

FARM FORUM OUR READERS WRITE

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We are on record in opposition to the high-handed and disruptive tactics of the animal rights supporters. It is difficult to understand how any employee of the Department of Agriculture could take such an extreme position against his agency's state purpose of promoting Pennsylvania's number one industry. Mr. Malik's criticism of veal producers is certainly not a promotion of agriculture and compromises his position with the dairy farmers he supposedly serves.

We commend, furthermore, the efforts of the AVA and other

Editor

I would like to know how we can enlighten the general public more about the health benefits of nature's most perfect food - milk?

People tell me that they cannot drink milk or use other dairy products because of the high cholesterol, however, when Penn State did a double-blind study, I believe, on two groups of volunteers in the past year or so they proved without doubt that whole milk actually could lower cholesterol very significantly.

With new grandchildren in our family, and being a label reader anyway, I again looked at the commercial baby formulas and was shocked to find that in all except one, the third or fourth ingredient was coconut oil - the first two being skim milk and usually water. The different formula used palm kernel oil instead of coconut oil. Even the soy formula for milk-intolerant babies had coconut oil in it!

Supposedly it is being removed from cereals, cookies, crackers,

livestock producers who continue to seek humane, yet profitable, methods of animal husbandry. Their practical, common sense approach to protecting their livestock investment will ultimately produce the best results for Pennsylvania agriculture.

Farmers, both crop and livestock producers, should rally behind the veal industry in this matter and counteract the instruction of destructive forces into normal agricultural operations.

Sincerely,
Representative John E. Barley
100th Legislative District
Representative
J. Scot Chadwick
110th Legislative District

etc. but the most vulnerable of all, the newborn baby, if it is unlucky enough to not have its own mother's milk, is prescribed one of these adulterated products for the first few months of life, exclusively. I had assumed if coconut oil was being removed from our diets - and used for soap for which it is very good - that the baby formulas would be cleaned up first. Not so! Not only is a much less saturated fat, milkfat, being taken out but a highly saturated fat is being put in, regardless of the health effect.

Either the tropical oils cost less or they help with a longer shelf life or both. They certainly cannot claim to be healthier for all of us.

Let's all try to get the milk and dairy products health messages to the general public, not just in our great dairy magazines. In public our actions sometimes speak as loud as our words.

Drink milk and use dairy products for your health!

Doris Hough
Peach Bottom

FARM MANAGEMENT

BY ROLAND P. FREUND
Regional Farm Management
Agent

Penn State Cooperative Ext.
The farm labor
situation.

Recently farmers have experienced increasing difficulty in maintaining the labor supply needed for the efficient operation of the business. But the problem is very complex, so we shall be presenting a series of articles in this column for the next several months to highlight some of the important aspects of farm labor management. There are many factors which contribute to the present situation, so we need to examine some of them in this introduction to the series.

The general economy

Low unemployment is generally regarded as a sign of a healthy economy. In southeastern Pennsylvania our economy appears to be very healthy on this count. But we have reached the point that there is such competition for the services of those who are willing to work, that they now have plenty of choices. Unfortunately many farm jobs are less appealing than the alternatives which are offered.

The farm economy

In recent years the crop, swine and poultry industries have suffered through very slim profit margins due to low prices. Then the drought of 1988 added to the difficulties. As a result, returns to labor and management for most

enterprises have been very close to zero. This has made it difficult to pay farm wage and benefit packages which are competitive with those by commerce and industry. So labor problems may be one symptom of a deeper farm financial bind.

While the short-term outlook for most of our enterprises looks a little better at the moment, there is still a basic long-range profitability question which will govern what is prudent for the individual farmer to do to improve the labor situation. There might be a temptation to make more investments such as new buildings or equipment for the sake of improving labor efficiency, but such action could lead to more problems than it avoids.

There is no general "fix" that can be applied to every situation. Each operation has its own set of circumstances, and only with a detailed picture of the whole farm and its management, can a solution be tailored for the problem. However, the process that needs to be applied will fit most circumstances.

Analyse the farm situation

Any major farm decision, including labor management changes, will have a financial impact. This effect on profits can be measured with careful analysis and strategic planning. The farm goal needs to be to maintain or to improve farm profitability, and different labor strategies can be

evaluated by creating whole farm budgets or by partial budgets.

