



OPINION

Offset Mandatory Records Cost

We may very well be on the threshold of a mandatory swine identification program -- like it or not. The sulfa contamination has put pork on the consumer's question list and thrust industry into the need to track any problem to its source.

Of course the industry has discussed the pros and cons of identification tags or markings for quite a long time. Colored ear tags, back tags, tattoos, ear notching, and skin implants have all been considered. To be effective, the identification needs to remain on the carcass throughout post-mortem inspections.

Now a proposal by the U.S. Department of Agriculture states that all hogs should be identified at the first transaction. The proposal would include all hogs sold, transported, received for transport, offered for sale, or slaughtered on an individual basis. This individual identification rule would apply to everyone except farrow-to-finish producers who market their hogs directly to the slaughter plant. Even then these hogs could not be mixed with hogs from other sources and would need to be slaugh-

tered as a group.

Andy Thulin, Michigan State University Extension Swine Specialist, says the nationwide identification and trace-back system would lead to a safer meat supply. We agree. But the mountain of bookwork could also cause producers and packers additional problems. The identification such as serial numbers of hogs, addresses where identification was applied, and telephone numbers of owners, would need to be kept for two years after disposal of the hogs and made available to the USDA upon request.

Whenever such an identification requirement is put into effect, we believe the USDA should also make readily available to the swine producer other pertinent information that would help in herd management. Besides the drug testing, other health information such as pneumonia, liver ascarid damage, and mange should also be collected and reported to the producer. Then at least some of the cost of keeping mandatory records for drug control could also be offset by increased management information.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Careful With Weed Sprayers

Farmers and gardeners should keep in mind that many weed killer materials will stick in the equipment for years. This is especially true of all forms of 2,4-D. sprayers in which this material has been used should be kept only for weed spraying, or very carefully cleaned. The use of very hot water with household ammonia (1 part ammonia to 100 parts of hot water) is suggested; this mixture should be allowed to stand for 24 hours in the equipment and then sprayed out . . . in the lane or driveway. Extreme care should be taken with this cleaning job after each herbicide treatment.

The safest method is to have separate sprayers for weed killers. Over the years I can recall a number of tobacco and vegetable plants that have been damaged because a sprinkling can or sprayer used last fall was not thoroughly cleaned.

To Control Flies

Flies are a continual problem to keep under control on most farms. Successful fly control begins early, before flies become a problem. Best control results from using a variety of preventative and control measures. Flies have developed resistance to many chemicals. Therefore, it is beneficial to use several different classes of insecticides (i.e. organo phosphates, pyrethrins, etc.) - not to be confused with methods of application (residual sprays, baits, feed additives, etc.). By using a variety of insecticides, flies that are resistant

ing, Keller Center, University Park

Tuesday, May 10

Beef Referendum Voting Day at all county extension offices

Wednesday, May 11

Hunterdon Wine Growers Meeting, Extension Center, Flemington, New Jersey, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 12

Tree Fruit Mtg., 6:30 p.m. Trexlers Growers, Inc. Rt. 309, between Orefield and Shnesville.

Berks County FFA Banquet, 7 p.m. Kutztown Grange

Saturday, May 14

Christmas Tree Growers Short Course, Cook College, Brunswick, NJ. Contact 201-932-9271.

4-H Dairy Fitting & Showing Workshop, Smithdale Farm, Shippensburg.

to one might be killed by another. Of equal importance is the prevention of fly breeding places. In other words, keep the premises clean. If feed is spilled, clean it up, scrape yards and alleys several times weekly, clean pens and box stalls weekly and incorporate manure soon after application.

To Do Spring Pruning

Many plants and bushes require some corrective pruning to improve their appearance, to hold them to desirable size, and to remove damaged and weakened sections.

There is a time to prune and a time not to prune, and this varies from plant to plant. A good time for pruning spring flowering plants is after they've bloomed and before they start forming next year's flowering buds. Pruning soon after flowering also gives more time for new growth to cover up that newly-pruned look.

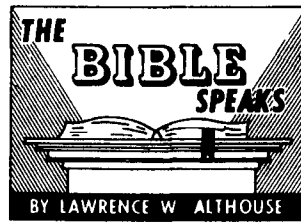
To Practice

Lawn Mowing Safety

Lawn grasses are growing rapidly now. Bluegrasses push-up their seed heads, making cutting more difficult, clogging mowers, using more power to operate and causing more accidents.

Unsafe operation of power lawnmowers leads to 75,000 mowing accidents every year according to the National Safety Council. Unfortunately most of the injuries occur to the hands and feet of boys and girls.

Follow common sense safety rules in operating these power machines . . . wear sturdy shoes . . . keep hands and feet away from moving parts . . . never mow while the grass is wet from dew or rain. Always insist that the engine is shut-off when servicing, adjusting or cleaning under the machine. Accidents cannot happen from moving parts . . . if there is no power available.



Background Scripture: Hebrews 8:1 through 10:18.

Devotional Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34.

In a recent newspaper article I read that someone in Israel was seriously proposing that the Jerusalem Temple be rebuilt and the practice of animal sacrifice be revived there. Even more incredible was the report that this proposal has found some support among various Christians.

The old-covenant-frame-of-mind dies hard. Although we know that Christianity is the creation of the New Testament, some Christians, I find, look more to the Old Testament than the New. Our denominational newspaper recently carried a letter from a reader who sought to garner Christian support for the nation of Israel on the basis of God's promise of this land to the people of Israel. What this reader seemed to forget was that the old covenant with Israel had long ago been superceded by a new one.

