



OPINION

Agriculturally Illiterate

Fewer and fewer people have first-hand experience on the farm. So today's farmers are not really understood by the urban public. You could say most people are illiterate. We are not talking about reading and writing. We are talking about being agriculturally illiterate.

Until the 1930s you just naturally knew where milk, meat, corn and wheat came from. Not only from practical experience, but also from your school textbooks. You compared apples with oranges in arithmetic. Your reading primer referred to barn yards, chicken coops and milk stations. (You took the milk cans to be dumped by hand into the weigh station and onto the tank truck. Remember?)

Today's writers of textbooks think of space travel, electronics and video. Less and less agricultural experiences are related in stories and problems. So while the level of education may or may not have improved, the knowledge about agriculture certainly has decreased.

To develop an awareness of agriculture and to create an application for its impact on lifestyle, the United States Department of Agriculture initiated an effort known as agriculture in the classroom. A major emphasis of the USDA is to coordinate and create channels of communication

among different state educational systems.

In New York state the Department of Agriculture and Markets has joined with Cornell University Farm Bureau and the state education department to create the New York Agriculture in Classroom project. The main effort is to include agricultural awareness in grades K to 12.

Another entrance agriculture has made into the thinking of urban and intercity youth has been through the 4-H Club program. Dr. Lamratrine Hood, Dean of Penn State University, spoke this week of the inter-Philadelphia 4-H Club as a very rewarding program. And while us production farmers don't always feel comfortable to have Extension expand their efforts into the intercity, especially in light of funding cuts, yet the point is well taken that 4-H in the city can be a means for ag to reach into the lives of young people. People who would have no other way to know the functional value of four fauces on the bottom of a cow.

So the challenge is here. Let's do all we can to provide intelligent communication with young people and older people alike. Communication that lets people know about agriculture. Let's do all we can to give them a proper education.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Aware of Frosted Crops

Colder weather means frost. In fact this is good news to many of us who have had enough of hot humid weather this summer. Livestock producers who have fields of sudan-sorghum hybrids, should keep in mind that when frost hits these crops they could be toxic to livestock for seven to ten days following the freeze. After this period and when the plants are dead, they may be used safely. However, any growth coming from the plant after a killing frost might also be toxic.

Another frost hazard would be to permit livestock to graze alfalfa or clover stands while the frost is still on the plants. This can cause severe bloating. Allow the frost to melt and the plants to dry before grazing. Good management is

needed on various forage crops after a killing frost.

To Be Careful During Silo Filling

Two problems occur during silo filling time. One is overloading wagons causing broken spindles, twisted frames and bent axles. Corn silage is heavy and overloaded wagons crossing ditches or ruts in fields causes excessive strain on equipment. If your wagon is full when only half way around the field, change wagons; the "down time" to make repairs is more costly than the time to change wagons.

The other problem is "silo gas". We are receiving calls concerning silo gas. These gases can develop from one day to 14 days after the silo is filled. Most of these gases have a chlorine-laundry bleach odor. Some are yellow and some are colorless. Don't take any chances—never enter a partly filled silo without running the blower for at least 15 minutes. These gases are heavier than air and will come down the chute into the barn. Be careful around recently filled silos.

To Consult Your Veterinarian

Being on excellent terms with your local veterinarian is a good thing. Most producers need some veterinary assistance once in a while. Developing a health program and sanitary practices for the farm operation is strongly suggested. Veterinarians are trained in disease prevention and treatment with the most important

part being disease prevention. When this is successful there is little need for high veterinary costs.

We suggest that producers regard their veterinarian as a valuable resource person for their farm operation; there may be times when it might be expensive; however, preventing infection and saving animals are things that must be done in order to make the most profit. Give your vet a chance to help.

To Store Pesticides Safely

Most producers are about finished with their spray materials for the year. Many of these can be held over until next year with good results. However, it is always best to buy only enough for one season at a time. When storing spray materials, always keep them in their original containers and from children, pets and livestock. It is best to have a separate room or building for pesticide storage.

Wettable powders are easy to store; however, emulsions and liquids may be harmed by freezing weather. Producers are urged to follow the label and instructions in this respect. It may be necessary to keep some of them in a heated building. Be sure they are not near feed supplies because accidents can happen. Pesticides kept in a room or building under a lock is a good way to prevent costly mistakes and tragedies.

The Cooperative Extension Service is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution

Wednesday, September 24
Pa. Poultry Conference, Holiday Inn, Grantville; continues tomorrow.

West Lampeter Fair, Lampeter; continues through Sept. 26.

Pa. Foundation Seed Cooperative annual meeting, State College.
York County Beekeepers Meeting, Extension Service Meeting Room, 7 p.m.

Beef Check-off meeting, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.

Western Pa. Pork Field Day, Butler Farm Show Grounds, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Monday, September 29
Delaware State Grange Leader's meeting, Capital Grange Hall, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 1
Lancaster Conservation District Board Meeting

New Holland Farmer's Fair, New Holland; continues through Oct. 4.

