

# NOW IS THE TIME

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### To Plan Forage Management

A good supply of quality forages is one of the most important things in the feeding program of dairymen, cattlemen and sheep producers. Growers should now be planning what kind of forage crops they hope to produce this year.

Both hay and silage crops respond to good management. Growers who make a special effort to obtain maximum yields of quality forages usually produce more than the average.

Some of the top alfalfa growers produce double the tonnage per acre than the average. In fact the 1985 champion alfalfa grower in the state averaged just over 10 tons per acre. This did not just happen. They planned and made decisions on data from their farm records. Doing all the practices that have been successful, and doing them on time, will normally bring good results.

### To Evaluate Manure Plant Food

Our agronomists have told farmers for 40 years that a ton of dairy manure is equivalent to 100 pounds of a 10-3-5 fertilizer, but recent research indicates less than half of the nitrogen is available to the crop when manure is spread daily and left exposed to the elements.

Current data has confirmed that a ton of stored daily manure is equivalent to 100 pounds of 10-3-5 fertilizer. The nutrients in fresh

manure are equal to those of inorganic fertilizer for crop production, but more slowly available. In the year of application, about one-half of the nitrogen in manure is available.

Studies show that corn fertilized with fresh manure applied and worked into the soil in the spring produced the most corn silage. Yields were lowest when the manure was applied in the fall, left exposed on the soil surface all winter and plowed down in the spring.

It's important to manage manure application just as you manage other areas of your operation. Another important factor, by incorporating the manure into the soil immediately, you reduce the possibility of water contamination and odors.

### To Prune Trees

General pruning of apple trees should be in full swing at this time of year, especially if you have a lot of pruning to do. I'd like to remind growers and homeowners not to over-prune young trees or those which haven't yet started to bear fruit. There is a tendency to either prune the small trees too heavily, or simply to leave them alone. A middle-of-the-road course is best.

The training of young trees should involve just enough cutting to maintain a healthy central leader and to develop the desired number of well-spaced scaffold branches. Branches that are either poorly spaced, or ones making

very narrow-angled crotches should be removed.

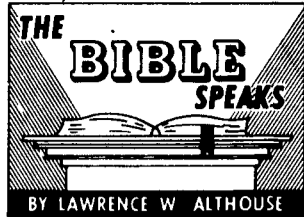
Keep in mind, when you start pruning early - start with your hardier trees, the apple and pear with plums and sour cherries next and leave your peach till near the end; they're quite tender.

### To Dress For The Chill Index

Winter is not over as some people would like to think—it's only the middle of February. And when you're outside on a cold windy day and it "feels" colder than the thermometer says it is, you're right. It is colder. Every year many people are severely frostbitten because they dressed according to the thermometer and not according to the "chill index" temperature.

The chill index is a combination of wind velocity and temperature reading. You've probably heard it reported on the weather broadcast. An example of the chill index is this: at ten degrees fahrenheit above zero with a ten mile per hour wind, the chill temperature to exposed skin is actually nine degrees below zero...not ten above as the thermometer reads.

That's why farmers and others who work outside in the winter should dress warmer than they feel is necessary. Remember - when the wind is blowing, the temperature not only feels colder, it is colder. Don't dress for the thermometer...dress for safety, and dress warmly.



## THE UNFAILING TREASURE

February 9, 1986

**Background Scripture:**  
Matthew 6:19-21; Luke 12: 13-21, 27-34.

**Devotional Reading:**  
Luke 16: 19-31.

**Possessions:** things that belong to me—or perhaps things that I want to belong to me and for which I am spending my time, effort and thought to obtain.

Probably nothing causes us so much inner conflict than our possessions. On the one hand we teach each other that only spiritual treasures make life worthwhile and give it everlasting meaning. At the same time, we have structured our society and our individual lives on the pursuit of more and more material possessions. We value everything with a pricetag that reflects material worth. We judge other people, ourselves and even our spiritual institutions on the basis of their material balance sheets.

### WHOSE POSSESSIONS?

Yet, we remember that Jesus said, "Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). I am not a rich man (in material things), but I do have lots of material possessions—"lots" in contrast to what my fore-bearers had or what the average person has in one of the Third World countries. Would I be more "spiritual" if I had a lot less:

Maybe yes, maybe no, but not necessarily either.

It is not that my possessions are evil, nor do they have the power to corrupt or adulterate me. It is the way I feel about and value those possessions that make the difference. If I let my "things" possess me, that is when the evil and the corruption set in. This is what Jesus was saying in his parable of the rich fool, (Luke 12:16-21). The problem was not that the man was enterprising with the fruits of his labor, that he wanted to pull down his barns and build bigger ones, but that he thought that in doing so he had found the treasure of life.

