



OPINION

Challenge Of Education

Well, they've done it again--brought together all segments of agriculture onto one magnificent research farm within a three-day period.

If you attended Ag Progress Days this week at Rock Springs, you had the chance to see every imaginable piece of farm equipment you will ever need for the next five years. And some of these pieces of equipment, you saw in operation. For example, they had at least 11 units in the hay mowing-conditioning demonstration that included almost every tractor, hay mowing and conditioning unit available.

Or if your interests may have been in the livestock tent or the dairy production display, you got a good education. Maybe you took the Sic.Q Quiz or visited the Meating Place to learn about new recipes and the lean cuts of pork, lamb, veal and beef.

The Pasto Farm Museum celebrated its tenth anniversary and more than 100 farm families attended the Dairy of Distinction fraternal gathering to make friends with dairy farm families from all across Pennsylvania. Maybe you attended one of these events.

While the Penn State University faculty and staff did a "whale of a

job" to showcase the reasearch and expertise that's available for the use of the agriculture industry, the Ag Days event could be a failure. Dean Hood hinted at this idea in his opening remarks at the government day luncheon when he said that rehearsing ag facts for those who already know them is like "preaching to the choir." "We have the responsibility to tell the ag story outside the agriculture industry," Hood said. "People who, for a lot of reasons, don't understand what agriculture is all about must be told of the many facets in our industry. Our educational challenge is to inform the 12 million citizens of Pennsylvania about agriculture," Dean Hood said.

So while Ag Progress Days, under the direction of Joe Harrington, was a great educational experience for the choir, we need to go home and preach what we have learned to our urban friends. What we've learned about this industry called agriculture will have its greatest value if we pass on the information to those around us. And the true success of Ag Progress Days will in the end be determined by the extent the participants join in this missionary-type educational process.

NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Alert For Silo Gas

We are fast approaching silo filling time; in fact many farmers are servicing their equipment now. This is one of the best methods of harvesting the corn crop to obtain maximum feed nutrients. With the dry conditions early in the summer and some badly "stunted" corn, we need to be aware of the increased danger of poisonous gases, known to farmers as "silo gas". We urge our farmers to discuss this hazard with their employees and all family members. These gases can develop from one day to 14 days after the silo is filled. Most of the gases have a chlorine-laundry bleach odor and irritate the eyes and respiratory system. Some are yellow and some are colorless. Don't take any chances -- warn all your people of this danger.

Never enter a partly filled silo without running the blower for at least 15 minutes, and never work alone. These gases are heavier than air and will come down the chute and into the barn. Be careful around recently filled silos.

To Plan Winter Cover Crops

This is a good time to give some thought to a winter cover crop on land that has been tilled this past season. The seeding of ryegrass, bromegrass, or winter grains following the harvesting of the main crop this fall, will help reduce soil erosion.

In addition, a cover crop adds organic matter when it is incorporated into the soil next spring. Cover crops are especially helpful on slopes and hillsides where water erosion is a problem. Just a word of

caution, some herbicides used on corn (atrazine) may prevent the growth of any grain or cover crop this fall.

To Be Aware Of Infertility During Hot Weather

During periods of hot weather cows and bulls can become infertile, according to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent. When heat becomes too stressful, cows will not exhibit sexual activity. If the heat persists cows may not conceive; it could be that the bull has become temporarily infertile. Or, if the cow does conceive, she may experience early embryonic death.

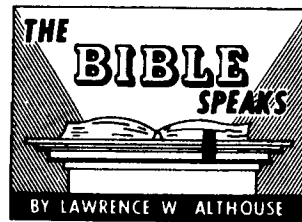
Once cool weather brings relief, the cow will probably regain her fertility more rapidly than the bull. It may be weeks before the bull becomes fertile. Therefore, if you are interested in getting cows settled as soon as possible after a heat wave, you might be able to

improve conception rates by breeding artificially, especially for the first month or so until the bull regains his fertility.

To Keep Stand-By Generators In Order

The value of stand-by generators was very evident this summer with the many power failures from lightning and high winds. The important thing is to have a generator that is in good working condition. We never know when we have storms (rain, snow, ice or wind) that will take away our regular power source.

Highly mechanized farmers are urged to test their generators and be sure they are in top condition. If the generator is old, or not in good condition, it might be wise to invest in another one. Some losses have been very high due to the lack of electricity for a short period of time. Planning for emergency action when electric power is off is very good management.



