

OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

New Enemies Of Farmers

Dear Editor:

It is with great distress and bereavement that we are writing this letter.

We are small farmers who live in a small community called Junius, N.Y. We are located in Seneca County.

Recently, events have started to take place which are very frightening to the American farmer. P.C.A. (Production Credit) and the F.m.H.A. (Farmers Home Administration) have become an "Enemy" instead of an "Ally" to the backbone of America.

Seizures of crops, livestock, machinery and personal items have become an everyday event all through the United States. Brutal and inhumane tactics have been the means of some farmers losing everything they and their forefathers have built up.

America started with farmers. If there had been no farmers, this country could not have grown to be one of the strongest in the world.

If we are to be told we cannot farm any longer because "someone" wants 30 percent less farmers next year, "someone" has taken our rights away. Some countries tell their people who can be farmers and who cannot. Are we to believe we are becoming one of those countries? We live in a

democracy and yet there are some heads of government operated offices who not only seize farmers' belongings, but also are allowed to take neighboring farmers' machinery and belongings just because it is parked on the seized farmer's land. If your car was parked in your neighbor's driveway and he was foreclosed on, would you expect your car to be taken along with his belongings?

The following is what we watched:

In 1983, the farmer had another rough time. A lot and we should say most neighbors in a farming community were called to the aid of the neighboring farmer. We borrowed machinery and we lent machinery, as well as labor and an old idea. This idea has become a must for the American farmer. This idea is to survive. We love our country. We love our land even more. We don't complain because it's not a 9 to 5 job or because we have to miss the biggest social event of the year as we have to get our crops in the ground or harvest them before the weather tries to beat us.

The Government has loaned us all too much money to grow and now because it costs us more to grow our crops than we can sell them for, they say we're in over our heads and they will call in all our loans.

We stood helpless on Jan. 15, 1984 as a neighbor farmer lost everything they owned and were tormented by P.C.A. and F.m.H.A. people. The next five days were to become a nightmare for the whole community. Neighboring farmers were afraid to go to the aid of a friend and neighbor because they might be next. As they took machinery to nuts and bolts and old junk tires, we were totally horrified. Then, the big jolt came.

We watched our machinery go down the road, too. It was only parked on this farmer's land because he used it when he was in need last year. We pleaded with these people not to take it, as it belonged to us and still they took it. We were told to go to the fairgrounds in a neighboring town to claim it within 10 days and it would be brought back to us.

A 20-year-old wagon among four others was purchased by my husband's father and was sold with the farm to my husband. Another was made by my husband and, of course, we do not have a Bill of Sale.

On January 19, we were told we cannot get the wagons back without proof of ownership. It's going to be tough, but they're ours and we need them to operate and we will get them back. Most of the people there on the days of the awful event didn't even know how to start farm machinery, let alone drive it down the road (on a Sunday) in sub-zero weather. The weather conditions certainly could not have helped this equipment. The wear and tear on the engines, tires and farmers' nerves could have been handled in a much more

humane way.

We also saw our nine-shank chisel plow and the two wings from our cultipacker taken. I'm only glad our children weren't on the land, they may have been taken, too.

Our fingernails have our dirt from our soil under them and our backs have our pain in them at the end of an 18 or 20-hour day, so why should our machinery be in their possession? Can't someone look into this mess — slaughter of the American farmer before America is no longer known as a self-preserved country. We want to keep our farms, surely there is a way to keep our people from going hungry.

Our plea is not a worthless one, but any response has been. You may be next and then what?

Look into our county offices all over our beautiful country and tell us "Why?"

May we have a reply to our letter before we are forced out, too. Won't someone try to help? The American farmer is an endangered species.

We help to preserve the American eagle. Why not help to preserve the American farmer.

Dale and Suzanne Smith
R2, Smith Road
Phelps, N.Y.

Farm Calendar

(Continued from Page A10)

p.m., Briggsville Mt. Zion Church.

Saturday, Feb. 4

Ephrata Area Young Farmers annual banquet, 6:45 p.m., Durloch-Mt. Airy Fire Hall.

Del. Horse Expo, 8 a.m., Lake Forest High School, Felton, Del.

Now is the Time

(Continued from Page A10)

see where and how much to prune. And it's easier to reshape tangled and low-hanging branches.

Most trees need thinning when they approach maturity. But, corrective pruning is important when trees are young. While the young tree is growing it's important to remove a branch starting in the wrong position because this branch could change the whole tree structure. Pruning consists mostly of cuttings that train the tree... but it generally involves more and more thinning out of weak and dead wood as the tree matures.

There is a saying that "as the branch is bent, so will the tree grow." With pruning, the results are even more drastic, for a limb which is cut will not grow back. So it's important to know the proper method of pruning before you start. The pruning of dormant shade trees while they are young will determine, to a large measure, the beauty and health of a tree in later years.



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