



# OPINION

## Autumn Leaves

The glorious days of autumn are upon us, so let's look at the fascinating process that produces the fall foliage display. When leaves change color and start to drop, it's a sign that the plant's physiology is changing in preparation for winter. An increase in sugar production, which is eventually changed to starches and stored in the roots and stems for next year's growth is one reason for the foliage colors. All nutrients in the leaf that can be mobilized have been translocated out. Green chlorophyll is breaking up. The sugar reacts with other chemicals in the leaves to produce those vivid fall colors: red (anthocyanin), yellow (xanthophyll), and orange (carotenes).

While all this chemistry is going on, a layer of cells is forming at the base of each leaf, called the abscission layer. This will eventually cut off the flow of nutrients from the leaf into the stems and the flow of

water into the leaf. At the same time, it severs the tissues that hold the leaf to the twig. Some trees especially pin oaks, do not form a complete abscission layer until very late fall or winter - sometimes not until new growth starts the following spring.

All this activity is triggered by shorter day length and cool nighttime temperatures. Frost is not necessary. A dry summer and fall can intensify the fall leaf pigments, but even with all the rain we have had, the fall foliage is still spectacular.

For many of our readers this fall spectacular happens right on their farms and in their communities. For others of us, we need to take a drive to our neighboring counties for a relaxing scenic view.

But wherever we live in Lancaster Farming Territory, now is the time to enjoy the pretty leaves.



## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

### To Apply Lime

First, soil test, then apply the needed lime before the soil freezes. That 1-2 order of events should have a high priority now as we finish one growing season and plan ahead for the next.

In order to do its job of correcting soil acidity, lime must come in contact with the soil particles, not just those on the soil surface. Weather changes during the next 6 months will provide just the right conditions to do lots of mixing of lime and soil within the topsoil layer. Freezing and thawing, rain, snow and ice, help to move the lime downward.

During the fall season fields are firm and usually dry enough to

allow lime spreading trucks to move about more easily. Deliveries of lime can be made on time.

### To Beware of Grazing Hazards

Dairy farmers who are grazing their milking herds in woodlots, or in pastures with oak trees, should be on the alert for fallen acorns. Our Veterinary Science people tell us that acorns are somewhat toxic to cattle and will dry up most cows for the rest of their lactation. We are aware of many oak trees in pastures, and in most years there will be a pretty good acorn crop.

If the cows start eating these acorns, then the milk flow will be reduced drastically. Either cows should be removed from the area, or someone should pick up the acorns before the cows are turned out daily.

### To Practice Good Public Relations

Farmers should be concerned about their image in the community. In most cases it's very good, and also the majority of non-farm people in the rural areas respect the needs and problems of the farmer. The image can be improved by getting better acquainted with your non-farm neighbors.

We urge farmers to invite their nearby neighbors to see their farm operation. In many cases a better understanding of the various farm operations will eliminate disputes

and hassles about noise and odors. Also, I would encourage farmers to become involved with community activities. You'll find that people that understand each other seldom have serious problems.

### To Enjoy The Fall Season

The fruits and seeds of a growing season are meaningfully expressed and seen during the fall of the year. 1987 was both productive and unproductive in field, garden and orchard crops.

Now that the harvest season reaches a peak of activity there is a certain urgency to get outdoor work finished as we approach the first good killing frost. However, take time to fully appreciate the world of Nature all around you. For example, no season can equal the colors of fall. You see it everywhere in the foliage of shrubs, trees and vines. Farm, garden and orchard harvests are to be admired for they, too, are colorful in their own way.

Fall brings with it a time and place for reflection, evaluation, satisfaction and thankfulness. Let's relax and enjoy it.

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

## Farm Calendar

### Saturday, October 10

PFA Berks Co. Meeting, Ag Center, Reading, 7 p.m.  
PFA Columbia Co. Meeting, Humidia Grange Hall, 7 p.m.  
PFA Luzerne Co. Meeting, Briggsville, 7 p.m.  
PFA Schuylkill Co. Meeting, New Ringold Fire Hall, 7 p.m.  
Pike Co. Extension Banquet, White Beauty View Resort, 6:30 p.m.

### Monday, October 12

Tax Workshop, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 Monday and Tuesday.  
PFA Bucks Co. Meeting McConnelburg Fire Hall, 7 p.m.  
PFA Snyder Co. Meeting, West Snyder High School, 7 p.m.  
PFA Bradford/Sullivan Co. Meeting, Wysox Fire Hall, 7:45 p.m.  
Poultry Health Seminar, Holiday Inn, North, Lancaster 6:30 p.m.

### Tuesday, October 13

PFA Bedford Co. Meeting, Everett High School, 7 p.m.  
PFA Clinton Co. Meeting, Lamar Grange, 7 p.m.  
Wayne Co. Ag Preservation Bond Referendum Educational Meet-

ing, Extension Office, 8 p.m.  
Adams Co. Beef Producers Association Annual Meeting, Extension office, 8 p.m.

Mercer Co. Milk Quality Meeting, Don & Angie Koontz Farm, 8 p.m.

Wayne Co. Educational Meeting on Ag Land Referendum, Extension Office, 8 p.m.

