



# OPINION

## The Ball Is In Your Court

The much heralded Dairy Month arrived this week with all the razzmatazz that local, state and national promotion groups could muster.

It is as American as baseball, hot dogs and apple pie — at least in the dairymen's world. Most newspapers read by the general public find a spot for an announcement of the event, but in most cases that is as far as their coverage goes.

Promotions kick into high gear to ward off the annual summer dip in consumption. Yet, despite these fine efforts, the average consumer is unaware that for the entire 30 days of June, the dairy industry is center stage.

Dairy Month does rally more individuals to the promotion cause than at any other time during the year. But then what? June 30 arrives and dairy promotion slides back into the hands of those who work with it year-round.

Dairymen need to become more active throughout the year in marketing their product. Historically, they have been concerned solely with the production end of the business and they have been content to rely on a second party to market their product.

The second party, while competent and hard working, does not have the same financial investment in the product as does the dairyman.

Too often dairymen do not know how their product is presented to the consumer. In their opinion, after it leaves the farm it is someone else's concern.

The owners of competing beverage companies know how their products are presented. They spend millions of dollars making sure the presentation is optimum.

These competitors are seeking the same share of the consumers' dollar and stomach space as the dairymen. From image to quality to packaging and advertising, these owners are aware of what happens with their products. This includes knowing and keeping tabs on the second parties they hire to promote and distribute the beverages.

With the dairy industry it is a different story. The business has taken enormous strides in correcting the promotional aspect, but there is a long way to go.

Dairy foods of high quality are an important part of the diet for the health and fitness conscious American consumer. The potential for growth is staggering — but only if we continue to get the message out.

Dairymen are ingenious at getting milk out of the cows. However, questions concerning milk marketing leave many groping. A trip to the supermarket's dairy case to see the product in its final form would be an eye opener for many.

Before the product ever leaves the farm for the marketplace, dairymen must make sure they exercise quality control. Milk quality begins at the farm level — it does not improve after the tanker drive out the lane with it. Only the highest quality product on the store shelves will encourage increased consumption.

A foul tasting glass of milk quickly undoes all of the promotional efforts. Even in the dairy community there are those individuals who dislike milk. This distaste can be traced to the day that the cows fed on a fresh patch of garlic which in turn caused an unappealing flavor in the day's milk.

The 15-cent promotion referendum has done a tremendous job of extolling the virtues of dairy products and some dairymen are whispering that they would support a higher deduction if the favorable results continue. Yet, a few years ago, Pennsylvania dairymen defeated this motion on the state level. They were unwilling to support their product's promotion. This mentality continues today in the form of an ignorance of milk marketing.

Now is the time for all dairymen to come to the aid of their product. They need to spruce up their image as well as that of their product. An education in milk marketing is required. If the middle man is slacking, he needs to be told.

Dairy farmers labor hard all year and mistakenly think the world owes them some type of gratification for their efforts. Soybean growers and drug companies will gladly cover the market. A Michigan-based company has started making a soy milk product. The marketplace is not a pretty world.

Dairy farmers do deserve a fair price for their product and their labor. This is attainable through increased consumption to balance supply and demand. Increased demand results when consumers buy more products. Consumers look for quality products with taste appeal and they buy from someone they like. Image is more important in selling than people realize.

Dairy Month is here and momentum is high. The fate of the dairy industry lies in the dairyman's hands. Catch the promotion wave and ride it through to May 31, 1988. With hard promotional efforts the wave will be even bigger and more powerful at that time.

It all depends on you.



## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

### To Prepare Grain Bins

We are approaching barley harvest season with wheat not far behind, so I would like to remind our grain producers that now is a good time to clean up your grain bins in preparation to harvest. First, clean out all the old grain, sweep down all the sidewalls and floors making sure to remove old grain lodged in the cracks.

Next, spray the floor and walk with a residual insecticide. Malathion and Methoxychlor are still very effective — follow the label for directions. Finally prevent birds and rodents from entering the bin. Repair holes with metal or other rat-proofing materials. Clean up all spilled grain around the bin to discourage

the various pests from the area.

### To Be Aware of Storm Safety

Spring is a time to savor — and also a time to beware when nature casts aside a gentle way and unleashes deadly forces. Though lightning, wind and floods frequently destroy life and property, you can do much to avoid being a victim of weather's fury.

When a thunderstorm approaches, avoid lone trees, small metal buildings, fences and high ground. Get out of the water if swimming or boating. Find refuge in a substantial building, motor vehicle or tractor cab. Don't ignore forecasts of severe weather because they are correct a majority of the time. It's also a good idea to safeguard your house and buildings with a properly installed, approved lightning protection system and inspect it annually.

Don't take chances, take safety.

### To Remove Broken Limbs In Pastures

The high winds that accompany summer storms can create problems in pasture fields. Broken limbs lying around may be hazardous to your livestock. If you have any wild cherry or choke cherry branches lying in your pasture fields, be sure to remove them before allowing any livestock in the fields. When leaves are damaged by broken limbs, they wilt down and a poisonous substance is formed within the leaves.

