

The road to Number One

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

There are two fascinations that predominate American life.

The first is youth. You see it everywhere in advertising. From fashions to beverages, the ads are made to appeal to a youthful audience. And milk is no exception in its play to the fitness of youth.

The second American obsession is centered on being Number 1.

Concerning the first fixation, 20 years ago I wouldn't even have noticed it. But the older one gets, the more it becomes apparent.

And, concerning the second fixation of being "Numero Uno," I'm as guilty as the next concerning a fascination for the person, group or team that ends up on top.

I rooted just as hard for Penn State and its quest to finally be Number One. And the other night, I was glued to the TV set too for the NCAA basketball finals. I waited, just like a lot of the nation, to the final second until the game was decided.

But sometimes, this mania to become Number One clearly gets out of hand. And examples of unprincipled drives to the top are evident all too much throughout the American way of life.

And, agriculture is no exception.

Many examples could be cited, but I'll touch only on two.

The first concerns instances I've noticed in youth competition in which the drive to win clearly outweighs the learning experiences the youths are supposed to be encountering. This drive to be first may not be as evident as in Little League baseball or other youth competition, but it's clearly there sometimes in the show ring or in the ag judging competition.

I never watch the first-place winner when he or she is named. I always watch the runner-up. If that second-place winner thinks only of the one ahead instead of the sometimes hundreds behind, then something is basically wrong with the competition.

But who's to blame? It was adults that made a bigger-than-life thing out of events like the slap on the rump of the Grand Champion Steer at the Farm Show. This year's grand champion brought a bonanza to the owner and 4-H and FFA in York County. And the benefactor is to be congratulated. But I sure wouldn't want to be the kid standing in the sale ring at the next Farm Show with the grand champ. This past year is going to be a hard act, if not an impossible one, to follow. What's going to happen if the youngster comes from a county without a special impromptu buyer to bid against someone interested in shooting a TV commercial?

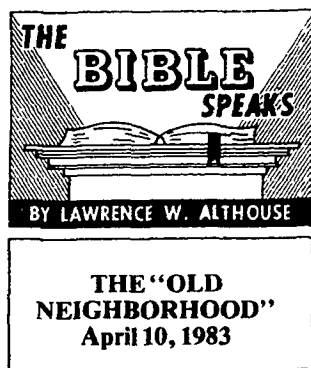
And the drive to be Number One in an entirely different area of ag is now taking a terrible toll.

And, it's not only in this particular area that perhaps some reassessments are overdue.

For example, the drive by breed associations to promote and market better producing cows is now finally evolving into a realization that if the milk from those cows isn't sold, what's the sense of breeding better cows? And if the grain isn't sold, what's the sense of the bigger combines?

Everyone needs goals and there's nothing wrong with shooting toward being Number One. But you can't lose sight of the road that must be followed to become Number One. If eyes are fixed only on the goal, the road there becomes blurred and often meaningless.

And sometimes, it's necessary to ask the question: Is it worth it?



Background Scripture:

Acts 9:32 through 12:24

Devotional Reading:

1 John 5:1-12.

You know the saying, "There goes the old neighborhood!" And you also know what it means: someone is moving into the neighborhood, someone who's race, color or creed is judged by you and your neighbors as to be detrimental to whatever it is you think your neighborhood represents.

If the saying had been popular in the first century A.D. it would have been more than appropriate on that day recorded in Acts 11 (also 10) when, in a vision, Peter was made to realize that the Gospel of Jesus Christ was to be available to all people, Jew and Gentile.

MAINTAINING OUR "PURITY"

From our perspective today the importance of this event may not be too apparent. But there was hardly a more important event in the life of the early church. It was an experience that would irrevocably change the churches "old neighborhood."

Jesus was a Jew whose entire ministry—with a few exceptions—was to Jews and, even though his ministry was rejected by many, the Way, as it was first called, was regarded both from within and without as a movement within Judaism and limited to God's children of Israel. Jesus' earliest followers were Jews who would not have even entertained the thought that the Gospel had freed them from the strict observance of the law. And one of the

features of that law was the maintenance of strict boundaries between the Jew and all others. These boundaries maintained a religious "purity" which contact with Gentiles could only stain and violate.

Thus, when Peter objects to God's command to eat the animals which have been lowered before him, he is quite in keeping with his Jewish conscience in responding, "No, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." Peter is not referring to the food as being unsanitary or physically inedible, but as being religiously forbidden.

Do you catch the irony of Peter's words? God is commanding him to "Eat," but Peter refuses on the grounds that to do so would be "wrong!" Imagine turning down a command of God because it is "wrong"! Yet, maybe that's not so rare as it may seem. How often does our religion get in the way of God's will?

WHAT GOD

HAS CLEANSSED

God's response to Peter went far beyond food: "What God has cleansed, you must not call common." At first, Peter was perplexed as to the meaning of the vision, but when some Gentiles came knocking at his door to take him to Cornelius, a Roman Centurion, he realized what God was saying to him: "God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean." Later, he was led to exclaim: "Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

When Peter arrived in Jerusalem, he was challenged to explain his scandalous behavior in baptizing Gentiles. But when he told them of his experience, they acknowledged, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life."

Yet, although they admitted God's design for their "old neighborhood", they continued to struggle with it and over it for a long time. And even today we still have not learned that lesson completely.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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Farm Calendar



To Start Grazing Gradually

With the amount of moisture in the soil this spring, warm weather will bring growth very rapidly in most pasture areas. This will also be true with producers that are planning to graze winter grains such as rye or barley. The herd or flock should be controlled at first, and not allowed on the area for more than a half hour; bloating and scouring may result if they consume too much of the lush forage the first few days. Also, it's best to feed the animals some dry matter such as silage, hay or straw before turning them out to pasture, the first few times. Dairy men should keep milking cows from the grazing area at least 4 to 5 hours before the milking period.

