



OPINION

Farmers Work Long Hours

The standard, 40-hour American work week may sound like a vacation to many farmers, based on recently compiled results of USDA's Farm Costs and Returns Survey for 1986.

Robert Leiby and David Dunbar, Lehigh County Extension, report that the survey, conducted by the National Agricultural Statistics Service, collected data from a sample of thousands of farmers representing around 1.6 million of the nation's 2.2 million farms.

Among the results, reams of detailed, farm-level data on returns, debts and assets, costs of production, farm family living expenses, production practices, and the distribution of debt among lenders.

In addition to the financial information, however, Economic Research Service economists have also reported on other survey findings, including the following statistics:

•The average reported age of operators in 1986 was 51, the same as in 1985. Farmers with sales in excess of \$40,000 tended to be younger than average. Operators of smaller farms were older and tended to be more financially solvent than their younger counterparts.

•Nearly two-thirds of operators with 1986 agricultural sales of less than \$10,000 did not consider farming to be their major occupation, while nine out of ten farmers with sales of over \$40,000 said farming was their primary job.

•Farmers with sales in excess of \$100,000 reported that they spent an average 56-58 hours per week, 50 weeks per year, working on their farm operation. That compared with an average of less than 30 hours per week, 43-44 weeks per year, for farmers with sales of less than \$20,000.

•Among different farm types, the longest hours, not surprisingly, were worked by dairy farmers, who reported a 68-hour average week and only one week off per year. The next toughest schedule was reported by poultry producers - 49 hours per week on average and 49 weeks per year. Cash grain farmers were third in total hours, with a 40-hour week and 43 weeks per year. Of course, these averages include the shorter work weeks of small, part-time farmers, and they do not include hours worked off the farm. But anyway you look at it, farmers are a dedicated group of business people. And like most other self-employed people, the time clock isn't one of their major pieces of equipment.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Recognize The Value of Lime For Weed Control

You have never heard us recommend lime for weed control; however, indirectly lime is important to obtain good herbicide weed control. Both research and farm experience has indicated that herbicides are not as effective in sour soil. So, for best control with chemicals, the soil-test requirement must be satisfied poor weed control experiences have been reported on sour soil. A complete soil test will indicate the amount of lime needed. There are many other advantages to crop production in addition to better herbicide action.

To Keep Small Children Away From Machinery

The spring cropping season will be starting in another month. That means that a lot of farm machines will be put into operation and things will really be moving. Small children like to become a part of this action and ask to ride on machinery, or even operate some of the smaller tractors. It might take nerve to refuse them at times; however, for their own protection they should not become involved. Many serious accidents have happened because "Dad" or "Grandad" took them along.

Where there are small children, all machinery operators should be especially careful of their exact location. Farm machinery and small children do not mix.

To Know Sewage Sludge Content

The use of sewage sludge on farm land is becoming more common. As the amount of this material increases, the farmers should be

center, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. ABS, Hoffman Bldg., Quarryville, 7 p.m.

DHIA District Directors Mtg. (Central), Stop 35 in Mifflintown.

Keystone Pork Congress, 9 a.m. Penn Harris, Harrisburg.

ABS Meeting, 12 noon, Montgomery 4H Ctr. Creamery.

ABS Meeting, Clearfield, 12 noon, Friends Church, Grampian.

ABS Meeting, Jefferson, 7:30 p.m. Horntown, Comm. Center.

ABS Meeting, East Crawford, 7:30 p.m. Centreville, United Methodist Church.

Wednesday, February 17 American Dairy Assoc. and Dairy

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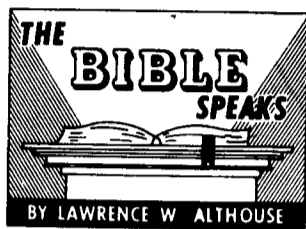
aware of the danger of excessive application. There can be a problem of too much sludge causing a build-up of heavy metals such as zinc, copper, cadmium and cobalt. When these metals become too high in the soil they are toxic to plants.

Farmers that utilize sewage sludge are urged to require a test of the material in order to know the exact mineral and fertilizer content. Disposal plants must provide this test information for their farmers in order to know what is being done. Both the sewage and the soil can be tested through the Penn State Testing Laboratory. Don't apply sludge without knowing the mineral build-up in the soil.

To Take A Correspondence Course To become knowledgeable

about a certain subject and continue with your normal job is a possibility. Penn State offers a number of correspondence courses in agriculture and related areas that should be of great help to everyone. Such subjects as Beef Production, Dairy Cattle Feeding, Rabbit Production, Pesticide Usage, Plant Life, Home Vegetable Gardening and many more are covered. These lessons are sent by mail and are practical at a very nominal cost. Details are available at any Extension Office in the state. A bulletin describing the various courses is available. Don't overlook this method of learning more about a special subject.

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



THE ONLY WAY TO "SURVIVE"
February 14, 1988

Background Scripture: Matthew 16: 13:28.

Devotional Reading: Philippians 2:5-11.

Most of us are so familiar with the teachings of Jesus that we tend to forget that they present a radically different approach to life. When Jesus first appeared, preaching and teaching, the religious authorities found his ideas in direct conflict with their own. But the teachings of Jesus are no less radical to the world in which we live. They challenge just about every major premise of the popular mind. The only reason that contemporary Christianity is not much more in conflict with our society is because most of us have consciously or unconsciously blunted and obscured the points of conflict.

