

The Bay — The Nitty Gritty

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

In plain English, let's get down to the "Nitty Gritty" of the Pennsylvania problem of agricultural nutrient loading of the Chesapeake Bay

The problem is too many nutrients -- primarily nitrogen and phosphorus -- from too much manure. And this is sometimes made worse by the addition of chemical fertilizers. Studies have shown that Lancaster County has more than enough nitrogen and phosphorus from manure to grow its crops without the addition of one single pound of commercial fertilizer.

Nitrogen is brought pointed to as the chief culprit. Once that manure goes on the ground, the nitrogen can only go into the crops, a little into the air and most into surface or ground water.

Too much is ending up in the water.

The escape of nitrogen into the air is too small to be of significance. Besides, farmers have been lectured not to let this happen.

Can crops eat up more of the nitrogen? Perhaps, a little bit more can be used up by double-cropping as much as possible. But its

value is quite limited too.

That leaves the nitrogen going into the water -- the crux of the problem. To cut down on the nutrients going into it, you must reduce the amount of manure going on the land. And what possibilities are there here?

Methane digesters -- a glamorous idea that does nothing to reduce the number of nutrients left over after you've digested the manure and produced your electricity. These nutrients must still be disposed of, besides just dumping them on the same ground. The overall economics of digesters still leave a lot of unanswered questions, too.

How about a far-out system of "destroying" some of the nutrients or permanently bonding them as part of a methane digester system or some other process. Can you imagine the problem of trying to sell such a philosophy to farmers who have been told constantly to make the most of their resources?

That leaves the major alternatives of reducing the animal units to reduce the amount of manure or disposing of part of the manure in another way, like transporting it to land that isn't being overloaded.

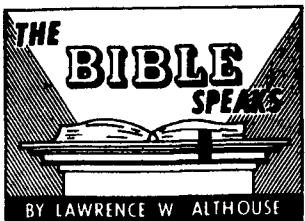
Everyone in ag shudders at the thought of reducing animal units. The disruption in the ag economy of the area would make the recent Avian experience seem like a Sunday afternoon social.

Besides, farmers can't shoulder the entire bill by reducing animal units when the blame for their increase must be shared by all of us -- government which encouraged expansion through support programs, agri-business including lenders and everyone who wants a cheap food policy.

That leaves the option of disposing of part of the manure in another way, such as transporting it away. Your guess at the cost of that to the taxpayer is as good as mine.

In a nutshell, that's the nitty-gritty of the Bay. Too simplified a summary -- a lot of people will say. It probably is.

But I think it's a lot more realistic than Pennsylvania's half-hearted attempt at setting aside a million dollars for some more Better Management Practices -- the actual worth of some of which are being questioned.



THE MODEL
October 14, 1984

Background Scripture:

Philippians 2:1-18.

Devotional Reading:

Philippians 1:19-30.

Michael Jackson has dominated the newspapers again today. His concerts are sold-out and people are desperate to get their hands on those elusive tickets.

I have nothing against Michael Jackson -- I don't know enough about him to make any kind of evaluation. My problem is not with Michael Jackson, but with society's response to him. There is something wrong when a mere entertainer can so affect a sizable segment of our society, when so many people look to him for their example of what they want to emulate.

FULL HOUSE

Apart from Michael Jackson, there are a few others who can command virtually a "full house" anywhere when they appear. Entertainers and athletic stars seem to be the persons our society most idolizes. Not even political leaders -- at least not in this country -- can command that kind of following.

My problem with this type of public response is that these people become the models for millions of people. People look at their lives --

the glamour, the success, the popularity, the material abundance -- and say, "Now that's living!"

But is it? If it is, then most of us will go through life without ever having chance at that kind of "living."

What we need in our world today is another kind of "model." If we can get people to idolize a radically different "model," we can have a different world -- a world in which spiritual values take precedence over material values, where peace is more likely than mutual annihilation, and where love can reign as God intended it.

THE FULL LIFE

The fact is, we do have such a model. Our problem is that we haven't really given him a chance.

It's not that we have been urged to do so. Paul, writing to the Philippians, "Have this mind among yourselves which you have in Christ Jesus..." (2:5).

Perhaps the problem is that we don't like the example he sets: he refused to claim his equality with God, he gave his life for others, actually taking upon himself the role of a servant. A life like that could only lead in one direction -- to the cross.

And we don't want that, do we?

