

Ag is so easy to take for granted

To while away the hour or so of driving to the Pa. Grange legislative session this week in Harrisburg, I played a little game that I used to engage in with my younger brother as kids during Sunday afternoon drives many years ago.

We'd each pick a type of vehicle and then see who counted the most seen during the drive.

This week, I changed the rules of the game a bit and counted the number of ag-related vehicles seen along Rt. 283 between Lancaster and Harrisburg.

I was literally amazed at the number. Clearly, the greater majority of identifiable commercial vehicles were related to agriculture.

To cite just a few that come to mind there were a half dozen trucks carrying food products, two grain rigs, a couple of feed trucks, an AI truck, another hauling a load of farm machinery, one laden with hay and another with straw and countless farm pickups easily discerned by the mud on the tires and the beds filled with sacks and bags.

If I had to hazard a guess, I'd estimate that fully two-thirds of the trucks that could be visually identified were carrying agriculturally-related cargoes.

After hearing the emphasis stressed by Grange Master Charles Wismer and veterinary representatives from Penn State and Penn's New Bolton Center concerning animal health problems and the need for funds to handle

them, my little game of counting ag vehicles and state ag problems started to gel together into a single thought.

Just like all those ag-related vehicles we pass every day on the highway and never really see, agriculture as a whole as the state's number one industry is equally taken for granted.

As long as store shelves remain fully stocked at a reasonable price (reasonable to the buyer), the average consumer never even thinks about agriculture. They drive along looking right through and beyond all those ag-related vehicles and the farms themselves that line the roads.

Animal health problems are just one example of a phase of agriculture that has been sorely taken for granted and permitted to slip into tough times through the lack of adequate funding and support. And unfortunately, it has taken a disaster like Avian flu to bring it to the forefront.

As the Grange, other farm organizations and ag representatives from Penn State, Penn and other schools will confirm, it's a constant battle to have their needs even heard, let alone finally met.

As representatives of a minority that is constantly dwindling in numbers, it's so easy to be taken for granted.

But as Avian flu has helped to point out, there comes a time when the bill must be paid for all those years of being taken for granted.

Animal health and the lack of proper veterinary lab facilities to handle them are real problems in Pennsylvania. And they are not going to go away when the last chicken flock is depopulated and the final quarantine is lifted.

The problems are here to stay and it's obvious the time is overdue to do something about them. It's up to the ag community as a whole in league with the state to come to a consensus of what actually should be done and how it should be paid.

We can just no longer enjoy the luxury of taking agriculture for granted.

What we need is some sort of universal ag logo or symbol that could be placed on every package of food, on every ag-related vehicle, or whatever.

Simply, it could say: "This began on a farm."

Such a logo or saying wouldn't help to solve some of ag's problems. But it could help in keeping ag more visible in the eyes of the public. And increased visibility and awareness can help create a better atmosphere to tackle some of these pressing problems.

THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

TRULY WISE & OTHERWISE
April 29, 1984

Background Scripture: James 1.
Devotional Reading: James 1:12-18.

Christianity has always placed a high priority on wisdom. This is one of the legacies it inherited from Judaism, in which wisdom was highly valued. In fact, there is a whole class of Old Testament literature that is known as "wisdom literature": Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, portions of the Psalms and the Apocryphal Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon.

In the New Testament we can see the influence of Old Testament wisdom literature in the sayings of Jesus—particularly the Beatitudes and parables—as well as various passages in the epistles of Paul. The New Testament Epistle of James is almost entirely written in the style of the wisdom literature.

LIVING RIGHTLY

Unlike the wisdom writings of other ancient literatures, the wisdom literature in the Bible has a slightly different meaning. Wisdom is not equated with learning, or even understanding and good judgement by themselves. Rather it is the knowledge of the principles by which a person lives rightly. As the writer of Proverbs puts it, "therefore get wisdom: and with they getting get understanding" (4:7). The person

who does not truly understand what he knows is not likely to put it into practice.

This is also the way the writer of James understands wisdom. He begins with the advice, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproaching, and it will be given him" (1:5). But he quickly makes it clear that the purpose of this wisdom is to enable the Christian to live rightly:

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (1:22).