When Jesus began to speak of his coming, passing and death in Jerusalem, many who heard him were scandalized. To their way of thinking, a "suffering messiah" was a contradiction in terms: if one was a messiah, he would not "suffer," and if one "suffered," he would not be the messiah! These two ideas were so mutually exclusive to the Hebrew mind that many wrote him off as a madman. A messiah who suffered was unthinkable.

LOSING ISN'T LOSING

No less unthinkable are some of Jesus' teachings today. His view of the world, of human existence, life and what is important is really quite incompatible to many of the concepts of Western society. For example, take the question of survival. Jesus began with the human desire to survive, to save one's own life as long and as fully as possible. Where Jesus differed from everyone else was in the method he

offered for survival: you can only truly save your life when you are willing to give it away! Both then and today that teaching was and is totally in conflict with the way of the world.

Actually, Jesus never asked anyone to really lose his or her life. Instead he challenged them to try a different way of saving themselves. In fact, Jesus tried to help them realize that the world's way would never work. "For whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it" (Matthew 16:25). This means that things are not what they seem. If, using the world's means, we "save" our lives, we will find that that security is but temporary. It is in the long run that we will have lost the very essence of life. If, however, we "lose" our life for Jesus' sake, we lose only in the short run, and gain in the long run of eternity.

Even if we have a hard time seeing how this works, we can find some evidence to substantiate it. We witness what happens when people try to cling to life with material possessions and power. "You can't take it with you" is proven to peasant and Pharaoh alike. The grave is the great equalizer. None of the world's goods can really grant us survival in the long run. Holding on to life is like trying to keep a fistful of sand. **THE CROSS BECAUSE**

Jesus taught true survival with both his words and his life. No sooner had his disciples confessed him as "the Christ, the son of the living God," then Jesus "began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed . . ." (16:21). Jesus would suffer the cross, not despite the fact that he was the Messiah, but because he was.

And so Christians will need to bear the cross, not despite the fact that they are Christians, but because they are: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (16:24).

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, February 13
Sheep & Wool Producers Annual Banquet, Blymire's Church, 7 p.m. Lynn Ebersole, 741-1407.
Cumberland Co. Holstein Annual Meeting, Mrs. Stamm's, 53 Heisers Lane, Carlisle, 10:45 a.m.

Monday, February 15
Farming Ag Security Districts, Cumberland Twp. Bldg., Fairfield Road, Gettysburg.

Atlantic Breeders Annual Meeting, 7:30 p.m., Penn Twp. Fire-hall, Hunsdale.

Atlantic Breeders Mtg., Cumberland 7:30 p.m., Hunsdale Fire Hall.

ABS Meeting, Indiana, 7:30 p.m., The Omni.

ABS Meeting, Mercer, 7:30 p.m. New Vernon Grange Hall.

Clean and Green, Ag Securities Act, Right to Farm, Purchasing Development Rights, Tony Dobrosky, 8 p.m., Red Lion High School Ag. Shop.
Mahoning Columbiana Corn Soy-

bean Day, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Mahoning Co. Joint Vocational School, Canfield, OH

Dairy Industry Update, Octorara High School, Vo Ag Shop.
Lancaster Co. Sheep & Wool Growers Assn. Mtg. Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 16
Lebanon-Lower Dauphin Crops Day, Palmyra Fire Hall, 8:45 a.m.

Vegetable Production, through Feb. 18, Sheraton Inn, Dover, Del. (302)856-7303.

ABS Meeting, Warren, 12 noon, Lander Fire Hall.

Dairy Mgmt. Seminar, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Holiday Inn, Rts. 22 and 512, Bethlehem, Pre-registration required.

Cecil Co. Dairy Day, 9:30 a.m., Calvert Grange Hall, Maryland.

Mid Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference, Willow Valley Conference Center, Lancaster, 9 a.m.

Crops and Soils Day, Farm/Home

Lancaster Farming

Established 1955

Published Every Saturday
At Record-Express Office Building
22 E. Main Street
Lititz, PA 17543

— by —
Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Steinman Enterprise

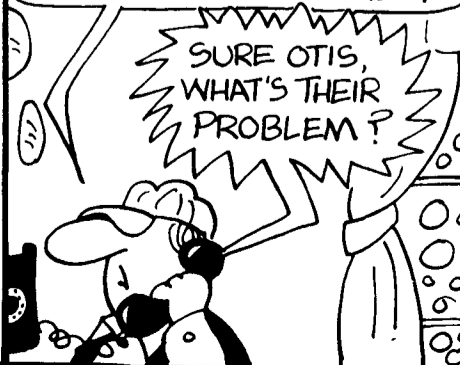
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BILL, THEY'RE HAVING A BIT OF AN EMERGENCY DOWN AT THE ELEVATOR AND THEY NEED ME THERE RIGHT AWAY...



"... COULD YOU RUN ME OVER ON YOUR SNOWMOBILE?"



THEY'RE TRYING TO PUT TOGETHER A CARD GAME AND THEY NEED ONE MORE GUY TO FILL OUT THE FOURSOME.

