



OPINION

America Thinks Agriculture

We often wonder what the American public thinks about agriculture. Last year AgFocus, A Project Of America's Governor Incorporated, tried to help answer that question with a detailed study by the Gallup Organization.

They wanted to pinpoint America's understanding of various key issues and attitudes toward these issues as they relate to the business of farming.

The basic survey showed that: Six careers were more popular with respondents than farming, and only three were less popular. Similarly, there were seven careers they would prefer for their children above farming and only one they would like less.

While respondents in limited numbers cited some advantages to farming, such as being self-employed, several counterbalancing disadvantages were cited, such as poor income and weather uncertainty. In assessing the nature of the farmer's life, respondents overwhelmingly saw it as hard physical work, risky, and at the mercy of price changes. A majority also felt that family-owned farms will give way to big-business farms.

Regardless of where they live, a majority of respondents had close contacts in the past or present with relatives or friends who are farmers, a substantial proportion had once worked on or lived on a farm, a small minority were currently in farming, and the few who had owned a farm in the past were concentrated in upper age brackets.

While over half the respondents were willing to estimate farm

incomes, the resulting median estimate for average yearly gross income was lower than that indicated by available statistics. Conversely, the median estimate for average yearly net income was higher than statistics would indicate. Few respondents were close in estimating either the percentage of the nation's total population engaged in farming or the percentage involved in agribusiness as a whole (agriculture and other food-related jobs). Similarly, few respondents, correctly estimated agriculture's contribution to the Gross National Product.

A majority of the respondents saw positive effects on the food supply from modern farming practices, citing increased production most frequently, while a small minority saw negative effects. A substantial majority pointed to effects on the environment; but of these few could name a specific practice, and those who could mentioned the use of pesticides and insecticides most often. A majority of those who saw effects on the environment described them as negative. A majority said modern methods affect food quality, but they split about equally as to whether the effects were positive or negative. A strong majority said that they serve to raise prices, while a minority felt that by helping to increase production, the methods help to lower prices. Not many of the respondents saw effects other than those on supply, environment, quality, and price; and a near majority thought that

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Review the New Pesticide Control Act

Recently enacted amendments to the Pennsylvania Pesticide Control Act, have brought about some important changes. There are new requirements for certification and recertification for private applicators. To be certified, the private applicator shall pass a written examination administered at an approved test site by the secretary or his agent.

For your convenience, exam sites have been established statewide. Contact your nearest Penna. Department of Agriculture Regional Office for details. In our area the Southeast-Central Penna. Office at Summerdale's number is 717-787-3400.

A private applicator shall be recertified as competent with respect to the use and handling of restricted use pesticides upon the successful completion of an update training program as determined by the secretary. The program shall include, at a minimum, a review of certification topics, but shall NOT

include a written exam.

All update training programs must be pre-approved by the P.D.A. with a meeting number assigned. Private applicators will need to acquire six (6) Core and six (6) Category credits during the three years preceding the expiration date of their permits. Training requirements are as follows: Core Areas include Labeling, Safety and Health, Environmental Protection, Equipment, Application, Laws and Regulation... Category areas include Pest Identification, Pesticides and Integrated Pest Management.

It's important to note that if your license expires September 30, 1987, you'll need 4 credits (2 Core and 2 Category); if it expires September 30, 1988, you'll need 8 credits (4 Core and 4 Category) and March 31, 1990, you'll need the 12 credits (6 Core and 6 Category).

To Plan For Fall Wheat Seeding

The time is fast approaching for our wheat growers to be making plans for their fall seeding. Some of the local wheat may not be satisfactory due to the weed seeds found in some fields this year. If you use local wheat, be sure you know the source and have it cleaned and treated for disease. Also, if you had a scab problem this year, do not plant wheat in the same field this fall; the fungus can remain in the soil.

Certified seed would be the best route to take if you experienced any problem with scab or powdery mildew this year. The extra cost for certified seed is well worth it to help insure a good crop next summer.

To Renovate Old Pastures

Late August and early September are good times to establish a new pasture, or renovate an old one. In fact, this is a good time of the year to make any pasture or lawn seeding. The old sod should be destroyed by cultivation or by a herbicide. After the soil has been treated with lime and fertilizer, according to a complete soil test, it can be seeded and should produce good grazing for next summer.

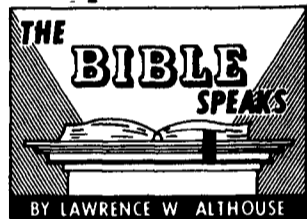
The advantages of a fall seeding is to permit time for the new plants to become established before the 1988 hot weather arrives. The cool, moist fall months should give the plants a good start. The Agronomy Guide lists some good seeding recommendations.

To Stay In Touch With Creditors

Maintaining a close relationship with your creditors and telling them about your financial status won't likely ease your debts, but will ease your creditors' mind. Creditors get concerned when someone owes a sizable bill and they never see him. By staying close to your creditors, you may be able to write another payment plan. Some bankers will renegotiate the payment schedule and add a year or two, thus cutting down the monthly or annual payments.

You may also need to visit about refinancing. In most cases you will be paying a higher rate of interest and it may not be beneficial, but it still deserves a look. It's worth the time and effort to visit with your creditors.

