



OPINION

Farmers Play Key Role

Is our food supply really safe or should we be concerned about pesticide residues? That question was at the heart of a debate between Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, director of the American Council on Science and Health and Jan Auerbach, review branch chief for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

These experts appeared during the "Confrontation," moderated by long-time NBC news commentator Edwin Newman. The session was part of the National Corn Growers Corn Classic in Nashville, TN.

Both Whelan and Auerbach agreed that the U.S. food supply is safe. However, Whelan noted that the public is sometimes led to believe otherwise by people she described as "noseaphobics." "These people are like hypochondriacs only they are always thinking they will get sick in the future." As a result, they try to remove all risks in our society, she added.

A recently released report by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) suggested that children are at risk from eating produce that was grown with the use of pesticides. Whelan said the report is "typical of this type of pseudo-science." Groups like this overlook naturally occurring carcinogens and many of the bigger public health concerns like smoking and alcoholism, added Whelan. In essence, they are "squishing ants while the elephants run wild."

Whelan suggested that the more than 1,600 corn growers in attendance demand that regulators stand up and state the truth. "We have the safest food supply in the world." She also asked the group to "implore scientists to step forward and get out of their stupor" on food safety issues. "We need scientists to defrock those 'toxic terrorists'."

Auerbach agreed that the U.S. food supply is generally safe. And she pointed out how the EPA has taken regulatory actions to protect the public when they can base their decisions on sufficient data.

However, many pesticides were registered years ago and the data base on these products is lacking, noted Auerbach. The EPA is in the process of requesting new data and reviewing pesticides to meet current regulation standards.

"When this process is over, everyone will have a much higher confidence level in our food supply," Auerbach added.

The agency has implemented a "comfortable margin" of safety for their regulations and assessments, explained Auerbach. But these assume that farmers are using pesticides safely. She encouraged growers to always follow label directions, practice integrated pest management and be open to using non-chemical alternatives.

No question about it. American farmers produce good food. And they play a key role in keeping the food supply safe.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Patient

This is the time of year that we are under strain and pressure to get a lot of jobs under way for the planting season. It also means that we are not as patient with people and livestock. Let's be careful, as we move our cattle around, and not give them that extra slap or prod or try to speed up movement. Keep in mind, that extra shove or push could have an effect on production. Cows can "sense" the change in pace and temperament and respond with a little less production.

There is a great deal of activity in the spring season, but let's not take it out on our cattle. Be patient and try to maintain a relaxed schedule as we move our livestock around. It'll pay off in the milk check.

We find that in the best producing herds the animals are relaxed and the workers are relaxed. This tells us something about the tender loving care that cattle need.

To Apply Poultry Manure Sparingly

With the large poultry population in this region, poultry manure is in good supply. Since poultry manure may contain from 15 pounds to nearly 50 pounds of nitrogen per ton, depending on moisture and litter content, overapplication can burn crops and result in disappointments. Gardeners should not be using heavy

amounts of fresh manure in their soils. On cropland it is recommended that poultry manure applications be limited to not more than 5 to 7 tons of 75% moisture content per acre.

Keep in mind that some poultry manure may contain up to 50 pounds of nitrogen per ton and can burn seeds and crop roots. Poultry manure is also the highest in phosphorus and potash of any of our farm manures. It has excellent fertilizer value when used properly.

The 1989-90 Agronomy Guide (page 19) gives additional details about the fertilizer values of farm manures. The Agronomy Guide is available through any extension office in Pennsylvania for a \$5 fee.

To Remove Trash

Landowners along rural roads are the victims of people who have little respect for property of others. Too many people are dumping trash in fields along the road. In all cases when this is dumped on pastures or cropland, the trash should be removed before spring growth begins. This trash will be hard on farm equipment when on cropland and may be poisonous to livestock when on

pastureland.

We urge property owners to remove the trash in the next few weeks. If any type of identification can be made, as to the owner of the trash, this should be reported to Township officials; prosecution can be made for dumping trash along the highway.

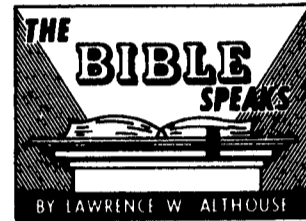
To Control Mice In Orchards

Now that the winter is almost gone, our fruit growers should take a look at the newly exposed grass sod in their orchards. If there are runways at the surface of the grass, it is a good sign that there are plenty of mice in the orchard, even though a mouse baiting program may have been followed last fall.

The mice have used up their stockpiles of stored food and are now looking for a fresh supply. At this time of the year they will move quickly onto bark and roots of fruit trees.

