



OPINION

A Time To Merge

Merger. The name means a blending or a loss of identity. To some, merger implies a passing of an era.

In southeast Pennsylvania Inter-State and Lehigh Valley Farmers are tabulating votes for the proposed merger of the two financially strong dairy cooperatives to form a stronger cooperative, Atlantic Dairy.

Members often consider merger talks with trepidation, until a presentation of the facts. The merger will create operational and hauling efficiencies and increase the bargaining power of cooperative members on the milk market.

Additionally, members will realize an immediate increase in cash with the return of equity to members of both co-ops.

Atlantic Dairy Cooperative will provide a new strength, not only in the marketplace, but in researching new products and developing new marketing strategies to increase dairy product consumption. By pooling their resources and management, the two cooperatives will be able to withstand competition from other milk marketing agencies, independents or cooperatives.

The move strengthens the entire dairy industry in the Northeast through the reduction of destructive competition. Competition for the dairymen's milk supply still abounds in the field, providing ample alternatives for the dissatisfied individual.

Dairymen Inc.'s merger with Maryland Cooperative in 1982 stands as a model for the success and growth possible for the proposed merger.

Dairymen in the two co-ops face a new beginning; a means to face the future with confidence.

Dairy marketing observers have enthusiastically supported the merger, labeling the union overdue by a decade.

Historically a friction has existed between the two groups stemming from the different philosophies used in marketing their members' milk. Lehigh Valley was a bottling co-op and Inter-State was solely a bargaining co-op.

This stigmatism appears to be the largest hurdle for some co-op members on both sides of the fence. Once these feelings are placed aside, the proposal can be viewed for what it is — a sound economical decision which will provide the general membership with a new organization they can proudly identify with.

To everything there is a season; a time for every purpose under heaven — for Lehigh Valley and Inter-State members, it is a time to merge.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Control Winter Alfalfa Weeds
Winter weeds in our alfalfa fields are every bit as predictable as summer weeds are in corn and soybeans.

Colder weather is here and hay fields are dormant. We now have a choice to use different herbicides, depending largely on the kinds of weeds present. The most commonly found winter annuals in alfalfa at this time include chickweed and the four mustard weeds — shepherds purse, pepperweed, pennycress and yellow rocket. Also, expect to see seedlings of other weeds plus some

old, tough perennials, too. It pays to know your weeds present before selecting the herbicide.

Check the "Agronomy Guide" and read the label on the container or package. There are directions and limitations to get the job done right... in the next six weeks.

To "Push The Pencil"

Farm records are a very important part of modern farming; they are needed for tax purposes and for the benefit of farm planning. Since we are at the end of the cropping season, and the end of the calendar year, it might be a good time to do some office work and determine the best enterprise for the past year. You'll need to consider any unusual circumstances, such as the Tax Reform Act of 1986, and how it will affect your operation.

Time spent in analyzing farm records and in planning the future based on these records should be very worthwhile. Major decisions are hard to make but are very important in today's farming. We hope that good farm records can contribute to these decisions.

To Plan Ahead For Machinery Repairs

Most of the outside field work is finished for this year. I also know that every farm has machinery that needs repair and service. If you are planning to have this done

at your machinery dealer, it would be wise to contact him in the near future so it's on his work schedule. I'm aware of the spring rush next March and April; and I know your local service man will appreciate the work during the fall and into the long winter days. It can also save time if parts need to be ordered to complete the job. The objective is to be planning for this repair work now. Have it done so your machinery is ready to go early next spring.

To Order Small Fruit Plants Early

This may strike you as premature, but now is a good time to order small fruit plants for next spring. Although you won't put them in the ground until April, you should be flipping through catalogs now. Ordering early assures you of a wide selection of the best varieties. Companies begin filling orders with their best stock...if you delay, you could be stuck with what's left over. Ordering early also means you'll get your strawberries or raspberries or whatever at the best time to plant.

So, dig out those catalogs now... get your order in... and be prepared for delicious fruit from your planting.

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

Farm Calendar

Saturday, November 15
Md. Food and Wine Celebration, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., Baltimore Museum of Industry, Baltimore, Md. Continues Nov. 16, noon to 6 p.m.

Flemington N.J. County Board of Ag annual dinner. Social hour, 6 p.m. Dinner, 7 p.m. Quaker-town Fire House. For reservations call 201-788-1338.

Farm Toy Show and Sale, Americana Host Farm Resort Hotel, Rt. 30 East, Lancaster, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Auction, 5 p.m. Grand Squares Square Dance, East Petersburg Fire Hall, 8 p.m.

Sunday, November 16
North American International Livestock Show, Louisville, Ky.; continues through Nov. 18. Annual Meeting, Pa. Farm and Power Equipment Dealers Association, American Host Resort, Lancaster.

Monday, November 17
Annual Meeting of Pa. Association of County Ag Agents, Penn State University; continues through Nov. 18. PFA Annual Meeting, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center; continues through Nov. 19. N.J. Farm Bureau Convention, Sheraton Post Inn, Cherry Hill; continues through Nov. 19. Huntingdon County Holstein Directors Meeting, Harpster's Cabin, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 19
Sire Power Inc. Annual Meeting, Tunkhannock.

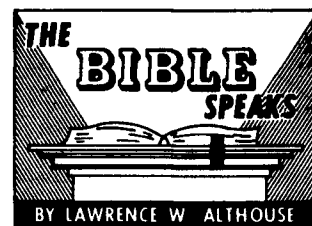
Thursday, November 20
Lancaster County Poultry

Banquet, Olde Hickory Inn, 6:30 p.m.

Lancaster dairy goat meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Lebanon County Farm-City Banquet.

Inter-State Milk Producer's Co-op Annual Meeting, Host Farm,



A PROMISE OF RETURN
November 16, 1986

Background Scripture: Zechariah 8:1-17.
Devotional Reading: Jeremiah 29:10-14.

There are two ways for the modern reader of Zechariah to regard the eighth chapter and the assurances that the people of Judah will return from captivity. On the one hand, you may regard it as an account of a restoration that happened more than two thousand years ago. As such, it is an interesting perspective on the history of Israel and her history. But, apart from what we as Christians inherited from Israel, it would appear that the story has little to do with us today.

I WILL RETURN
There is, however, another way

of responding to this ancient history: we may regard the promise of return as applicable to us as well as to Judah. I am not therefore indicating that I believe we are likely to be carried into physical captivity as were the people of Judah. Nevertheless, we can experience spiritual exile just as the ancient Jews suffered political captivity. In fact, I would submit to you that we are in spiritual exile whenever we allow ourselves to be separated in any way from God and his will for our world.

One of the things that the prophet Zechariah proclaimed to the Jews in exile was that God's purpose cannot be thwarted, regardless of what transpires on the stage of history. It was God's purpose to restore Jerusalem and Judah and so it would come to pass — not because the Jews deserved it, but because he purposed it. Likewise, today when we find ourselves in spiritual exile, we too need to be reminded that God's purpose will be accomplished even though we have thrown some barriers in his way. We may be humiliated, but God's will remains intact — and we take our hope for the future in that.

A SOWING OF PEACE
We are constantly called to faith as they were: "For there shall be a sowing of peace; the vine shall yield its fruit, and the ground shall give its increase . . . so will I save you and you will be a blessing" (8:12, 13).

But there is one additional facet to this message of hope: we are to live rightly if we hope to be saved. "Speak the truth to one another, render in your gates judgements that are true and make for peace, do not devise evil in your hearts against one another, and love no false oath, for all these things I hate, says the Lord" (8:16, 17).

Two thousand years has not changed those requirements one bit.

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