

The year ahead

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

1983 was a momentous year in agriculture. Many in agriculture were hit hard in three different ways -- the weather, disease and government programs.

But when this time rolls around next year, the effects felt by agriculture during the past year may seem quite small compared to what may lie ahead during 1984.

From a long-range viewpoint, the coming year may become the most important ever experienced in agriculture. What happens during the next 12 months may be felt throughout agriculture for many years to come.

Look at just a few examples:

More than likely it will be well into the New Year before the full extent and effects of the Avian flu outbreak is known in the poultry industry. As 1983 ends, Avian was still creeping southward and westward from the core of infection in Lancaster County. It was getting ever closer to the Delmarva Peninsula and was detected in Adams County -- another poultry center of the state.

Farmers and industry personnel soon will start to face the final decision of whether to repopulate or wait. This decision, which is deeply steeped in economic terms, will have to be made in the light of the status of the disease that exists during the coming weeks and months. It will be a most difficult decision for many.

During the coming month dairy farmers

have a big decision to make, too. In its way, it will shape the future of dairying, just as the decision facing area poultry operators will determine their future. Each dairy family must make a decision on whether to participate in the Milk Diversion Program and how much.

While this is a decision that must be made by each and every dairy family, their collective answer will affect the entire industry for many years to come. To use a sports term, the government neatly placed the ball clearly in the court of the dairy industry. How they handle "that ball" to help solve the problem of over-production will surely be a major factor in any future dairy legislation.

And, on an even larger legislative scale, the coming year will bring many meetings and discussions about the new Farm Bill due in 1985. While the bill won't be formally written during 1984, you can bet that before year's end many of the basic decisions will have been made on the overall future relationship between the Federal Government and agriculture.

As the New Year prepares to begin, it might be good to reflect just a bit on 1983, but take an even longer pause to look ahead to 1984.

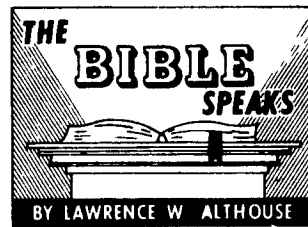
It's a big country and a huge agricultural network that stretches across it. But in the long run that huge ag network is based on the individual decisions that are made on each and every farm.

And, there's no easy way to make such decisions. It comes down to trying to draw a fine balance between the individual needs and situation of each farm family and the overall goals and requirements of agriculture as a whole.

The development of the best and most productive agriculture in the world did not occur by chance in this country. There have been many factors that account for this tremendous achievement.

But one factor that is often overlooked when credit is given is the resiliency of the typical farm family to bend to meet changing times and adapt itself to new demands and conditions. This resiliency has been evident down through the years as agriculture led the way for the country to expand from coast to coast and evolve into a highly mechanized and modern industry. In the midst of all of these changes, the common denominator in agriculture has been this dedicated human resiliency of the individual farm family.

And, once again I'm sure, this quality will help provide the foundation for the farm family to meet the challenges ahead in 1984 and make the decisions that will be faced.



THE GREAT ARRAIGNMENT January 1, 1984

Background Scripture:
Isaiah 1; 2 through 3:15.
Devotional Reading:
Isaiah 3:1-7.

The Book of Isaiah begins with a great trial which sums up pretty well the rest of the book. In this trial, which one Biblical scholar called "The Great Arraignment," we can discern the various actors in a court of law.

Yet, it is not an ordinary trial, but one of cosmic proportions. For in these proceedings it is evident that God is both the Plaintiff and the Judge. The Jury is composed of Heaven and Earth. And the Defendants? It is the people of Judah who stand accused.

THE CHARGE

Of what are they accused? Isaiah lays it out for all to see: they are "a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the Lord, they have despised the Holy One of Israel..." (Is. 1:4).

And the evidence: "Your country lies desolate, your cities are burned with fire; in your very presence aliens devour your land; it is desolate..." (Is. 4:7).

But surely the people of Judah have a defense! Yes, they remind the Judge of their piety, their worship, the sacrifices they offer in the Temple their special feast

days and ritual observances. Surely this is evidence of their piety and faithfulness. Surely they have been wrongly accused!