Fruit growers should rebait their orchards as soon as possible if there are fresh mouse signs.

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THE FULLEST OF THE FULLEST
March 19, 1989

Background Scripture: Colossians 2:6-23.

Devotional Reading: Luke 19:29-40.

Although hardly an expert on religions other than Christianity, over the years I have had some significant experiences with other faiths, as well as having taught a number of classes on one or more of them. At these times I have always been profoundly impressed with these traditions so different from my own. I have frequently concluded that, if everyone on this earth were to sincerely practice one of these many faiths, the world would be a far better place in which to live. Truism or not, I believe we all believe in one God. A good Buddhist has nothing to fear from a good Hindu and a good Christian should be able to regard both as his brethren.

THE COMPLETE PICTURE

Yet, at the same time I can appreciate that all or most religions can lead us to the one God. I am no less enamoured of the Christian way, for in it I find a fullness, a completeness that I do not find in the others. The God I find in Jesus Christ is as complete a picture of God as I could ever want or need.

I don't mean that this answers all the possible questions I might want to ask, but I am convinced that it contains all the answers that

I need. I find myself echoing Paul: "For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily..." (2:9).

That doesn't mean I can comprehend all that "fullness," but I can comprehend enough for my needs. Neither does it mean that I say this with any arrogance or pride-- "My view of God is better than yours"-- but with humility. All too often Christians adopt the wrong attitude toward other religions, failing to realize that having a "better" religious faith does not necessarily make us "better." Being a Christian is not like being an avid fan of the NFL team that wins the Superbowl.

THE COMPLETE LIFE

Actually, the key is not a matter of who understands God more completely, but who serves him more fully. This is the second of the "fullnesses" of which Paul writes the Colossians: "...and you have come to fullness of life in him..." (2:10a). Christianity gives us, not only the most complete picture of God, but the most complete life we can experience. If-- a big "if," I'll grant you-- I can manage to live according to Christ's teachings, I cannot imagine any possible life fuller than that. If I can learn to love God with all my heart, soul, strength and mind, and my neighbor as myself, what more is there that I need to know? If I can manage to take up my cross and follow him, what more is there to do? If I can discipline myself to seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, what more can anyone of any faith add to my life?

I can choose only for myself, but I am certain that in choosing Jesus Christ I have found all the fullness the world has to offer.

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Farm Calendar



- Saturday, March 18**
1989 Intensive Grazing Management Seminar, 4-H Center, Jefferson, Md., 7:00 a.m.
- PA Simmental Association annual meeting, Altoona Sheraton, 7:30 a.m.
- Monday, March 20**
National Agriculture Day
PennAg Free Trade Conference, Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, 9:15 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Water Quality Fair, Penn State Fruit & Research Lab, Biglerville, 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland Council hay auction, Plum Bottom Farm, Belleville, 1:00 p.m.
- Future of Chester County Agriculture meeting, Sadsbury Fire Hall, Sadsbury, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.
- Mercer County Pork Producers meeting, Mercer County Extension Center, Mercer, 7:30 p.m.

- Vegetable Breeding Symposium, Ithaca Sheraton Inn, Ithaca, NY; runs through March 21.
- Tuesday, March 21**
Luzerne County Pesticide Certification Exam, Luzerne County Extension Office, Wilkes-Barre, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
- Southeast Pennsylvania Vegetable & Small Fruit meeting, Montgomery County Extension Office, Creamery, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- Financial Management for Farm Families, Hunterdon County Extension Center, Flemington, N.J., 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; make reservations by March 14 at 201/788-1342.
- Bradford County Agronomy Day, Ulster Fire Hall, Ulster, 9:30 a.m.
- Elco FFA banquet, Elco Middle School Cafeteria, Myerstown, 7:00 p.m.
- Northern Lebanon FFA banquet,

- Northern Lebanon High School, Fredericksburg, 7:00 p.m.
- Child Caregivers Short Course 2, Health Concerns for Day Care Providers, York County Extension Office, York, 7:00 p.m.; call 717/757-9657 for reservations.
- Mercer County Field Crop Pesticide Management meeting, Mercer County Extension Office, Mercer, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
- Hydroponics Workshop, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Building, Room 309, Harrisburg, 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.; call 717/757-9657 for reservations.
- Ephrata Area Young Farmers Association meeting, Ephrata High School Agriculture Department, Ephrata, 7:45 p.m.
- Wednesday, March 22**
Upper Dauphin County Area Dairy Day, Upper Dauphin High School vo-ag department (Turn to Page A35)

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