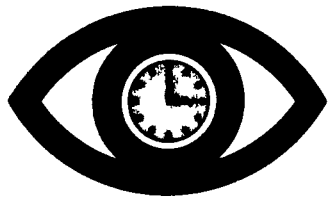




OPINION

TAKE TIME

The Eye Clock

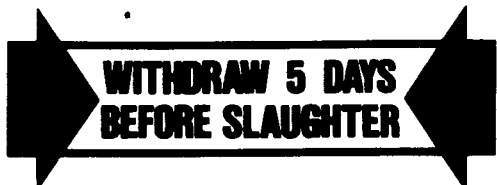


OBSERVE LABEL DIRECTIONS

And

The

Double Arrow



Producers of animal-derived foods have adopted tough, self-imposed positions. For example, the Beef Safety Assurance Program promoted by the National Cattlemen's Assn., asks each participating cattle feeder to sign a beef safety assurance agreement that verifies that all cattle shipped from the producer-member are healthy and wholesome. This means the cattle meet Food and Drug Administration (FDA), U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards. The agreement for the beef producers includes periodic sampling of carcasses at packing plants.

In addition, the National Pork Producers have a new quality assurance program that will lead to certification of qualifying producers. The National Broiler Council promotes their Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) procedures.

The American Veal Assn., adapted their Veal Quality Assurance Program at their recent annual meeting in Lancaster. The veal producer guarantees that all calves shipped meet FDA, USDA and EPA specifications.

And the quality incentive programs in the dairy industry have been very successful. These programs take into consideration, not only bacteria and cell counts, but also look for antibiotic violations.

One of the organizations that has helped producer groups to formulate these programs has been the Animal Health Institute in Alexandria, Virginia. The AHI has developed labels that help agricultural food producers to watch for instructions for proper use of medications.

The Eye Clock reminds livestock and poultry producers to take time to observe the label directions. And the Double Arrows highlight the warnings and procedures which must be followed if a producer is to avoid violations for drug residues in his products.

We applaud these self-imposed industry programs and the help AHI gives to the producer groups. Mike Wehler, president-elect of the National Pork Producers Council said it best: "Much as I'd like to avoid another program, I really don't think we have a choice anymore," Wehler said. "We can wait for the government to impose a program...or we can elect to regulate ourselves...self-regulation is a much more attractive option from the point of view of independence for the producer"

Farm Calendar

Saturday, July 15
 Pennsylvania Cattlemen's & Colonial Charolais Association
 Field Day, Ray Grimes farm,

McKightstown, 9:00 a.m. For information, call Dr. Wilson at 814/863-3659.

(Turn to Page A35)

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NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
 Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Evaluate The Wheat And Barley Crop

We have a number of concerns with the grain crop coming off this year. Many farmers are reporting lower yields and lower bushel weight from this year's disease infested fields of barley and wheat. Large quantities of spores from a variety of disease organisms are making fields very dusty. Inhaling large quantities of dust and spores can be hazardous to your health. So, we're recommending that you use a toxic dust mask when working in these conditions to help protect your lungs. Our specialists tell us that this poor quality grain should be dried down to 12-13% moisture to help blow out disease organisms and prevent their growth while in storage. And most importantly, do not feed any of this grain until it has been analyzed for nutritional value and for toxins. Let's not take chances with this "below standard" grain.

To Manage Stressed Alfalfa Stands

Many second cutting alfalfa stands lack vigor for a variety of reasons. The presence of cool wet conditions caused black stem to infest some of the first cuttings and leafspots to infest many of the second cuttings. The general lack of sunshine resulted in less photosynthetic activity by the plants. Excess rainfall and water logged soils stressed root systems, and the roots that remained were less able to supply plants' needs, especially as maturity and hot weather increased their water demands. Consequently, stands were yellow, growth was stunted and some plants died out. Then, the more recent arrival of leafhoppers added insult to injury.

The question many farmers are asking is, "How should I manage these stressed stands?" Fields that have been cut more than four weeks ago would probably benefit from being cut again, as soon as possible, regardless of height or stage of maturity. Cutting will accomplish several things: it'll remove diseased and injured top growth, it'll help balance the demands of the plant for water and nutrients with the current ability

of its weakened root system, and it'll encourage more rapid regrowth.

