

Is it fair?

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

Fair season is in its final big month in Pennsylvania.

While we're all in favor of perpetuating the agricultural nature of fairs throughout the state, we'd be remiss if we didn't make a couple of observations. These observations are not intended as a criticism of any single fair but are presented to prompt possible local review in these times of tough economic conditions not only on the farm, but throughout agribusiness and in Harrisburg, too.

Last week, single exhibitors walked off with the majority of premium money in the colored breed shows at a county fair. In one of the shows, there was only one exhibitor. Total premiums won by these dominant exhibitors ranged from \$450 to more than \$600 each. In a couple of cases, the top winners weren't even from the county where the fair was held.

Are shows at local and county fairs intended to be such money-making ventures for exhibitors? Obviously, it must pay these people to follow the fair schedule week after week. In the case of some such exhibitors, I'm sure that a sizable portion of their farm income comes from the fair circuit.

Sure, we recognize the reason cited for keeping such shows to encourage retention of the breed and its genetic base. And, we recognize that without state premium money the ag segment of many more fairs would disappear. Also, we don't mean to only point a finger at dairy -- dominant single exhibitors are just as evident in hogs, beef or sheep.

But in these hard economic times, should state taxpayers be required to help subsidize fair show strings out of general tax revenues? Yes, fair premium money this year was supplemented out of the general fund since horse racing revenues were down due to the recession.

And, it's not small sums of money that go into the fair premiums. This year's state budget provides for some \$700,000 from the general fund for fair premiums. The total fair amount, including horse racing money, could total \$2.4 million.

If general fund money is to be used for agriculture, can it be better used for promotional efforts that can have long-range benefits for all of agriculture?

I think it only fair that all local fairs be required to adopt the sliding scale method of awarding premiums in which a lower premium is automatically paid in classes which don't have a minimum number of exhibitors.

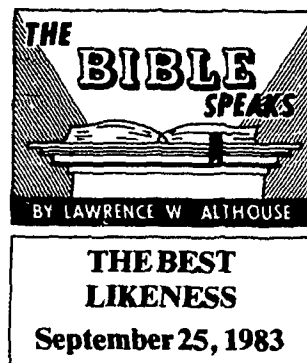
Here in Lancaster County, the fair season is about at its halfway point.

We're well aware that we're not the first to repeat the following point and won't be the last.

For the top ag county in the state, it's still a crying shame that Lancaster County can't get back together for a countywide fair. Each community still goes its own way -- cutting down on the participation by commercial exhibitors and support by buyers.

It's just another example of how fractured and split agriculture is.

If Lancaster County agriculture can't get together on something like a fair, how can it ever hope to get together on important issues, such as the survival of the family farm or possible pollution of farmland by a proposed hazardous waste dump.



Background Scripture: John 1:14-18; 14:6-11; Hebrews 1:1-4; 1 John 1:1-4.

Devotional Reading: John 1:14-18.

One of the standard philosophical arguments for the existence of God is our continuing discovery that in every corner of the world there is testimony and evidence that virtually all peoples have believed in some kind of Higher Power. Ultimate Source, or Ground of Being--to use just a few of the terms that have been used to designate the reality you and I call God.

For some people this conviction has been founded upon a perception of God as creator. For others, this perception has been manifested as the experience of God in history. Still others have perceived God as the source of morality, particularly through the pronouncements of prophets and lawgivers.

Various Ways

Since my first days in the Christian ministry I have come to realize that all religions tend to point us in the same direction. Although initially I was quite insensitive to the value of other religions, I have since discovered much of value in the teachings and experiences of religions other than Christianity. God has said some important things to us through Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism,

Confucianism, and so forth. There are many, many different paths to the one God. Some of them I can understand and appreciate and some I cannot. (That is a reflection upon me, not the other religions.)

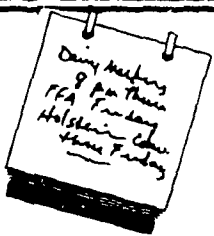
Yet, as my understanding and appreciation of the value of other religions has grown over the years, I have come to an even deeper appreciation for and attachment to the revelation of God I find in Jesus Christ. I cannot choose for others or even judge the value of their choices. For myself, however, I am even more convinced of the magnitude and depth of the fullness of the God I find in Jesus Christ. For me, then, the words of Hebrews have a very special meaning:

In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom he also created the world. He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature... (1:1-3a)

Seeing The Father

Ironically, it is my faith in Christ that helps me to appreciate the value of other religions. The God I encounter in Christ is not the parochial tribal God so many people try to present as "Christian," but a God so big and great that only the whole world and all its peoples are a creation big enough and great enough to be his. There are and will continue to be lots of questions which my faith leaves vague or unanswered, but, if I want to know the essential nature of God, I know I have only to look to Jesus Christ to find the key to life in this cosmos. I know fully what Jesus means when he says, "He who has seen me has seen the Father."

Farm Calendar



Saturday, Sept. 24
8th annual Home Gardener's School, Cook College, Rutgers.

Sunday, Sept. 25
Pa. Flying Farmers meeting at 1 p.m. Pilots may use Elizabethtown/Marietta Airport. Meeting at Keith and Kathy Vogt's.