The cross-examination by the plaintiff, however, is withering:

"What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices?" says the Lord. "I have had enough burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts. When you come to appear before me, who requires of you the trampling of my courts?" (Is. 1:11,12a).

THE VERDICT

Then suddenly, the arraignment trial is over. There is no need for any more evidence. That which has been presented is more than enough to convict them. They are guilty, even though in their own hearts they may not yet have acknowledged it.

I must confess that I have previously misinterpreted Isaiah 1:18-20, as have many people. I assumed that the Judge was offering the Defendants unconditional pardon: "...though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." But, according to Biblical scholars, these verses mean that the Judge is castigating the Defendants for their hardness of heart. What he is saying, then, is something like this: "Although your sins are like scarlet, you think they are white as snow."

No, the forgiveness is not unconditional, but is dependent upon their response to this conviction: "Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean...cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; defend the fatherless, plead for the widow" (Is. 1:16,17). Then and only then can the Defendants be pardoned.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Know Tax Reporting Timetables

Farmers planning to estimate what their tax is going to be for 1983 should file Form 1040ES by January 17. If you file your Estimated Return by January 17, you have until April 16 to file a complete tax return on Form 1040 and pay any tax still due to request a refund if they overpaid in making the tax estimate. However, farmers who do not file and pay an estimated tax must file the completed 1040 form by March 1 and pay in full whatever tax is due at that time. Non-farmers have until April 16 to complete their 1040 and pay any tax due. Farmer's Tax Guides are available at the Extension Office of assist in filing your reports.

To Check

Barn Ventilation
Proper ventilation of all types of livestock and poultry buildings is

very important during the winter months. When the warm, moisture-laden air is not moved out of the area, we usually see condensation on the windows, walls and ceilings. This is especially true with little or poor insulation. Exhaust fans will move the air out, and protect the building. This time of year the barns are filled with livestock; these animals give off large amounts of body heat. When condensation occurs it is a sign that some attention is needed; in most cases it is a problem with ventilation or with insulation.

To Review Farm

Partnership Agreements

There are a number of advantages to setting up farm partnerships, but an annual review of the agreement, and its meaningfulness in relation to current needs is essential.

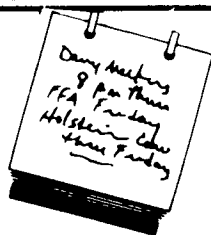
Once a farm partnership is drawn up, the agreement should be received at least once a year. This should be done for two reasons. First, to see how well each of the partners is meeting his obligations...and secondly, to carefully evaluate the agreement to see if it is doing its intended job.

Then too, farming is a rapidly changing business. So don't be surprised if the agreement you set up just a couple years ago isn't entirely adequate to meet today's needs.

So review it carefully. If the agreement doesn't quite measure up to current needs, plan to make the necessary changes as we enter 1984.

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Farm Calendar



Tuesday, Jan. 3
Annville Young Farmers meeting at 7:30 p.m. at the Annville Cleona High School. Esther Raush, Lebanon County ASCS office, will speak on the milk set aside program.

Wednesday, Jan. 4
York County Dairy Day at the 4-H

Center in York.
Lancaster County Tobacco Show from 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the basement of the Farm and Home Center. Judging begins at 1:30 p.m.

County Board of Agriculture meeting at the Flemington, N.J., Extension Center at 8 p.m.

Thursday, Jan. 5
Bradford County DHIA workshop at 12.30 p.m. at the Methodist Church, Columbia Cross Roads.
Fayette County Holstein Breeders meet at the Amedjo Restaurant at 7.30 p.m.

Grain Hedging workshop at the Sheraton Inn, Dover, Del. Continues tomorrow.

Otis



WE WOULD LIKE TO SALUTE ALL THE LANCASTER FARMING READERS, FOR THE HARD WORK, COURAGE AND PERSISTENCE, THAT YOU PUT FORTH, IN OVERCOMING A DIFFICULT YEAR IN AGRICULTURE, AND WE WANT TO WISH YOU ALL, THE VERY BEST IN 1984!

CONGRATULATIONS!
DAVE CARPENTER
& OTIS



PSSST! HE DREW HIMSELF MUCH BETTER LOOKING THEN HE ACTUALLY IS.