I wish James had also included... "and not speakers of the word only," for there are many of us who talk an excellent game that may pass for Christian discipleship. We know how to clearly verbalize what it means to be a Christian. But between the speaking of the word and the doing of it there is often a great chasm.

BRIDLE THE TONGUE

Some Christians are obviously in love with the ideas of Christianity. For them the essence of being a Christian is self-righteous argumentation and debate. A tremendous emphasis is laid upon just how a person enunciates his or her faith.

But James says, "If any one thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this man's religion is in vain" (1:26). The unbridled tongue is the downfall of many of us who would never think of physically injuring someone, but would hardly hesitate to wound that person with words.

It matters little that we know the right words, unless we understand how to do the word. That's the difference between the truly wise and the otherwise.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717 394 6851



To Prepare For Corn Planting

It always seems like we are in the full swing of the spring rush by the time daylight savings time arrives. Well, this year we are a bit behind schedule but, in any event we are fast approaching corn planting time and if your planter is not "ready to go" then put this high on your list of jobs that must be done. If you plan to change the row width, be sure to calibrate your planter to the plant population you desire. This should be done well ahead of time — so if you need new plates — they can be picked up and installed. Also your pest control programs should be worked out.

If you are on a no-till program and have a cover crop of rye, wheat or barley, then it should be 24 inches tall. Paraquat plus a surfactant does an excellent job. surfactant does an excellent job.

As far as insect control goes, research data collected from

numerous sites over the past several years indicates that soil insecticide treatments for corn rootworm control have not significantly increased yields except in a small percentage of the fields. If rootworm was not a problem in the past, treatment will not be necessary. If the field was in anything but corn, there would not be a rootworm problem because they only survive on corn roots.

To Think Rye

Many farmers plant rye as a forage crop for their cattle. Rye can provide a lot of much needed high quality forage — if it is handled properly. For top quality feed value, rye should be cut around the boot stage of maturity, and wilted before ensiling. After this stage, feed value drops rapidly. Some of our rye fields will be heading out soon. That means we should be thinking about cutting rye, perhaps even before we start planting corn.

For Spring Worming

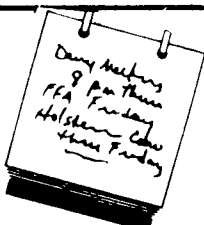
Spring is the best time to start a year round program to control internal parasites in cattle. Worming will help calves achieve heavier weights and give better feed efficiency.

Since producers will probably be handling cattle before turning them out on summer pasture it's a good time to worm cattle to rid them of existing parasite burdens.

Internal parasites damage the stomach and intestines and compete with the animal for feed. A parasite infection increases the nutrient requirement for good

(Turn to Page A12)

Farm Calendar



Saturday, April 28

Chester-Delaware Pomona Grange legislative banquet, Wagontown Fire Hall.

Bradford County Maple Festival, Troy Fairgrounds, continues tomorrow.

Region IV 4-H Horse Clinic for parents & leaders, 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

NW All-Breed Calf Sale, 1 p.m., Crawford County Fairgrounds.

Annual Maryland Jersey Cattle Club spring sale, 11:30 a.m., Gaywinds Farm, Keymar, Md.

Dairy Expo, Penn State Ag Arena.

Sunday, April 29

Club Lamb Workshop, noon - 2

p.m., Howard County, Md. Fairgrounds, followed by Touch of Class Club Lamb Sale, 2:30 p.m.

Pa. Flying Farmers, 1 p.m., home of David and Joanne Sweigart, use Elizabethtown-Marietta Airport.

Tuesday, May 1

Annual Wool Growers meeting and educational session, 6:30 p.m., Berks County Ag Center, Leesport.

Wednesday, May 2

Sprayer Calibration and Weed Control meeting, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Dennis Boyd Farm,

Forksville R1.

Adams County Sheep Producers annual meeting, 7:30 p.m., Extension Office.

Thursday, May 3

15th Mid-Atlantic States Veterinary Clinic, York Fairgrounds.

Friday, May 4

Pennsylvania Farm-City Council, 10 a.m., Pa. Kiwanis Office.

Saturday, May 5

Adams County Apple Blossom Festival, continues tomorrow, South Mountain Fairgrounds.

(Turn to Page A:12)



Otis