

Ag Week - Ho Hum

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

Agriculture now has a special week to launch its busy season in spring and a week to wind things up in the fall.

Ag Week is now under way and includes Ag Day on Tuesday, the first day of spring. Then after the harvest, there's Farm-City Week about Thanksgiving time.

Like the multitude of other weeks and days that are proclaimed in this country, the general public probably receives these two ag events in much the same way -- with a yawn and hardly a passing glance.

And as far as having any lasting impact on agriculture or helping to solve some of its problems, they have about as much influence as any of the other special observances proclaimed by special interest groups.

I'd like to suggest that a few other ag weeks or days be proclaimed during the heart of farming's busy season and not just at its beginning and end.

How about a National Drink Milk Week in June.

Or, a Ton of Topsoil Disappearance Day after a big thunderstorm in July.

Or, just the opposite, a National Rain Dance Day for Corn during tasseling.

Now, days or weeks like this, might get at

the heart of some of the specific problems that are facing agriculture.

No Ag Week or Day is needed to remind farmers that spring is near. Like migrating birds or lost dogs, they have an instinctive personality trait that comes forth about this time of the year just like the first flowers and buds.

But let that rural rhymer and Bally balladeer, Sandy Moser, who makes periodic poetic contributions to Lancaster Farming express this condition she's been noticing in her father:

Some people say my Dad is sick
and I am forced to agree,
for as the days keep getting warmer
his temperature goes up by degrees.

This affliction is a common thing
for it happens every year.
It seizes the entire farming community
and there is no cure, I fear.

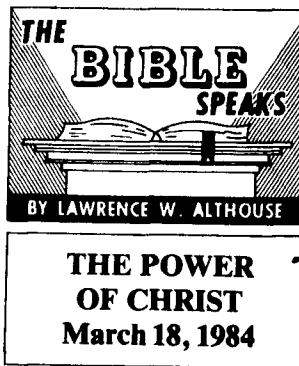
The symptoms make it simple
to diagnose this disease,
it's important to catch it early,
after winter's last freeze.

The sufferer sneaks out in the middle of the night
in hopes that he will not be seen,
He's greasing machinery, it's easy to tell,
he never gets his fingernails clean.

The smell of grease will be on his breath
though this accusation he'll deny,
He'll say he feels quite normal,
but notice the glazed look in his eye.

He will be prone to fits of violence -
a sure sign he's not well,
He'll jump up and kick the TV set
if the forecast is rain or another cold spell.

These symptoms remain until the patient
is on his tractor, the gas pedal floored.
Plowing fields up to the horizon,
And only then will he be cured.



Background Scripture:
Mark 4:35 through 5:43.
Devotional Reading:
Mark 4:10-20.

Last week I was at a public presentation where a prominent theologian was asked about the miracles of Jesus. The theologian gave a long and rambling answer, but the essence of his reply was that he didn't believe they were literally true as presented in the New Testament.

Lots of people, lay and clergy alike, seem to find the miracles of Jesus a continuing source of either difficulty or embarrassment. In short, they would find it necessary to believe that the miracles, for example as recorded in Mark 4 and 5, did not really happen: Jesus did not still the storm (4:37-41), did not heal the woman with a "flow of blood" (5:25-34), and did not raise the daughter of Jairus from apparent death (5:35-43).

WHO IS THIS?

At the same time that I have experienced so much skepticism on the part of Christians, I find that there are many people with scientific backgrounds who seem much more open to the possibility that Jesus did the things the New Testament claims that he did.

Last year about this time I was privileged to have dinner with a

Nobel laureate scientist, who told me in the course of the evening that none of Jesus's miracles appear to him to be beyond the realm of possibility. "In our day, no one should decide that anything is impossible," he told me.

Unfortunately, too much preoccupation with whether this or that act of Jesus is "possible" or "impossible" keeps us from going beyond the act itself to the deeper meaning to which it points. I have no problem believing that Jesus stilled the storm, but I am also aware that there is more involved than just a storm. The event is a demonstration of Jesus' power to still all the storms of life, human and natural.

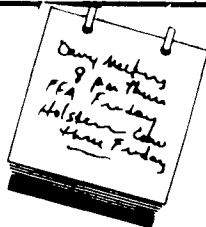
Neither do I have any problem believing that Jesus healed the woman with the "issue of blood," for I have seen such demonstrations of Christ's power to heal in my own life. (See the writer's book, *Rediscovering The Gift Of Healing*). But I know that these demonstrations of Christ's power are indicative of his power to heal all human hurts.