Eastern Milk Producer's Cooperative Annual Meeting, Syracuse.

Thursday, October 2
Keystone International Livestock Exposition, Harrisburg; continues through Oct. 6.
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Farm Calendar



Saturday, September 20
Pa. State Dairy Princess Pageant, Harrisburg Marriott. Reception at 5:30 p.m., banquet at 6:30 p.m.

Little Buffalo Festival of the Arts, Little Buffalo State Park, Newport.

Delaware Valley Old Time Power and Equipment Association Annual Show, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Lambertville, N.J. Continues tomorrow.

Londonvale Run Antique Auto Show and Flea Market, Paradise Community Park.

Huntingdon County Fall Family Festival, downtown Huntingdon, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Grand Squares Square Dance, East Petersburg Firehall, 8 p.m.

Sunday, September 21
Pa. Meat Packers Association meeting, Nittany Lion Inn, State College
Farm Safety Week begins; continues through Sept. 27.

Monday, September 22
Bloomsburg Fair, Bloomsburg; continues through Sept. 27.
Reading Fair, Reading; continues through Sept. 28.

Pa. All-American Dairy Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg; continues through Sept. 26.

Pa. Association of Weights and Measures annual meeting, Sheraton Harrisburg East.

Md. PDCA Junior Dairyman Contest, Md. Frederick Fair.

Hunterdon County, N.J. Wood lot Management Program; for information call Adult Education at 201-788-1405. Will be repeated Sept. 29.

Pa. Junior Dairy Show, Harrisburg.

Grange Booster Night, covered dish supper, 7 p.m., Fulton Grange Hall.

Tuesday, September 23
Ephrata Fair, continues through Sept. 27.

Morrison Cove Community Fair, Martinsburg; continues through Sept. 26.

Elite Ayrshire Sale, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg.
4-H and FFA Dairy Judging Forum, Harrisburg.

Beef Check-off meeting, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.
Huntingdon County Dairy Promotion Meeting, Extension Meeting Room, 8 p.m.

Thursday, September 25
National Hay Association Convention, Contemporary Hotel, Lake Buena Vista, Fla.; continues through Sept. 27.

Tri-Valley Community Fair, Hegins; continues through Sept. 28.

Pa. Forestry Association Annual Meeting, Allenberry Playhouse, Boiling Springs.

Schuylkill County Agricultural Extension Meeting, 6:30 p.m., First United Church of Christ, Schuylkill Haven.

Bradford County Pesticide License Update Training, Extension office, Towanda, 7:30 p.m.

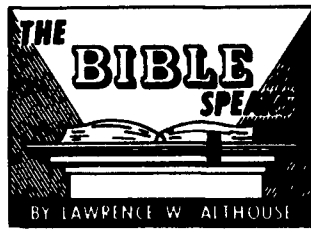
Penn State Crops Day, Southeast Field Research Lab, Landisville, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For brochure call 717-820-3085.

Friday, September 26
Harvest Day Celebration, Lancaster Square.

Saturday, September 27
New Holland Sales Stables Annual Heifer Sale.

Christmas Tree Growers Short Course, Cook College, New Brunswick. Call 201-932-9271 for details.

Ag Awareness Day, Flemington, N.J., free farm tours in North Hunterdon County, noon to 5 p.m.



COME UP HIGHER!
September 21, 1986

Background Scripture:

Genesis 17
Devotional Reading:
Galatians 3:15-22.

There are always three things that strike me when I read the story of Abraham in Genesis 17. First of all, I am always struck by the ages of Abram and Sarai: 99 and 90 respectively! At an age when people are long past what we regard today as a productive age, Abram and Sarai, heretofore childless, were now to become parents! I'm so glad God waited until these two people were in their 90's, for it should remind us that advanced age is a time when God still has something for us to do and be. One is never too old to be singled out by God for a task. One never "retires" from God's service.

NO LONGER

The second feature of this story that strikes me is the fact that Abram and Sarai are renamed by God. Even the degree of change is significant: Abram becomes Abraham, and Sarai becomes Sarah — both similar and yet somewhat different — just as later Saul would become Paul. These changes in name signal a continuity with the past and also a new reality. Abraham and Sarah would still look like the old Abram and Sarai, they would still sound like and act like them. But there would also be a difference, a change great enough to justify a new name.

What this means is that when God calls us to be "new persons," it doesn't mean that we will be totally unlike what we have been before, but that all of those traits, features and factors will be organized around a new center. It is as our lives become refocused.

The third thing that strikes me about this story is Abraham's all-too-human response to God's promise: "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said to himself, 'Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?'" (17:17). Sometimes God's promises to us do seem absurd, but it is only our lack of faith that introduces the element of absurdity.

KEEP THE COVENANT

If an angel were to appear before you today and proclaim that God would be making a "new person" of you, you might not actually laugh, but perhaps you would think it an absurd promise. "Who?" "Me?" "At this time in my life?" "A change to what?" But think of it simply as a call to "come up higher," to take one or more significant steps upward from whatever you are to whatever in God's sight you can be.

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