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CHOSEN BUT UNCHOOSING

August 9, 1987

Background Scripture: Romans 9 through 11
Devotional Reading: 10 1-4

Romans 9 through 11 is one of those passages of the Bible that Christians have traditionally used to make a case against the Jews. Paul is very specific in these three chapters: the Jews, God's chosen people, have failed to respond to God's Son, and thus have violated their special status with the Lord. Even Paul's assurances that it is not too late for them to be saved, if they will simply respond to Christian preaching and accept Christ, are nevertheless powerful ammunition for those who want to castigate the people of Jewish faith. God's "chosen people" have not chosen to follow the one for whom they were chosen.

WHO IS "CHOSEN"?

The irony is that today this

passage from Romans in a condemnation, not just of the Jews, but even more of Christians. Paul's point in Romans 9-11 is that, because of their special status with God, the Jews should have recognized and accepted the Christ. Of all people, Paul is saying, they should have known who and what he was. It was not lack of knowledge, but of a willful misunderstanding that led them to default on their relationship with God. Paul asks: "Have they not heard?" and then quickly answers: "Indeed they have (10:18). The Jews heard, "But they have not all heeded the gospel" (10:16).

Actually, then, according to Paul, it is not that God has rejected the Jews, but that

they have thus far failed to heed his revelation in Christ. Paul furthermore makes it clear that he is not condemning the Jews: "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they will be saved. I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but it is not enlightened" (10:1).

THE SUBSTITUTE

Could not these words of Paul be just as appropriate for us today? As I look around the world at all kinds of Christian groups, the problem is generally not a lack of zeal, but of enlightenment. Lots of Christians, it seems, have actually let zeal become a substitute for enlightenment. So, what we need to do when we

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FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

Editor:

After reading the article entitled, "Lightning--Don't Take Chances With It," August 1 issue, I found it surprising that the author is still alive. The common sense safety tips lacked common sense and safety.

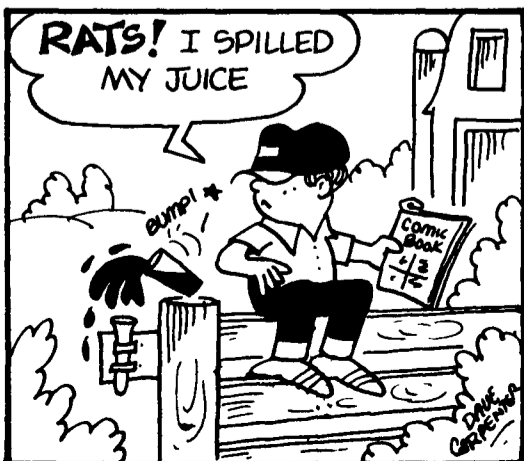
1. If you are riding a horse when a thunderstorm hits, dismount and get away from the horse. If you crouch next to the horse and lightning strikes the horse, the lightning may very well jump from the horse to you or electrify the ground enough to kill you.

2. When driving a car, stay inside the car in the middle of the car. The tires do not provide insulation. If lightning hits the car, the electricity will follow the metal and ground through the tires. As long as you are not touching the sides of the car, you are relatively

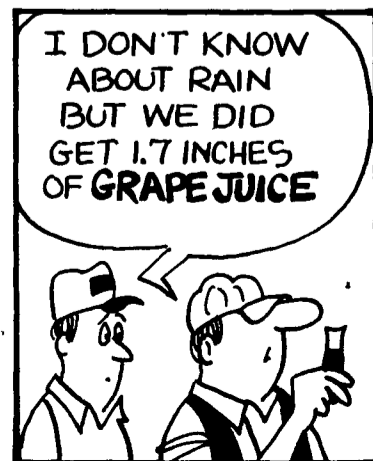
safe. After a lightning bolt travels 1,000 feet through air, why anyone would think six inches of rubber would insulate the car is beyond me. The same holds true for a tractor. If you are in a field sitting on top of six tons of steel and a thunderstorm comes up, get off the tractor and head for low ground or shelter. The tires won't protect you. After all, wood is an excellent insulator of electricity, but lightning frequently hits trees.

One other item that wasn't mentioned is that lightning sometimes gives a few seconds warning before it strikes. A sudden buildup of heat, or your hair standing on end, or a blue glow around an object is the buildup of static electricity before lightning strikes. This happens only seconds before it strikes. So jump for low ground.

Pete Flynn
Westtown



LATER



Farm Calendar

Saturday, August 8
Fox Hill Angus Lawn Sale, Kennett Square.
Eastern Pa. Championship Holstein Show, Kutztown, 10 a.m.
American Association of Meat Processors Convention, Louisville, Ky.; continues through

Aug. 11.
McKean County 4-H Horse Show/Roundup, Fairgrounds, East Smethport.
Bradford County Holstein Picnic.
Chester County 4-H Market Hog Sale.

Monday, August 10
South-Central PA Championship Holstein Show, Shippensburg, 9:30 a.m.
Tioga County Holstein Show, Whitneyville, 9 a.m.
York County Pesticide Recertification Training, Extension Room, 7:30 p.m.
Bedford Co. Fair, through August 15, Bedford.
Butler Co. Farm Show, through August 15, Butler.
Greene Co. Fair, through August 15, Waynesburg.
Kutztown Fair, through August 15, Kutztown.

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