ALL MEN MARVELED

"Who then is this," asked the disciples, "that even wind and sea obey him?" (4:41). Later, when he had cast the demon out of the Gerasene Demoniac, it is said, "And all men marveled" (5:20).

Jesus was a preacher and teacher whose words have changed the world. But we must not forget that he was also a man of power—power demonstrated in marvelous acts that boggled people's minds. Yet, even more than that, the "signs and wonders" pointed to an even greater power and authority: the capacity to heal all human brokenness and meet the deepest needs and hungers of the soul.

Farm Calendar



Tuesday, March 20
It's Ag Day.
Waste Water Disposal for Homes and Communities meetings, 1:30 p.m., Oxford Twp. Municipal Building; 7:30 p.m., North Branch, Adams County National Bank.
ELCO FFA Banquet, 7 p.m., Middle School Cafeteria.
Lycoming Dairy Day, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Lycoming Mall Community Room.
Ephrata Young Farmers meeting on soil loss, 7:45 p.m., ag shop.
Regional small fruit meeting, 9:30 a.m., Vo-Tech School, Marlin.
Tioga Crops/Soils Day, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Youth Center, Fairgrounds.
Workshops on managing better meetings, 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., Business Administration Building, Delaware State College, Dover.
Joint meeting of Senate & House

Ag & Rural Affairs Committees, 9:30 a.m., Senate Majority Caucus Room, subject: farmland preservation.
Wednesday, March 21
Regional Greenhouse Production and Marketing, 4-H Center, Bar.
Lebanon County Holstein tour. Hunterdon County, N.J. Ag Development Board, 8 p.m., Extension Center.
Carroll County, Md. Sale, Fairgrounds, Westminster.
Del. Poultry Improvement Assn. annual banquet, Felton Fire Hall.
PCCEA regional meeting, 10 a.m. - 2:30 p.m., Sheraton Crossgates, Wilkes-Barre.
Bradford Agronomy Day, 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., Wysox Presbyterian Church.
Saturday, March 17
Pa. Ayrshire Breeders meeting, Embers, Carlisle.

Small Farms Livestock Conference, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m., Mercer County Extension Office.
Berks County Guernsey Breeders Assn. annual meeting, 11 a.m., Shartlesville Grange Hall.
Elizabethtown Young Farmer Banquet, Hostetter's, Mt. Joy.
Bradford County farm tour to New Jersey, 10 a.m.
Pa. Brown Swiss Assn. Canton 4 meeting, 11:30 a.m., Cloister Restaurant, Ephrata.
Monday, March 19
Woodland Management Workshop, 7 p.m., Tyler Arboretum, Lima, Delaware County.
Chester conservation meeting on Chesapeake Bay, 7-9 p.m., Russellville Grange Hall.
Warwick Young Farmers meeting on ag nutrient pollution, 7:30 p.m., high school ag room.
Adams County Beekeepers, 7:30 (Turn to Page A12)

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Practice Safety Around Liquid Manure Pits
Many manure pits will be cleaned out at this time of year for field application. This by-product of the livestock and dairy business is very useful as fertilizer. However, the pit can be a safety hazard because of poisonous and explosive gases. When the mixture is agitated in order to be removed, these gases are more plentiful and much more dangerous. Good ventilation above the pit is very important. Also, anyone who goes down in the empty pit should be wearing a gas mask. These gases are dangerous and can be fatal to both humans and animals. We urge all farmers to caution their employees of this potential danger.

To Control Wild Garlic
We may like onions on our hamburgers and in other foods, but

very few of us like onion-flavored milk. This can easily happen on dairy farms where wild garlic plants are allowed to grow. Many pastures are infested with wild garlic. One of the best times to start control measures on this week is early in the spring when the young plants are 4 to 8 inches high. An application of 2, 4-D will knock them down. Follow the label for directions. When this is applied around the middle to latter part of March, little damage is done to any legume in the area. If garlic plants are allowed to mature each year, the pasture area will become so contaminated that dairy cows cannot utilize the grass.

To Care For Horses
Many horses and ponies are neglected this time of the year. When they're kept in a stable for long periods of time...such as during the winter...they can get out of condition. And they may develop some bad habits. But you can avoid this by following good management practices.

Your horses are natural athletes and need a daily workout to keep their muscles, feet and legs in good condition. Twenty or 25 minutes on the end of a long line is one of the best ways. Just let the horse run circles around you. This keeps him from getting fat and developing weak feet and legs.

Don't feed moldy, dusty or dirty hay or grain to horses; this could result in colic or respiratory problems. Free choice of clean water, salt and minerals should be

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