Franklin Co. Conservation District Meeting, Chambersburg, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, October 14  
Veterinary Nutrition Forum, speaker-Dr. Harold Hintz.

Bradford Co. Holstein Meeting Lancaster County Farmers Association's Annual Meeting, Country Table, Mt. Joy, 7 p.m.

Main Capitol Bldg., Rm. 401, House Ag & rural Affairs Comm., 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, October 15  
PFA Perry Co. Meeting, Perry Valley Grange, 7 p.m.

Friday, October 16  
American Scotch Highland Cattle Show, Bloomsburg Fair Grounds, Danville; 10/16-18.

American Dairy Assoc. Dinner

Meeting, Gibson Grange, Gelatt, 8 p.m.

Saturday, October 17  
PFA Wyoming/Lackawana Co. Meeting, Methodist Church, Lake Winola, 7 p.m.

PA Forestry Association Regional Meeting, French Creek State Park, 12:30 p.m.

Monday, October 19  
Christmas In October, 19-20, Farm & Home Center, 9-2:30.

Tuesday, October 20  
York Co. Sewage Sludge Meeting, Extension Service, 1 p.m.

Wednesday, October 21  
York Co. Holstein Annual Banquet, St. Matthews Luthern Church, York, 7 p.m.

Northumberland Co. Nutrient Demonstration Mtg., 7 p.m. at Robert Truckenmiller's farm, 1 mile east of Dewart.

Thursday, October 22  
National Meeting on Poultry Health & Condemnations, Sheraton Fountainebleau Inn "Spa, Ocean City, Md., through 23rd.

Southeastern Poultry Assoc. Banquet, Heritage Restaurant, Franconia.

Berks Co. FFA Leadership Training Conference, Conrad Weiser H.S., 4 p.m.

Delmarva Beef Cattlemen's Field Day

Lancaster Co. 4-H Dairy Awards Banquet, Country Table, Mt. Joy, 7 p.m.

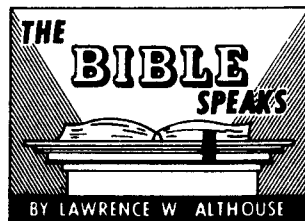
Wayne Co. 4-H Achievement Night, Pleasant Valley Grange, Honesdale, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, October 23  
Adams Co. Poultry Assoc. Fall Banquet, Inn 94, Crosskeys

Dairymen Mid Atlantic Div. Luncheon mtg., Sheraton Inn, Get-

tysburg, 12:30 p.m.  
Saturday, October 24  
PA Simmental Assoc. Show/Sale,

Green Co. Fairgrounds, Waynesburg Show 10 a.m., sale 1 p.m.



## ABRAHAM LAUGHED

October 11, 1987

Background Scripture:  
Genesis 15:1 through 18:15.

Devotional Reading:  
Genesis 18:1-15.

Abraham laughed when God reiterated his promise of a son with Sarah. And I don't blame him. God had been making that same promise for approximately 25 years and it had still not come to pass. Furthermore, Abraham was 100 years old and his wife was 90. It is the kind of situation that calls for either tears or laughter and Abraham chose to laugh.

It appears a most irreverent response on Abraham's part. But, it doesn't seem that God blamed Abraham either. Instead of rebuking Abraham for his unseemly behavior, he simply explains the promise he has given Abraham several times in the past: "No, but Sarah your wife shall bear you a son and you shall call his name Isaac" (He laughs).

### HE BELIEVED THE LORD

It was not that Abraham had no faith in God. He had already

demonstrated that with his response to God's call to move from Haran to Canaan. Furthermore, when God first made these promises of a son with Sarah, Abraham accepted them in faith, although they sounded somewhat improbable even then. Telling Abraham that his descendants would outnumber the stars in the sky, God is pleased that "he believed the Lord, and he reckoned it to him as righteousness" (15:6).

Even when God came again to him many years later, repeating that same promise, Abraham wanted to believe the promise, but all the evidence at hand seemed to make disbelief a much more sensible alternative. And isn't that often our dilemma too? We want to believe and indeed we have faith. Still, we can't help having our doubts, too. There are times when there doesn't seem much possibility, if any, that what we think God has promised is going to come our way. The doctor tells us the condition of a loved one is "hopeless," and we want to believe that the final word has not yet been spoken, but it's hard to take our faith as seriously as our physician's verdict.

### GOD GIVES A SON

We need to understand that this story of Abraham is not just a tale of a man who faithfully waited for something good to happen to him. Much more was at stake than just the question of whether Sarah could give Abraham a son in their old age. Basically, it was God's own will and plan that would be fulfilled if he kept his promise to Abraham. Thus Abraham waited faithfully and patiently because he knew that God's covenant was behind his personal promises to him. When what we want and what God wants coincide or overlap, we have even more reason to wait for God's promises.

But, if, while we're waiting, we laugh a bit, it's all right. True faith is never without some doubts.

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## FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

Dear Editor:

Thank you for your continuing editorial support for Farmland Preservation.

For nearly twenty years, the Adams County Farmers' Associa-

tion and our state affiliate, the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) have been concerned about the loss of prime farmland.

It took several years to achieve

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