



Lessons in ring

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

It's a pleasure to sit along the sidelines and watch a good judge at work.

By a good judge, I don't only mean one who picks the animals in proper order.

I mean a judge who takes the time and puts forth the effort to make the competition a real learning experience for the competitors, particularly if they are 4-H or FFA'ers.

At the Lebanon Fair this week I watched just such a "teaching" judge at work -- Clyde Myers, of Berks County Extension.

In the market steer competition, Myers always took the extra time to talk with each of the competitors after each class before announcing the reasons for his placings to the audience. Each of the competitors listened to him intently as he privately explained his decisions and offered tips on how they may brush up on their showing and fitting techniques.

And, this is how it should be. Showing livestock is not primarily a competition to pick who has the best animal. After all, if you have the money, anyone can go out and buy a winner, just as the Yankees buy a \$20 million centerfielder.

Showing livestock is primarily a learning experience for the competitors -- just another phase of hands-on education to prepare them for that tough, long road in farming later on.

The showing experience should teach values that can be applied later on, too. Values like winning isn't everything and if you know you did your best that's all that's really important. Other values like the realization that caring for an animal involves the heart as much as it involves the hands and head.

And, probably most important of all, the values of keeping everything in perspective in whatever you do and when it comes time to make a tough decision to have the guts to make that decision and then stick to it.

And these are just a few of the values that can come out of the showing and a good "teaching" judge helps formulate them.

When we speak of competitors recognizing such values, we don't only limit the scope of the showing to youths.

Livestock competition began at fairs as means of encouraging farmers to improve their stock and afford a basis for them to compare their animals with those of others. But somehow I think this value has become somewhat tarnished over the years.

How can we expect a youth not to enter the ring with just the vision of a trophy and an inflated grand champ price in mind, when he or she sees adults go into the showing primarily with bottom-line merchandising clouding their perspective.

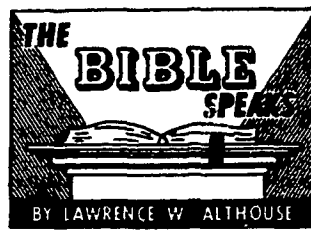
If this editorial sounds a bit moralistic and unpractical, it's intended to be. After all, a few Pollyanna paragraphs now and then are needed.

And if any group of people are Pollyanna -- blindly optimistic -- it's farmers. They got to be.

Working daily with uncontrollable variables, farmers must constantly look ahead to better weather, better market prices or whatever.

But the trouble with being eternally optimistic and expecting things to get better is the personality trait of vacillation that develops -- putting off hard and tough decisions and even after making them not sticking to them.

And, that brings us back to the showing. I hope some of these words ring in the ears of competitors as they lead their black and white entries around the Farm Show Big Arena late next month.



A DISCOVERY TOO LATE August 14, 1983

Background Scripture: 1 Samuel 1:3; 2:12-17, 22-25; 4. Devotional Reading Acts 5:1-12.

It was an old story. Two men, Hophni and Phinehas were brought up in one of the best -- if not the best -- families in all Israel. Their father was none other than the esteemed priest and judge Eli. By virtue of their birth, they themselves became priests and, as Eli became too old to handle the work, took over the priestly responsibilities of the sanctuary at Shiloh. Thus, they were men of exceeding power and privilege.

Yet, as parents have sorrowfully learned since the beginning of time, despite all these advantages there is no guarantee, for it is not so much a matter of what we give our children as it is what they do with what they are given. The sons of Eli had been given the best that Israel had to offer, but still they lacked the most important element of all: integrity.

NO REGARD
The problem with Hophni and Phinehas was not that they didn't believe in God, but that, believing in him, "they had no regard for the Lord." In a sense, their sin was even greater than that of atheism. They believed in God but they did not let their belief effect the way

they lived. Perhaps that should make each of us uncomfortable, for almost everyone who reads these words believe in the existence of God. Like Hophni and Phinehas, we would probably not think of declaring that God does not exist. At the same time, it may very well be that many of us live lives that are not more affected by our belief than those lived by Eli's two sons.

Let's give these two men the benefit of the doubt: let's assume that they were not born scoundrels, that it was somewhere along the way that they began to be corrupted by their temptations. For that's the way it works with most of us. Our start in life is at least adequate and perhaps considerably more than that. Our parents aren't perfect--just as we are not perfect parents--but they give us a good enough start so that we can live lives pleasing to God and in accordance with his plan and purpose for us. No, where most of us go "wrong" is somewhere along the way when we failed to live up to the best that we know.