Then, pamper the regrowth. Protect it from leafhopper injury if leafhoppers are present, and delay the third cutting until the crop reaches the bloom stage of maturity so it can build up energy reserves in its root system.

To Plan For Fall Seeding

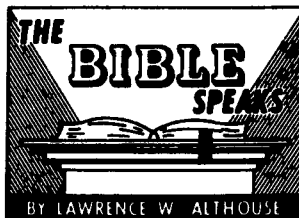
The late summer and fall seeding season is coming rapidly; August seedings of alfalfa should now be in the planning stage. Winter wheat and barley seedings should be planned and orders placed for the right kind of seed. Don't wait until seeding time and then discover the supply is exhausted. Certified seed is highly recommended this year, because of the fungus and mold problems. Don't waste time and money on poor quality seeds; you could be

spreading disease and more weeds.

To Take Time To Be Safe

Once every four years the average farm laborer can expect to be injured so severely that medical attention is required. Our safety engineers tell us that agricultural workers are much more susceptible to accidents and injury than industrial workers.

Many pieces of farm machinery need to be repaired and adjusted on the job. Some of this is done while the machinery is operating and on the run. This is dangerous and we urge you to stop the machine and shut it off before any adjustments are made. Just a few seconds of patience could save a life or a vital part of the human body. Keep in mind however, it is not the machinery that is at fault in most cases, but the operator who does not take time to be safe.



SHOW ME A SIGN
 July 16, 1989

Background Scripture:

Judges 6

Devotional Reading:

Exodus 3: 1-12

From what I read of Gideon, he is a man after my own heart. Lots of people who have believed they, like Gideon, have received a special mission from God would have been better off—and maybe the world, too—if they had responded as Gideon did; "If now I have found favor with thee, then show me a sign that it is thou who speakest with me" (6:17).

I must confess that the first time I read this story many years ago, I did not respond nearly that favorably to Gideon. In my youthful naivete I was more than a little shocked at his seemingly irreverent response to God's angel—"Pray, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers recounted to us..." (6:13).

AUDACIOUS GIDEON

Gideon seemed to be on the thin edge between an audacious question and an outright complaint. How could he question "all this" that had plagued the people of Israel. True, they were certainly suffering persecution, but was it not Israel's own fault? Today you and I have the benefit of the hindsight of the writer of Judges: "The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian for seven years" (6:1).

It is interesting to note that, although Judges implies that Gideon is audacious for his response to God's angel, nowhere in the whole story is there any sense of negative reaction by the Lord. Nothing he says to Gideon,

either directly or through his angel, indicates the slightest impatience with Gideon's cautious and questioning manner.

When we carefully examine Gideon's encounter with the angel, I think it is evident that Gideon's response was a reasonable and sincere one—throughout the Bible God seems to have a predilection for people who speak out plainly and boldly when doubtful. For one thing, Gideon was perfectly reasonable in being suspicious of the angel who began the encounter with an equally audacious statement: "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor" (6:12b). To call him "a mighty man of valor" must have seemed a cruel mockery. Up until this time Gideon was not recorded as having been either "mighty" nor a "man of valor."

CAUTIOUS GIDEON

I once regarded Gideon's response as an evasion of responsibility. But today I realize that Gideon was being perfectly open and honest: "Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family." This is not an evasion nor easy way out, but an honest doubt that he was equal to this task. Haven't you and I had pretty much the same reaction at times when God has called us. "Who, me? Surely you must have the wrong number!"

It seems that the angel of the Lord addresses Gideon in terms of what he could be, rather than in terms of what he was at that moment. He is challenging Gideon to become the man that God created him to be. And to reassure Gideon, God, through the angel, tells Gideon not to worry about his personal adequacy—"But I will be with you." (6:16).

Earnestly desiring not to be deceived and misled, Gideon asks for a "sign" that this is really God speaking to him and even after that he asks the Lord to give him two more signs. He wanted to be sure he was working with God alone. When God calls us to a new task in our lives, there is nothing wrong with asking him to show us a sign.

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