If the original state's animal health bureau had done its job to satisfy our veterinarians, this farmer would have been saved plenty of aggravation and money.

This is not to say all the rules and regulations governing inter and intrastate movement of cattle are questionable and ridiculous. Quite the contrary, they are essential in protecting farmers against disease outbreak and epidemics.

But, if the rules need to be changed to add some common sense exceptions, then revisions should be made. Too often we just sit back and say, "Sorry, that's the way it is" rather than "Here's how it should be."



BEGIN WITH THE LAST COURSE
June 27, 1982

Background Scripture:
Matthew 27:3-5;
Mark 14:10-11, 17-21, 43-46;
John 12:3-6; 13:21-30.
Devotional Reading:
John 12:1-8.

Remorse is often the bitter dessert that is served when we sit down to a banquet of consequences. Perhaps if we were to sample the just desserts first, we'd be motivated to miss the whole sorry affair.

When we consider the story of Judas Iscariot, for example, we can't help wishing he had known in advance the terrible remorse he would feel later. If he had, it seems likely that he would not have betrayed Jesus.

Judas is a tragic figure, but his experience has much to say to us. He began as a trusted disciple, trusted enough so that he was made the treasurer of the disciples. He shared some important experiences with Jesus and heard from his lips the teachings that later would change the whole world — an opportunity of a lifetime!

Not That He Cared

Yet, it is obvious that something happened to Judas along the way that led him to squander that great opportunity. Why Judas betrayed Jesus is unclear to us today. The most obvious clue, according to the gospel records, is that Judas' loyalty was eventually eroded by

his greed. Luke tells us that, when Jesus was anointed with costly oil in the house of Lazarus in Bethany, Judas complained at this extravagance, suggesting the money should have been spent to help the poor. But Luke hastens to explain to us that "Thus he said, not that he cared for the poor but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to take what was put into it."

Judas cared for Jesus, but apparently he came to care more for money and its power. Eventually, he sold-out Jesus for the sum of thirty pieces of silver. A terrible judgement on Judas, but what of us? We too care for Jesus, but is it possible that sometimes there is something else for which we care more? What is the price for which we are willing to sell-out our Lord? See To It Yourself!

Some commentators have speculated that Judas never really meant to betray Jesus of that what he did was the result of a moment's weakness. Perhaps those interpretations appeal to us because we can identify with them. When we betray our Lord — and many of us do — it is often, not because we set out to do so, but because along the way something else becomes more important to us. Or, we may assume that our infidelity doesn't matter all that much.

Unfortunately, all too often by the time we realize the consequence of what we have done, it is too late for use to turn back the clock. Wracked with remorse, we find there is no one to comfort us. As the chief priests and elders responded to Judas' confession, "What is that to us? See to it yourself," so we find little comfort once our just desserts have been served.

If only we might learn to sample the last course first, we might avoid our banquet of consequences altogether.

OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

Cholesterol question

I'm disgusted. Of all the places to find one of those untrue, outdated anti-cholesterol articles pumped out by institutions who should know better by now, I didn't expect L.F. to be one.

Even a "nutrition intern" should know that a high cholesterol level is not necessarily bad — that high density lipids versus low density lipids have been found to be the controlling factor in atherosclerosis.

And polyunsaturated fats have been found to possibly contribute to cancer.

I think you owe your dairy, beef, and hog farmer readers an apology for running a "canned" article

without an editorial disclaimer.

Bob Corbin
Hampstead, Md.

Editor's note - Your criticism of the news release "Modified diet may lower blood cholesterol" which appeared in the June 12, 1982 issue of Lancaster Farming echoes the reaction most farmers have when someone mentions the word cholesterol.

As University of Delaware's intern nutritionist Susan Herman points out, "too much cholesterol may contribute to heart disease" but adds that so may high blood

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Control Flies
The good growing conditions we've experienced this spring for field crops also favor the build-up of fly populations. The abundant moisture presents ideal conditions for maggots to develop into flies. We suggest that livestock and poultry operators use residual insecticides on their building and pit walls to cut down on the fly problems. Also, you may want to use different materials at different intervals to break the cycle. Flies

are immune to some of the old line materials but some of the newer materials such as Ectiban and Atraban are doing a good job. For laying hens, the newly approved Larvadex, as a feed through, is giving excellent results. Follow label instructions for rate of application.

One of the most important practices in keeping down the number of flies is to clean up the place, and eliminate fly breeding areas. Manure packs and other

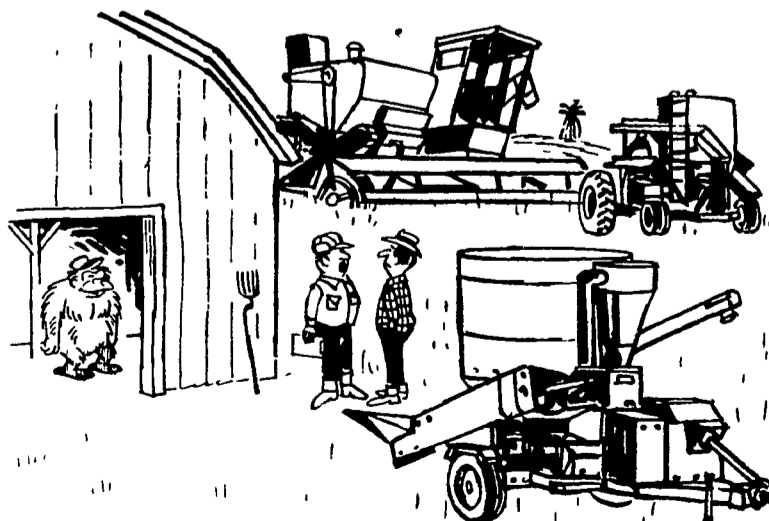
debris are good fly breeding places.

Good sanitation along with insecticides go a long way in keeping flies under control.

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 include hay, straw or silage. With the dry matter present, they will

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HAY HAWS



"As a matter of fact, Leroy, no. You're not going to be replaced by a machine."