

## OUR READERS WRITE

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might deal with permanent securing of fragile lands in conservancy as woodlands, prairielands, and wetlands.

Enactment of Nature Preserves by government is perhaps as old as recorded history. In biblical times and in biblical lands, conservancy parks or "paradizes" were set aside specifically to preserve environments for plants and animals. These preserves were established also from consciousness of the need to preserve best fruit for seed.

The writer of Genesis puts it in the form of a mandate from the Creator, "thou shalt not eat of the fruit in the middle of the garden." The "Garden of Eden" story in The Old Testament is in the setting of such a biological preserve and its message is to people of all time, namely, that human encroachment on earth's biological system can destroy it, leaving humans scratching for subsistence amongst stones.

The "original sin" is self-serving exploitation that is blind to future necessity and to the common wellbeing. Tragic conditions in Africa are profound warnings of the truth in the biblical lesson. Africa today, and which country tomorrow?

Worthy of legislative consideration is permanent provision in the Farm Bill for establishment of scattered, natural preserves. These could come into existence by a form of land-tithing. Ten percent of every U.S. farm and ranch could be taken out of production and

grazing, and could be put in permanent reserve.

Wetlands, prairielands, and woodlands shall be included to provide diverse habitats for regional fauna and flora. Fostering of indigenous populations could be under expertise of landscape scientists, zoologists, and botanists.

A wealth of science expertise exists in land grant universities. Nature Preserves would provide undisturbed habitats for basic research, so important to long-term interests of human societies. Fragile land logically should be the first to go into permanent reserve. Implementation of the program could be through Soil Conservation Service, for example.

Immediate benefit could come to farmers surrendering land to permanent, public use in the form of cash payment. This would provide badly needed cash-flow in the short-term for farmers, and benefit to the whole public in the long-term. Nor should the moral and aesthetic value from such enactment be overlooked. Greater sensitivity to life should be a natural consequence.

The ubiquitous distribution of Nature Reserves across the whole geography of U.S.A. would provide habitats for narrowly distributed plants, animals, etc. Natural game, fish, fowl, fruits, nuts, wood, etc. could be harvested seasonally. Establishment of these lands needs to be in perpetuity to secure undisturbed habitats from the cutting edge of the plow and chainsaw.

As intelligent creatures, humans

**HARRISBURG** — Improving topsoil moisture conditions and completion of spring plowing across the state highlighted farm activities during the week ending June 2, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

The week started off on a dry note, but by the end of the week western Pennsylvania and sections of north central Pennsylvania received heavy rain and severe storms, which caused significant damage for farmers in at least ten counties.

Statewide, topsoil moisture supplies were rated short by 21 percent, adequate by 73 percent and surplus by six percent of the reporters. The northern region rated moisture 50 percent short and 50 percent adequate. Central region reporters rated soil moisture as 29 percent short, 64 percent adequate, and seven percent surplus. Reporters in the southern region rated soil moisture as 92 percent adequate and eight percent surplus.

Across the Commonwealth, all

above all must live in the realization that the success of all life is in biological variation. In it is the future of humankind. Societies must seriously invest in the future by securing biological variation now. That this is in everyone's best interest should be obvious. To ignore the obligation is to repeat the original sin of first parents. Contact your legislator now and urge him (her) to support land-tithing.

Sylvester L. Steffen  
Biologist  
Route Three  
New Hampton, IA  
50659

## Rains ease water shortage

regions reported spring plowing virtually complete. Last year at this time spring plowing was only 79 percent complete.

Statewide, four days were rated suitable for fieldwork. Activities included planting potatoes, tobacco, corn and soybeans; fertilizing; spraying for weeds and insects; hay making; and harvesting haylage.

Statewide, soybean planting was reported 64 percent complete compared with 25 percent last year and a five-year average of 41 percent. The northern, central and southern regions report planting rates of 66, 56 and 66 percent, respectively.

By the end of the week, 94 percent of the corn was planted. Last year at this time only 57 percent of the corn was planted. The five-year average stands at 77 percent. The northern region reported corn planting 91 percent complete. The central and southern regions reported 95 percent complete.

Meanwhile, the potato crop planting was reported virtually complete. Last year at this time 76

percent of the crop was reported planted.

By week's end, the barley crop was virtually all heading or headed. This compares to last year's progress of 11 percent in the boot stage and 55 percent heading or headed. Statewide, three percent of the wheat crop was in boot and 97 percent in head. Last year at this time 40 percent was in boot and 27 percent heading or headed.

Alfalfa stands were rated 72 percent good, 25 percent fair and three percent poor. Clover-timothy stands were rated good by 55 percent of the reporters, fair by 42 percent and poor by three percent of the reporters. Feed being obtained from pastures was rated above average by 22 percent, average by 72 percent and below average by six percent.

Strawberry picking was reported in all regions. The southern region reported early variety strawberries at their peak. The southern region has also begun to harvest spring onions, lettuce and sugar peas. The central region reported poor cantaloupe sets.

## Block names Marienthal

**WASHINGTON** — Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block has appointed George Marienthal as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Administration.

Before his appointment at USDA, Marienthal served as director of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Water Policy. He has held several other posts in government including those of director of the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Federal Activities and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy,

Environment, and Safety.

In addition to his government experience, Marienthal has served as vice president of a pharmaceutical manufacturer and as a management consultant to the Department of Defense and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

He holds an undergraduate degree in engineering from the United States Naval Academy and graduate degrees in engineering from Stanford University and in business administration from American University.

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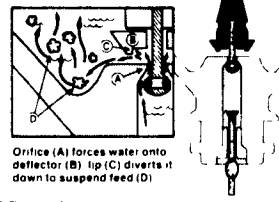
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