CONTEMPT FOR GOD
With Hophni and Phinehas it seems that, as their power and privilege increased, their respect for God decreased. They made the old mistake of believing that their temporal power placed them in a position where their lives were beyond the power or jurisdiction of God. Perhaps they had assumed that God was very much like their aging father, Eli: weak, impotent, and irrelevant. They pursued their evil deeds with no fear of divine consequences.

In time--too late-- they came to realize that they had been as wrong as human beings can be. Let each of us beware that we do not make the same belated and tragic discovery.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, Aug. 13
National Plowing Contest at the York 4-H Center. Small plows at 9 a.m.; antique plows at noon; and large plows at 2 p.m.
Sixth annual Sussex County, N.J., Open Sheep Show at 9 a.m. Continues tomorrow.
Wayne County Jr. Livestock Sale at 7 p.m. at the Wayne County Fairgrounds.
Northeast Chianina Field Day (judging contest) at the York Fairgrounds.
Blueberry Festival of Bradford County Jr. Holstein Club at Bob Whipple's of Hornbrook.
Eastern Pa. Holstein Championship Show, Kutztown.
Southcentral Pa. Holstein Show, Carlisle.

Sunday, Aug. 14
Manor Young Farmer and FFA picnic at 4 p.m. at the Lampeter Fairgrounds.
McKean County Fair opens at

Smethport. Continues throughout the week.
Monday, Aug. 15
Twilight beef field day at the Greenridge Beef Farms of J. Paul Espy, Tyrone.
Tuesday, Aug. 16
Vegetable Growers Tour through Northampton and Lehigh Counties. Continues through Thursday.
Cumberland County 4-H Swine Round-Up Sale, at the Carlisle Livestock Market. Show is at 9:30 a.m. and sale is at 6:30 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 18
PDA ag export seminar at the regional office, Lansdale.

Friday, Aug. 19
York Farmers Forum annual picnic at the C.B. Musser farm.
Avian influenza meeting at 8 p.m. at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

Saturday, Aug. 20
NE District 4-H Dairy Show, Hartford.
Central Pa. Holstein Championship Show, Huntingden.

Lancaster Farming

Better read than any other ag publication in the East

To Plan For Fall Wheat Seeding
The time is fast approaching for our wheat growers to be making plans for their fall seeding. Some of the local wheat may not be satisfactory due to the wheat scab found in some fields this year. If you use local wheat, be sure you know the source and have it cleaned and treated for disease. Also, if you had a scab problem this year, do not plant seed in the same field this fall; the fungus can remain in the soil.

Certified seed would be the best route to take if you experienced any problem with scab or powdery mildew this year. This extra cost for certified seed is well worth it to help insure a good crop next summer.

Plan your seed needs now so you are ready to plant when the conditions are right.

To Ensilage Drouth-Stricken Corn
Corn fields are drying out very rapidly, and one way to salvage drouth-stricken corn is to ensilage it. For good packing and good fermentation, ensilage the crop at about 60-65% moisture. Moisture content is going to be difficult to estimate accurately. Stunted plants with good ear development may be drier than usual. However, plants with little or no ear development may be higher than normal in moisture content. Once most of the leaves below the ear dry up and die, moisture content can drop quickly; observe fields frequently. In deciding when to cut, consider the greener corn will partially offset the lack of moisture in drier corn.

Drier material may need to be chopped finer for good packing; keep the knives sharp and properly set. If you are forced to chop corn finer, be sure you have enough other good, longer-stemmed forage available to maintain near normal rumen activity and fat tests. If the corn is too dry, add water or consider using a preservative. To raise the moisture level of 1 ton of silage from 55% up to 60% will require about 30 gallons of water; that's 300 gallons to a 10 ton load!

If pollination and ear development are poor, and the stalks remain fairly green, don't panic; let the crop stand and cut it at the usual 45-55 days after silking. This will permit the plant to accumulate more nutrients, particularly energy, and it provides more time for nitrate levels if present, to decline. To further reduce the risk of nitrates in drouthy corn, wait until 3-5 days after a "recovery" rain and cut the crop higher; accumulation of nitrates generally are greater in the stalk, following periods of rapid growth.

Off-quality silages should be stored separately from good quality forages, so it can be managed accordingly. Put only good quality forage in the silo. Don't let a layer of poor quality feed block your access to the good quality feed you need for your top producers. If necessary, consider stacks, silo bags and other silos as alternative storages.

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OTIS

OTIS, DID YOU EVER THINK OF GETTING YOURSELF A FARM COMPUTER?

NOPE!

WHY NOT?

BECAUSE I DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF ONLY HAVING TO TOUCH A BUTTON, TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH I OWE.

TAKE A LOOK! THE NEW COMPUTER.

NEW