Monday, Sept. 26
Bloomsburg Fair begins. Continues through Saturday. Opens at 7 a.m. each day.

Invitational Youth Judging Contest at All American Dairy Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg at 8 a.m.

Pa. Junior Dairy Show at 9 a.m. Eastern National Milking Shorthorn Junior Show at 7 p.m.

All American Show continues through Friday and all activities are at the Farm Show Complex.

Penn Ag annual meeting at Seven Springs Resort, Champion.

Tuesday, Sept. 27
Penn State Crops Day, Rock Springs Agronomy Research Farm.

Eastern National Brown Swiss

Show and Eastern National Milking Shorthorn Show at 9 a.m.

Pa. 4-H and FFA Dairy Judging Forum at 10 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 28
National Guernsey Show at 9 a.m. Eastern National Ayrshire Show at 9 a.m.

West Lampeter Fair opens. Continues through Oct. 1.

Thursday, Sept. 29
PAA Jersey Show and Eastern National Holstein Show at 9 a.m.

All American Holstein Sale at 7 p.m.

Franklin County Conservation

District annual meeting and dinner at 6:45 p.m. at Kauffman Station Community Center.

Friday, Sept. 30
Lancaster Ag Expo in downtown Lancaster. Continues tomorrow.

Eastern National Holstein Show (milk and group classes) at 8 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 1
Eastern National Livestock Exposition.

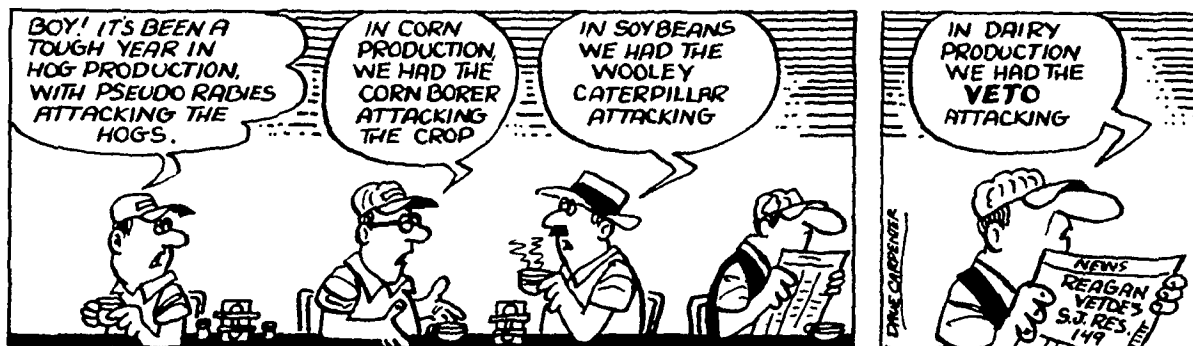
Md. Polled Hereford Association sale at Frederick, Md. Fairgrounds. Show at 3 p.m. and sale at 6:30 p.m.

OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

Dairylea replies

EDITOR: In a recent issue of Lancaster Farming you ran a news release put out by NEDCO in which Dairylea was identified as causing (Turn to Page A12)

Otis



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
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To Observe National Farm Safety Week

The proclamation of September 18-24 as National Farm Safety Week is very important during this busy corn harvest and fall planting season.

This year Farm Safety Week focuses on the future: the protection and safety training of our younger generation to whom we must look to take over the tremendous job of feeding and clothing our nation and many others around the world.

According to preliminary National Safety Council estimates, agricultural work-connected accidents were responsible for about 1,800 deaths and 180,000 disabling injuries in 1982. Many of these casualties were children or youth.

Accidents have no respect for age. About one person in three killed accidentally in the U.S. is age 24 or younger. Accidents lead as a cause of death for all persons ages 1 through 38.

Safety is something we should practice all the time, but we need a gentle reminder sometimes. Let's have a safe harvest season and a safe year.

To Reduce Egg Breakage

Many egg producers are not aware of their breakage losses. You could be very surprised how much. Some poultry producers do not realize how many eggs they are losing because they do not keep track of them. In studies where this has been checked carefully, we find the percentage of eggs

broken ranging from 2% to 5% up to 20%.

With a flock of 30,000 layers averaging 70% production, a loss of 4% is 84,000 eggs or 7,000 dozen a year. This loss comes to \$4,900 when eggs sell for 70 cents per dozen.

Check nests or cages for needed repair. Often we find eggs broken right in the cages. Check the egg trays. If they are bent, they can break many eggs. Many times plastic bumpers placed on the egg tray will reduce breakage. Careful handling will reduce breakage if eggs are gathered by hand.

Take time to check these factors and other to reduce breakage. It very well could be the difference between profit and loss.

To Store Pesticides Safely

Most producers are about finished with their spray materials for the year. Many of these can be held over until next year with good results. However, it is always best to purchase only enough for one season at a time. When storing spray materials, always keep them in their original container and away from children, pets and livestock. It is best to have a separate room or building for pesticide storage. Wettable powders are easy to store; however emulsions and liquids may be harmed by freezing weather. Producers are urged to follow the label and instructions in this respect. It may be necessary

(Turn to Page A12)