Background Scripture: Deuteronomy 6.

Devotional Reading: Deuteronomy 6:1-9.

We are so accustomed to bewailing "the new generation," that we may forget that in God's sight it doesn't matter whether a generation is "new" or "old," but whether it is obedient to him. There are numerous places in the Bible where the "old" generation failed God and he had to go with the next one to accomplish his purposes.

One of those failures was evident in the story of the Israelites' wanting to go back to Egypt rather than into the Promised Land. The "old" generation, for all their experience with God and the wilderness, failed because they lacked the faith to follow God's plan. So, the consequence was that that generation should wander into the wilderness for 40 more years. Because of their timidity, that generation of Israelites was disqualified from taking the Promised Land.

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

So, it was to a "new" generation that the Promised Land was to be given. Presumably, the children of the Israelites learned a lesson from their parents. No generation can keep from making mistakes, but we can try to help succeeding generations learn from them. Of course it is difficult to teach a "new" generation, but if we're open and honest about our mistakes, our sins, we can at least give them the opportunity to learn and avoid the consequences we have had to pay. The problem is often, not that a generation has its failures, but that it pretends otherwise and thus increases the probability that the mistakes will be

perpetuated.

This is what Moses attempted to do when he addressed the "new" generation of Israelites: "And when the Lord your God brings you into the land which he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, with great and godly cities, which you did not build, and houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out, which you did not hew, and vineyards and olive trees, which you did not plant, and when you eat and are full, then take heed lest you forget the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt..." (Deuteronomy 6:10-12).

GODS WITHIN US

To the "new" generation of Israelites, Moses also said: "You shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people who are round about you" (6:14). It sounds like such simple advice, but it isn't, not if we're to judge from human history. Even when Western civilization had given up idols and graven images, that did not mean the end of serving "other gods." Although Christianity rather quickly conquered all of Europe, the old pagan gods were often anonymously incorporated into the new religion.

For the acid test for religion is not the faith to which you publicly subscribe, but that which you follow in the day-to-day living of your life. The problem is not so much the pagan forces that surround us, but those which inhabit our lives from within. We profess a spiritual power, but live as if it were only the material that counted. We preach faith, but we try to live by certainty. We talk of venturing forth for God, but we cling desperately to our security. We elevate righteousness, but spend our lives grasping at power. Even-- and maybe especially-- in our church lives.

So Moses gave the "new" generation good advice and they were wise enough to heed it.

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, August 20

Central Championship Show, 6 p.m., Huntingdon Fairgrounds
Warren County Holstein Sale, Pittsfield, noon.
Northeast District Dairy Shows, Troy Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.
PA Cattlemen's Association, summer field day, Ag arena, PSU, 9 a.m.

Sunday, August 21

Toy Tractor Show & Sale, Preble Co. Fairgrounds, Eaton, OH.
Franklin County Fair, Chambersburg, through 27th.
Crawford County Fair, Meadville, through the 27th.

Monday, August 22

Harford Fair, Harford, PA. Runs through the 27th.
Fulton County Fair, McConnellsburg, through the 27th.
Mountain Area Community Fair, Farmington, through the 27th.

Tuesday, August 23

Cumberland Co. 4-H Swine Round-up Sale. 5:30 p.m. at Carlisle Livestock Market.
Blue Valley Farm Show, Bangor, through the 27th.
Perry County Fair, Newport, through the 27th.
Elizabethtown Community Fair,

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Hookstown Grange Fair, Hookstown, through the 28th.

Wednesday, August 24

Northwest PA Holstein Show, Crawford Fairgrounds, Meadville.

Perry County Holstein Show, Fair-

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FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

Editor:

I am writing this letter in sheer disgust, I am ashamed that the American Congressman & Representative cannot see past his nose.

I am ashamed that the American dairy farmer cannot send a representative to a drought hearing that knows anything about the farm situation.

People make jokes about the stupid farmer and they are probably right. Who else in the world would sell everything he markets and not know what he is going to receive for his product? Who else

would work 15-hour days only to find out that he did not work hard enough so he could take a vacation? Who else would gamble that it was going to rain enough to supply food for the country at slave wages.

I keep reading about a 50 cent increase in milk prices and I keep hearing about emergency loans and emergency feed.

Only the American farmer would be stupid enough to believe that these things will keep him in business. Only the American farmer will continue to work long

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