Labor management should be just as much a component of a farm plan as crop rotations, feeding programs, or machinery management. If this sounds like a time-consuming effort, it is. The problem is that in the absence of a clear plan and detailed job assignments, along with objective and regularly scheduled employee evaluations, farm labor can become economically and emotionally unproductive and unrewarding for both management and labor. The time taken to organize labor is only a fraction of the time that will be lost through disorganization.

Evaluate the family situation

Any operation which involves more than one person, and this includes both family and hired workers, has a labor problem unless serious thought is given to the concerns and responsibilities of each person. Disputes within a family often arise because of lack of communication and negligence. Plan to avoid conflicts, because it may be impossible to resolve them once they arise.

Develop a labor management plan

The many aspects of labor management which need to be considered in a plan will be the subject of the series of articles which will appear over the next several months. These will include: Legal issues, Tax implications, Structuring the labor force, Job descriptions, Recruiting, Interview/hiring, Training, Motivating workers, Communications and evaluation, Supervision and delegation, Salary and other incentives.

Do not despair! A long journey can be made one step at a time. Walk through this process with us, and do not hesitate to contact your equal opportunity county extension office for information and assistance on labor and other farm management issues.



A tornado completely destroyed the Herr's home in Lancaster County on June 15. The Herr's wish to thank the farming community who aided the Herr family during clean-up.

Editor:

On Thursday evening, June 15, our home was destroyed by the tornado that touched down in Manor Township (Lancaster County).

We would like to thank the many people from the farming community that came to our aid the morning after the tornado. To all of the people that helped to clear the debris, that brought trucks and other equipment, to the people who sifted through the rubble and searched the fields to find anything that could be salvaged,

to the people who donated food and drinks, to those of you that took the time to talk to us and offered shoulders to cry on, to our family, friends, relatives and the countless others that are nameless, we would like to say, God bless and thank you so very much. We may not know many of your names, but your faces will be etched in our minds forever. You not only lended us a hand, but gave us your hearts as well.

Sincerely,
Michael, Denise,
Stephanie & Lauren Herr
Centerville

CHOOSE IT OR LOSE IT!

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and consume you, after having done you good" (24:20).

Joshua gave the people of Israel ample opportunity to make their choices freely. But, despite his warnings against insincerity, the people replied: "The Lord our

God we will serve, and his voice we will obey" (24:24).

And you-- what will you choose?


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Broiler and Turkey Talk

by
Forest Muir

Associate Professor of Poultry Science
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FEED WITHDRAWAL FOR BROILERS

by Forest Muir
Professor of Poultry Science

Carcass contamination in the processing plant can be greatly reduced by ensuring that the digestive tract of broilers is free of feed prior to slaughter. This is accomplished by withdrawing feed from the broilers 10-12 hours before processing. A recent research article in the Poultry Science Journal reported on the result from two experiments examining the effects of cooping and water deprivation on contents of the digestive tract following feed withdrawal.

For the first experiment, the broiler chicks were reared on litter in a windowless house. The management of the house included continuous light and free access to feed and water. At 48 days of age, feed was removed from the broil-

ers and equal numbers of birds were assigned to the following treatments: 1) broilers placed and kept in coops, 2) broilers kept on litter without water, 3) broilers kept on litter with water provided free choice.

Cooped broilers had significantly more material in the coop than broilers left on litter 4 hours after feed withdrawal and in the proventriculus and gizzard at 6 hours post feed withdrawal. No significant treatment differences were found for the quantity of material in the small intestine.

Chicks for the second experiment were reared similarly to those in the first experiment, except at 48 days the broilers were placed on a meal-feeding regimen of 1.5 hours access to feed and water and 4 hours without feed. This cycle was repeated 4 times per 24 hours. After 42 hours of the meal feeding

program, equal numbers of the broilers were assigned to the three treatments of Experiment 1. The quality of feed material in the crop was significantly greater for cooped broilers at 2, 4, 6, and 8 hours after feed restriction than for the broiler on the two litter treatments. The results showed that during both experiments water withdrawal did not significantly affect the quantity of feed in the digestive tract of broilers left on litter.

The results from these two experiments demonstrated that following feed withdrawal, cooped broilers retained feed in the digestive tract longer than broilers left on litter. Lack of water is not the factor that limits the movement of material through the digestive tract of cooped broilers. Because the objective is to make certain that the digestive tract is free of feed before processing, broiler processing companies must consider that cooping broilers delays clearance of the digestive tract in scheduling feed withdrawal time for a specific flock.

Reference: May, J. D., and J. W. Deato, 1989. Digestive tract clearance of broilers cooped or deprived of water. Poultry Sci. 68:627-630.