To Control Fowl Mites

The Northern fowl mite has been particularly troublesome in many of our poultry flocks. The mite problems began during the winter

and continues in many flocks. It is a well recognized fact that the Northern fowl mite can be very difficult to control because it spends its life cycle on the host, and has the ability to develop resistance to miticides. However, in many cases mite control is not achieved because of the way that the miticide is applied.

For example, when a fine spray mist is used, the total volume of miticide per bird is not sufficient to control the mites. A coarse spray or a "pencil" stream will put more miticide on the bird with better penetration; thus better control. Another point for better control is to add a small amount (1 tablespoon per 3 gallons) of a detergent to the spray as a feather wetting agent. It will give better penetration and retention of the miticide. Some of the miticides currently approved for use on layers are Co-Ral, Rabon and

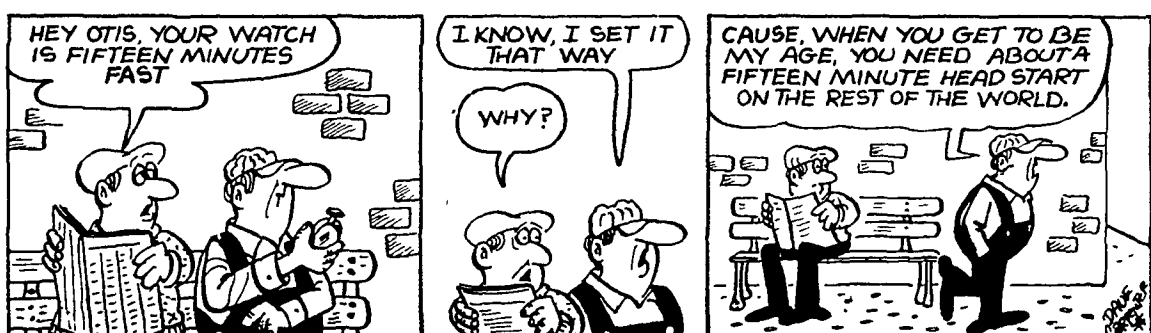
Sevin. Be sure to follow label recommendations and precautions when using any pesticide.

To Control Wild Garlic

Dairy men who pasture their milking herd have the most to lose if they do not eliminate wild garlic from their pasture fields. This fast growing wild onion is already growing in pastures and other turf areas. The young plants are much easier to kill with herbicides than mature plants. We suggest that the plants be sprayed very soon with 2, 4-D. This has proven effective in keeping the young plants from maturing; by spraying early in the spring the legumes in the pasture area will not be injured. Since the wild garlic plant is very well rooted, it may take several sprays over a period of two or more years to eliminate the weed from the area. Don't wait until the plants

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Saturday, April 9

Pa. Ayrshire Breeders Assn. Project calf sale, 1 p.m., farm of Cletus and Mary Rhode, New Alexandria, Huntingdon Co.

Penn State 4-H and FFA Spring Dairy Cattle Judging Contest, Penn State Dairy Barns, 9 a.m.

Hunterdon County, N.J., Soil Conservation District annual meeting 7 p.m., Quakertown Fire House

Red and White Dairy Cattle Sale, Farm Show Complex

Monday, April 11

South 4-H dairy meeting, 8 p.m.

Fayette County Fairgrounds Bradford County 4-H Livestock Committee, 8 p.m., Extension Office

Hunterdon Co., N.J. Farmland Preservation Information meeting, 8 p.m., Tewksbury Municipal Bldg.

Chester Co. Equine Council lecture on Acupuncture for Horses, 7 p.m., Chester Co. library

Franklin Co. Conservation District, 7:30 p.m., 4-H room, County Adm. Bldg., Chambersburg

Tuesday, April 12

Lancaster ASCS banquet, Bird-in-Hand Restaurant, 6:30 p.m.

Hunterdon Co. Farmland Preservation Information meeting, 8 p.m., Lester D. Wilson School, Alexandria Twp.

Wednesday, April 13

Surplus food distribution meeting, PDA, Harrisburg

Hunterdon Co., N.J. Farmland Preservation Information mtg., 8 p.m. Franklin Twp Municipal Bldg.

Paradise Grange organizational meeting, 7:30 p.m., Paradise twp. Municipal Bldg.

Octorara FFA banquet, Christiana Fire Hall

Thursday, April 14

Pa. Poultry Federation Fundraising banquet, Hershey Convention Center, 6 p.m.

Cumberland Valley FFA banquet, 7 p.m., high school, Mechanicsburg

Elizabethtown Fair Board meeting, 8 p.m., Ag Room, high school

Hunterdon Co., N.J. Farmland Preservation Information mtg., 8 p.m., County Parks Bldg., Rt. 31 Clinton Twp.

Lancaster County Farmers Union meeting on ag/bridges, 7:30 p.m., Leola Family Restaurant

Friday, April 15

Berks Conservation District and ASCS banquet, 7 p.m., Virginville Grange Hall

Fayette Co. Holstein dairy tour, 9 a.m.

Farm Credit Assn. of York Open House at Chambersburg Office Penn State Ag Arena ground breaking, 4 p.m.

Saturday, April 16

All-Ag banquet, 7:30 p.m., American Legion, Eldred, Del.