Just a handful of these wilted leaves can kill a cow or several sheep if they are eaten. Death occurs very quickly because the poison interferes with the oxygen-carrying ability of the blood. Treatment is possible but the animals are usually found dead in the field.

The only way to eliminate the danger of wild cherry poisoning is to eliminate the trees. Fields with wild cherry should be checked for fallen limbs after a storm; it's a simple precaution and could save a cow or a whole herd.

### To Use Respirators

A great many different types of chemicals and pesticides are used on farms today. This includes mixing, handling and applying various materials. We urge farmers to invest in respirators to meet safety measures under today's farming procedures. These are needed for handling and applying various spray materials, and when using solvents that give off their fumes.

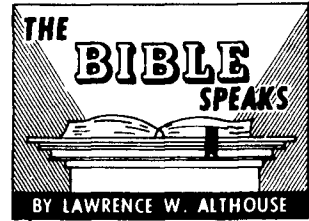
In addition, farmers working in dusty places, in manure storage tanks, and in silos should wear one of the protective devices. Dusts, molds and fumes are hard on lungs and require protection to reduce injury. The canister type respirators are suggested because they cover the entire face. Don't expose yourself to permanent lung injury when protection is available.

- Saturday, June 6**  
 Washington County Sheep and Wool Field Day, Washington Fairgrounds, Washington.  
 Landis Valley Craft Fair, Pa. Farm Museum, Lancaster.  
 Cecil County, Md. Breeder's Fair, Fairgrounds, Fair Hill, Md.  
 Bucks County Dairy Princess Coronation, Richland Mall, Quakertown.  
 Tioga County Dairy Princess Pageant, Mansfield High School, Mansfield.  
 Wayne County Dairy Princess Pageant, Hickory Grange, Rileyville.  
 Pa. Jr. Polled Hereford Association Show, Ag Arena, Penn State, 1 p.m.  
 Queen Contest, Strawberry Grower's Association, Lycoming Mall, Muncy.  
 Pa. Shropshire Breeders Association field day and annual meeting, Menhennett Farm, Cochranville.

- Saturday, June 7**  
 4-H Highsteppers Horse Show, Wayne County Fairgrounds.  
 Pa. Meat Packers Association summer meeting, Pocono Manor; continues through June 9.

- Monday, June 8**  
 Rabies Clinic, 5 to 8 p.m., former Lower Chanceford School, Rt. 74, Sunnyburn. Pets must be restrained. Cost, \$5.

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## ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

June 7, 1987

**Background Scripture:**  
 Romans 1:17; 15:14 through 16:27.  
**Devotional Reading:**  
 Galatians 3:10-14.

Good for Paul! He says "For I am not ashamed of the gospel..." (Romans 1:16), and I don't believe he ever was.

I wish that I could say that I have never been ashamed of the gospel, but I'm afraid there have been times when I found the gospel a potential embarrassment. There have been times when I have muted my Christian witness because I was afraid that people would reject me. In fact, there have even been a few times in my life when I really didn't want people to know I am a Christian. Perhaps some of you reading these words have also had that kind of experience.

Why should anyone ever be ashamed of the gospel? Why should we ever feel embarrassed to go public with our Christianity? The reason is not all that difficult to figure out. We are surrounded by a society whose values are often seriously in conflict with those of the gospel. We become embarrassed by the gospel because we want to be acceptable to those around us. Despite the comparative prosperity of the churches in the U.S.A. today, we live in a secular, materialistic society, the values of which are much more in control of our nation than we

often realize or admit.

Regardless of what we may say we believe in, we demonstrate daily that we really believe in the gospel of material things, temporal success, and personal expediency. We judge others as "successful" if they wield a lot of power and/or make a lot of money. Good press relations, not integrity, are the more cherished. Although we weekly—and weakly—proclaim the primacy of love, public officials are lionized, not for their love, but for their "toughness"—"being tough" with whomever we believe they ought to be "tough." Neither do our children idolize the "good" and "loving," but the "famous."

Thus, the values we learn from Christ and the values that are operative all around us often put us on a collision course. And, because we want to be acceptable and accepted by those around us, we are embarrassed to let them know that we espouse values which are so different. It would seem that it's not hard to talk about love—and maybe even do it—when we're in the security of our church, because the people surrounding us there are supposedly of a like mind and commitment.

Actually, I find that sometimes, although people will talk about religion at church, it is not the place to talk about spirituality. We don't mind people knowing we're Baptists or Presbyterians or whatever, so long as they don't think we're all that spiritual. Spirituality seems to make many of us embarrassed—as if it is soft-headed, a weakness of character, a sign of not being self-sufficient.

But Paul was unashamed of the gospel because he regarded it, not as a position of weakness, but of strength: "It is the power of God for salvation to every one who has faith" (1:16). Paul realized that it was the paganism of his world that was weak and powerless. Despite all of its posturing, boasts and claims, there was no salvation in it—no helping people overcome their problems to cope with life. If anything was shameful, as Paul saw it, it was the abject impotence of the paganized way of life, the tendency of people to seek power and help in the wrong things and the wrong places.

Like the church at Rome, all of us need to be reminded that the Gospel of Jesus is not weakness at all, but strength, the only power that can save the world. Then, like Paul, we will be enabled to say: "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

