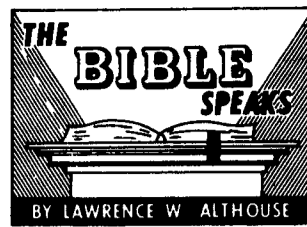


NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent
Phone 717-394-6851



IS IT
ALL "VANITY"?
May 12, 1985

To Check Weevils in Alfalfa

We are right into the decision making period for alfalfa weevil control. The question comes up, should I spray or cut it? This depends on the degree of damage and just how far your alfalfa is along. If your stand is getting along in maturity, then it would pay you to cut it early. If you decide to spray, then it should be applied only when 60 to 70 percent of the plants show slight feeding damage at the tips.

In most cases, spray application will not be necessary. The economic threshold line is based on a loss of 1/10 ton of alfalfa hay per acre. At \$100 per ton of hay, a loss of 1/10 ton equals \$10. If the cost of spraying is \$9 to \$10 per acre, you are at the break even level.

The two major problems with spraying is the physical damage by running the tractor over the growing plants and, secondly the tolerance time from the time of application until the residue is "off" the plants. Be sure to read the label before applying pesticides.

To Use a Starter Solution For Transplants

Gardening is a way of life for farmers and most suburban people. And if you want to give

your garden a real boost this spring...then use a fertilizer starter solution when you set out your plants.

It's easy to make...just dissolve about three tablespoons or so of regular 10-10-10 fertilizer in a gallon of water. And, as you set out your plants, such as cabbage, tomatoes or peppers, pour some of the starter solution in the hole...stir the soil...put in the plant...cover the roots with soil...and you've got that plant off to the best start ever.

A starter solution makes plant nutrients available to the young roots immediately...just the time you do your transplanting.

Or, even better, you might want to buy a special starter fertilizer. There are specially designed complete fertilizers which are high in available phosphorus. Be sure to follow label directions on the container.

To Inspect Lightning Rod System

The thunderstorm season is at hand and buildings that have rods should be protected; that is, if the rods are connected and free of obstructions. We urge owners of rodded buildings, especially barns, to inspect them closely and remove all items that will stop the flow of the electrical bolt. In many cases straw, hay, bags, or bird nests

might be between the rod and the building and cause a fire. Also, be sure the rods go into moist soil and are well grounded. A close inspection of the rod system will assure the protection that is needed.

To Check Your Dog For Parasites

Most all farms have a dog or two around as pets and for security purposes. In either event, now is a good time to check for parasites.

Fleas become a special problem during the spring. The eggs they laid in the fall that were not killed by insecticides may have been dormant over the winter. Then in the warmth and moisture of the spring, these eggs hatch.

Numerous treatments exist for fleas such as flea and tick powders that contain carbaryl. One application won't eliminate the problem. You must also pay attention to your pet's environment. Aerosol sprays work well for treating living areas.

You may not be aware that your dog has fleas, especially with a longhaired dog. Just roll the dog on its back and look at the belly where the hair is thin. You can usually spot fleas in this area.

The Penn State Extension Service is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.

Background Scripture:

Ecclesiastes 1:1 through 2:11;12.

Devotional Reading:

Ecclesiastes 7:1-13.

Except for Chapter 3, which begins with the familiar words, "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven...", I am quite certain you've heard few, if any, sermons from the book of Ecclesiastes. It seems to be no one's special source of faith and inspiration.

Interestingly enough, if Ecclesiastes had been published outside the Bible, it would probably have survived as a gem of philosophic literature. But no one I have ever encountered seems to have a satisfactory explanation as to why Ecclesiastes is found in our Bible. What purpose can it possible serve? It's mood is so depressed, so hopeless, so crushing that it seems an outlook on life really quite in contrast to the perspective of faith and hope.

WHAT THE PREACHER SEES

The problem is not so much what the writer of Ecclesiastes sees in the world, but with the conclusions about life which he draws from his observation. The Preacher, as the writer of Ecclesiastes is known, has his facts down pat. What did the Preacher see? He saw pretty much what many of us see in out

world today: he saw lots of evils and problems that appeared to be utterly beyond his ability to do anything about them, he saw the world in a rut or treadmill-running like mad, but getting nowhere—and he saw a sense of "vanity" in all that he tried to do. Nothing seemed to matter.

Who us has not put down the morning paper and its fresh accounts of disasters an' around the world and not said the contemporary equivalent of: "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity" (1:2). Life seems futile, devoid of meaning, and going nowhere fast. Nothing we do appears to make any difference.

ADDING IT UP

But, if we read through the twelve chapters of Ecclesiastes, even though we first identify with the Preacher's gloomy feelings, we may find ourselves saying, "Enough is enough!" Yes, we all feel that way sometime, but the Book of Ecclesiastes is one complaint or gloomy prediction after another. Maybe that's why there is a Book of Ecclesiastes in our Bible: to serve as a negative example, to show us we are not supposed to be.

By the time I come to the end of reading this book, I want to argue with the Preacher and say to him, "Yes, life can be discouraging, but it can also be inspiring. Yes, there is a lot over which to be gloomy, but there's also much to be happy and thankful."