OF THINGS AND PLACES

This is the covenant of which Jeremiah prophesied (and the writer of Hebrews quoted): "The days will come, says the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel . . . not like the covenant that I made with their fathers. . ." (Hebrews 8:8). The new covenant was not to be one of things or places, but of an inner reality: "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts. . ." (8:10). The earthly sanctuary of the old covenant, said the writer of Hebrews, has been replaced with a heavenly sanctuary.

As Christians, we acknowledge that the old covenant is part of our spiritual heritage. The New Testa-

ment has grown out of the Old. But that doesn't mean that the old covenant remains in force. Not according to the Epistle to the Hebrews: ". . . Christ has obtained a ministry which is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he makes is better . . . For if the first covenant had been faultless, there would be no occasion for the second" (8:6,7). The writer makes it even more plain when he concludes: "In speaking of a new covenant he treats the first as obsolete" (8:13).

OLD OUTLOOK

So why do we continue to be so "old covenant" in our outlook? Perhaps it is that the old covenant view is more primitive and therefore seems easier. The concept of having to sacrifice something in order to handle our guilt and sin is probably as ancient as the human race. Although the Old and New Testament references to blood mean little to us today, we must remember that blood was the essence of life. Sin was "washed away," not so much by blood itself, as by the life force that the blood represented.

What made the sacrificial system meaningful was the realization that the consequences of sin were great enough to require the sacrifice of life itself. Thus, Hebrews says: "For if the sprinkling of defiled persons with the blood of goats and bulls . . . sanctifies for the purification of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ . . . purify your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (9:13,14).

Every system for dealing with the reality of sin requires some kind of regular repetition of the process. Except one, says the writer of Hebrews: ". . . we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (10:10). What the priests used to do daily in the temple, Christ has done once and for all on a cosmic scale. "Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant."

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 7

Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, Howard Co. Fairgrounds, 7 p.m. West Friendship, MD.

Monday, May 9

PA County Agent's Spring Meeting, Keller Center, University Park

Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Holiday Inn at Shammokin Dam. Dinner 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 10

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Wednesday, May 11

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Saturday, May 14

Christmas Tree Growers Short Course, Cook College, Brunswick, NJ. Contact 201-932-9271.

4-H Dairy Fitting & Showing Workshop, Smithdale Farm, Shippensburg.

Sunday, May 15

Home Garden Day at the Arboretum, Park System office, Rt. 31, 1 p.m. \$3 at the door.

Monday, May 16

PA Dairy Sanitarian & Laboratory Analysts Conference, J.O. Keller Conf. Ctr., PSU.

Northeast National Marketing Officials annual meeting, Willow Valley Resort, through the 18th.

Wednesday, May 18

Atlantic Dairy Ag. leaders lunch, Harvest Drive, 12 noon.

Friday, May 20

Bradford Co. Dairy Fitting/Showing workshop, Mike & Stacy Huslander's farm on Berwick Turnpike Crossroad, 8 p.m.

Saturday, May 21

Spring Wine Festival, Tomasello Wineries, Atlantic Co. Md., noon until 5 p.m. Through the 22nd.

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PA County Agent's Spring Meet-

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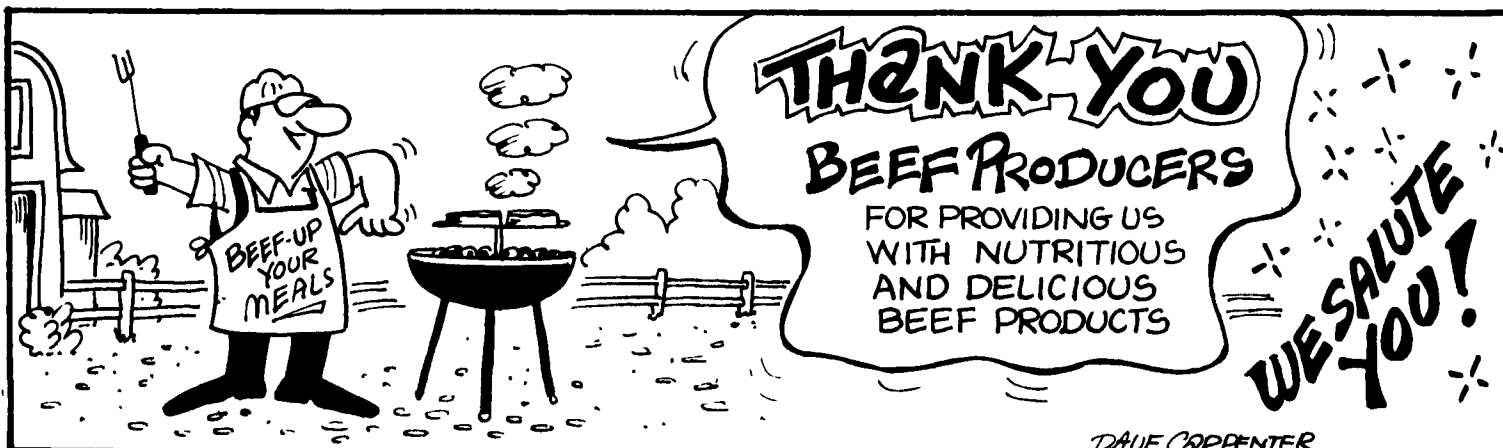
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