### FOOL!

God's response jars us just as it must have shaken up the rich fool: "Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" (12:20). Take a quick mental inventory of your material possessions and then read those words again: "...the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" If tonight were to prove to your last night, what treasure, if any, could you take with you?

The bright and shiny things of this world are wonderful to own, use and enjoy, but we must constantly remind ourselves that they constitute a treasure that ultimately will fail us. It may be stolen from us, we may lose it in a terrible natural disaster, or keep it until our dying day, but it is the wrong treasure upon which to found our lives. As Jesus says, "...provide yourselves with purses that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (12:33,34).

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## OUR READERS WRITE, AND OTHER OPINIONS

### Hats off to you

Dear Editor:

Have you noticed the change in hats? When I was home on the farm we wore straw hats, and the girls wore sun bonnets. In the

winter we kids wore wool hats that itched like crazy.

About 1927 or '28, no self-respecting teenager wore a hat. We'd wet our hair and part it in the middle and in two minutes outside in winter it froze. What price vanity?

Now all hats have some kind of logo, like seed, feed, or fertilizer, not to forget farm machinery. You advertise their products and they charge you a lot of money for them besides.

I bought one of those big cowboy hats that you see a lot of. I'm on the short side, and I looked like toad under a toadstool. The last time I saw it, mamma cat had kittens in it.

A big cowboy hat has to have some adornment like a rattlesnake skin or feathers. I saw one hat that had a pheasant's head and breast in front and the wings on the sides. Hope none of my hunting buddies see him. They shoot cockbirds no matter where they are.

The most useless hat I ever saw was the overseas cap the army gave me in '42. It didn't keep the sun out of your eyes, or keep your ears warm.

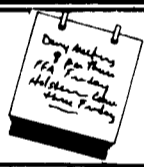
The Boy Scout hat was no bargain either. After you put it in your barracks bag for a week or two it had more wrinkles than two pounds of prunes.

Now, you take that iron helmet. There was a useful article. We wore it, took baths in it, washed our clothes and it made a good seat.

I finally hung up my straw hat last fall. Maybe next spring I'll hang a few lures and bucktails on it and see how it works as a fishing hat.

The Hat Historian

## Farm Calendar



**Saturday, February 8**  
Butler Holstein Club Annual Meeting.

**Monday, February 10**  
Dairy Herd Buyout Program, Bermudian Springs High School, 7:30 p.m.

Dairy Herd Buyout Program, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Dairy Herd Buyout Program, Berks County Agricultural Center, 10:30 a.m.

Cumberland County 4-H Dairy Club Meeting, Brethren in Christ Church, Carlisle.

**Tuesday, February 11**  
Milking School at Troy Citizens and Northern Bank Office, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Regional Fruit Growers meeting, Ramada Inn, Chinchilla.

**Wednesday, February 12**  
Milking School at Troy Citizens and Northern Bank Office, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Cambria-Somerset Potato

Meeting, New Germany Church Hale, New Germany, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

USDA Dairy Herd Reduction Program, 9:45 a.m., Cumberland County Extension Office, Carlisle, OR at 11:15 a.m., Penn Township Firehall, Huntsdale.

**Thursday, February 13**  
Lancaster County Extension Service Annual Dinner Meeting, Farm and Home Center, 6:30 p.m.

Mercer County Corn Day, Mercer Vo-Tech, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Sheep Meeting, Berks County Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.

Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference, Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn, Hunt Valley, Md.

**Saturday, February 15**  
The Pennsylvania Flying Farmers Valentine Banquet, Country Table Restaurant, Mt. Joy; call David Kruger, 717-867-2384.

Cumberland County Holstein Club Annual Meeting, South Mid-

dleton Firehall, Boiling Springs.

**Monday, February 17**  
Adams County Beekeepers meeting, "Winter Management - Checking Honey Stores," 7:30 p.m., Penn State Fruit Research Lab.

**Tuesday, February 18**  
"Coping with lower milk prices" workshop, Bradford County Extension office, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lancaster County Crops and Soils Day, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Lykens Valley Local of Inter-State District 7 Meeting, 11:45 a.m., Killinger Grange Hall, Millersburg.

County-wide 4-H dairy meeting, Mercer County, 8 p.m., Extension Center.

**Wednesday, February 19**  
Dairy Day with Atlantic, 11 a.m., New Vernon Grange.

Vegetable Grower's Meeting, Rutter's Restaurant, 8:45 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Thursday, February 20**  
Keystone Pork Congress, Penn Harris Motor Inn, Harrisburg, 8 a.m.