Yet, who can deny that, despite all of his humility, his self-giving and obedience, his death on a cross, Jesus achieved what is beyond that of anyone who takes the power and fame road:

Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth. (2:9, 10).

He and he alone is the model our world needs to know what real "living" is all about.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

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To Utilize Corn Stalks

Corn producers who are not making the crop into silage might consider making the corn stalks into bedding materials. The market value of all livestock bedding is quite high, and can be used on the farm or sold to others. After the corn is picked and the stalks dry, the corn can be shredded and baled.

This material makes very good bedding for box stalls and feedlot pens; the fodder absorbs water rapidly and when shredded gives less trouble in mechanical handling. When used on the farm as bedding, it can still be returned to the soil as added organic matter.

To Store Corn Carefully

Corn harvested for grain is a very important crop for most farmers. Therefore, good corn storage is very important. It

should be protected from the weather, given proper ventilation for drying, and then protected from rodents. This latter menace is one that needs more attention on many farms. Mice and rats like to make their homes in corn cribs and storage places when given the chance. Make an effort to eliminate all nesting places and practice good sanitation to keep the population down. All rat baiting stations should be located where children and pets cannot come in contact with the bait.

Rats and mice are destructive and are costing farmers a great deal of money.

To Practice Good Public Relations

Farmers should be concerned about their image in the community. In most cases it is very good, and also the majority of non-farm people in the rural areas respect the needs and problems of

the farmer. The image can be improved by getting better acquainted with your non-farm neighbors.

We urge farmers to invite their nearby neighbors to see their farm operations. In many cases a better understanding of the various farm operations will eliminate disputes and hassles about noise and odors. Also, I would encourage farmers to become involved with community activities. You'll find that people that understand each other seldom have serious problems.

To Graze Cautiously

As we approach frost season, farmers pasturing cattle should be concerned about possible dangers of grazing frosted legumes. All of the permanent grasses such as bluegrass, orchardgrass or brome grass can be safely grazed at any time of the year and this is also true of any of the small grain

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Farm Calendar



Saturday, October 13

Parents/students program, Ag College, University of Delaware, 9 a.m., Purnell Hall.
Farm Toy Show and Auction, Lancaster Mennonite High School, Show 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.; auction 5 to 10 p.m.
Sheep Field Day, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Penn State Schuylkill Campus, Schuylkill Haven.

Sunday, October 14

Pa. Flying Farmers Meeting, 1 p.m. at the home of Ralph Heffner, Pine Grove, Pa.

Monday, October 15

Lancaster County Farmers Association ag fete ribbon cutting, 5:30 p.m., Park City Mall.
Poultry Serviceman's Seminar, 6:30 p.m., Holiday Inn North, Route 501, Lancaster.

Tuesday, October 16

Beef and dairy packer co-op meeting, 7 p.m., Dutch Pantry, north of Selinsgrove, on purchase of Clover Packing.
National Meeting on Poultry Health and Condemnations, Carousel Hotel, Ocean City, Md.

Continues tomorrow.

Northeast Greenhouse Seminar, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Luzerne College Community Conference Center, Nanticoke.
Sewage sludge workshop, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Berks County Ag Center, Leesport.
Jersey Shore meeting on agronomic problems, 7:30 p.m., home of Russell Rozenberg.
Landis Valley Associates meeting on "Evolution of Farm Machinery," 8 p.m., administration building auditorium.

Wednesday, October 17

Lancaster County FFA Market Lamb Show and Sale - show at 7 p.m., New Holland sales stables, sale Oct. 18 at 3:30 p.m.
Hunterdon County N.J. Ag Development Board, 8 p.m., Extension Center.

Thursday, October 18

York County Holstein Banquet.
McKean County 4-H Achievement Night, 7:30 p.m., 4-H Center, Smithport Fairgrounds.
Dillsburg Community Fair, continues through Saturday.
Clearfield County Extension Annual Banquet, 6:30 p.m., Holiday Inn, Clearfield.
Md. State Grange annual meeting opens at Fireman's Activity Building, Thurmont; continues through Saturday.

Friday, October 19

Maryland Egg Council annual banquet, Martins West in Woodlawn.

Saturday, October 20

Woodlot Management Program, 9 a.m. to noon, Hercules Powder, Inc., Roxburg Township, N.J.
Pa. State National Farmers Organization Convention, Lamar Holiday Inn. Begins at 11 a.m.