Probably the most positive thing the Preacher says, is: "Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Perhaps it was as much as could be said, until the coming of Christ, who changed the Preacher's "vanities" into God's redeeming purpose.

Soil conservation workshop completed by Penn State

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — As a result of training workshops at The Pennsylvania State University, farm-nutrient management specialists for the lower Susquehanna Basin are better prepared to help farmers prevent losses of fertilizer and manure caused by erosion and runoff.

The four weekly workshops,

completed recently, were attended by state, federal and conservation district personnel from 6 counties, according to Mitchell Woodward, manure management specialist for the southeast region of the Penn State Extension Service.

The workshops were conducted by Penn State faculty as a part of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup

program. Fertilizer and manure washing down the Susquehanna River provide a significant part of the Bay's pollution problem.

In the coming months, the nutrient management specialists will be helping farmers to prepare nutrient management and erosion control plans for their farms, said Woodward. They will also be staffing a mobile soil and nutrient testing laboratory for the lower Susquehanna region.

Workshop participants represented the Extension Service, County Conservation Districts, Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Resources, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service and the U.S. Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

Workshop presentations and discussions covered various aspects of fertilizer and manure use, as well as related matters of tilling and water quality, said Woodward.

At the first workshop, soil chemist Dale Baker presented the overall goals and strategies of the Chesapeake Bay cleanup program in Pennsylvania. Baker directs Penn State's part in that program. "It was good to get that overview," said Woodward. "So many people and agencies are involved that it's hard to see how they all fit together."

At subsequent sessions, faculty of the Departments of Agronomy and Agricultural Engineering discussed such topics as laboratory methods for determining nitrogen and phosphorus requirements for crops, especially corn.

Les Lanyon, associate professor of soil fertility, presented a worksheet for helping determine whether a farm field receives more nutrients than necessary for its crop. Cutting back on fertilizer excesses can reduce farm expenses and protect water quality in streams and domestic water wells.

Agricultural economist Bill

McSweeney led a round table discussion on the difficulty of assessing fertilizer requirements and available nutrients in fields which receive heavy applications of manure.

"Many farmers have a long tradition of applying fertilizer as well as manure, as a way of protecting yields," said McSweeney. "Before we can suggest that a farmer cut back on fertilizer applications, we have to find an effective way of evaluating manure's nutrient content and the economic impacts of relying on manure rather than fertilizer. We don't have any easy answers."

York County reaches 30% acreage reduction signup

YORK — When the 1985 farm program sign-up period ended April 1, York County farmers had enrolled 15,688 acres, or 30 percent of their eligible wheat and feed grains in the federal acreage reduction program.

Harry Wolf, Chairman said York Co. producers enrolled 207 farms in the programs and agreed to take out of production, at least 30

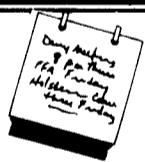
percent of their wheat and 10 percent of their feed grain base acres.

"This means that as much as 1,932 acres of cropland in York Co. could be idled this year, depending on how many acres of program crops are planted by participants," Wolf said.

Crop base acres enrolled in the 1985 farm programs include 13,870 acres of feed grains, and 1,818 acres of wheat.

Program participants will be eligible for price support loans at \$3.35 a bushel for wheat, \$2.83 for corn, \$2.09 for barley, \$1.53 for oats, and \$2.43 for sorghum. They are also eligible for target prices of \$3.03 per bushel for corn, \$2.88 for sorghum, \$2.60 for barley, \$1.60 for oats, and \$4.38 for wheat.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, May 11

W. Pa. Sheep and Club Lamb Sale, Mercer Co. 4-H Park, Mercer, 6:30 p.m. Phone: 412-662-3800.

Monday, May 13

Pa. Dairy Sanitarians' and Laboratory Directors' Conference, J.O. Keller Conference Center, PSU. Continues through May 15.

Servicemen's Seminar; Holiday Inn, Shamokin Dam. Phone: 814-865-5573.

Thursday, May 16

PACMA meeting at Clover Packing plant, Selinsgrove; 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 18

ABS Cattlemen's Spring Field Day, Stornoway Farms, Ligonier. Phone: 412-238-9756.

Sunday, May 19

Spring Farm Show, Carroll County Farm Museum, Westminster, Md. 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, May 22

20th Spring Rally, Pa. Society of Farm Women, Ramada Inn, Hagerstown, Md.

Saturday, May 25

Pa. Simmental Association Sale, Farm Show Building.

YOU KNOW OTIS, WITH THE INCREASING COSTS OF RAISING BEEF, FEED, MEDICATION AND ETC., YOU SOMETIMES WONDER IF IT'S WORTH IT.



WELL JOHN, JUST GO HOME TONIGHT AND PUT A THICK, JUICY, NUTRITIOUS, DELICIOUS STEAK ON THE GRILL...



... AND AFTER YOU TAKE JUST ONE BITE OF IT, BELIEVE ME, YOU'LL KNOW... "IT'S WORTH IT"



A SALUTE TO THE BEEF PRODUCERS
DRAVE CARPENTER