



OPINION

Real Cost Of The Apple Scare

Now that some of the dust has settled on the Great Apple Scare of 1989, we need to ask ourselves what the cost has been. And who among us is paying. Not the cost to apple growers; we know they've lost millions already. And not to apple processors or food retailers, who may be able to survive short-term crises like these.

American taxpayers are bearing part of the cost. As taxpayers, you and I are going to foot the bill for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's recently announced purchase of \$15 million worth of surplus apples. A small price for the government, perhaps, but an expenditure brought on solely by the fact-less apple scare. Also, we will bear the cost of economic hardship felt by the hardest-hit apple growers, many of whom will go out of business and won't be around to compete in future years. Growers have lost as much as \$56 million in irretrievable or delayed apple sales during the last three months.

Jay Vroom, executive vice president, National Ag Chemicals Assn., says that while we ponder the financial costs, we should also count the nutritional costs. Five to seven million boxes of apples currently are in storage around the country. If consumers — especially America's children — are not eating healthy, nutritious apples, what are they eating?

In our system, industry is held responsible for its products and actions through complex regulatory and legal checks and balances designed for the common good. When mistakes are made, companies must bear the costs imposed by federal agencies or the courts. Everyone accepts this. But what happens when self-anointed watchdog groups like the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the group that started the apple scare, create a panic? They answer to no one, not even the government; they are not subjected to the same stiff fines when their actions result in public harm.

Ironically, organizations like the NRDC usually are the only groups to profit as a result of fear-mongering. Experience shows that following alarmist reports by these groups, their memberships and donations initially increase as a worried public turns to the alarmists themselves for information and guidance. Groups like the NRDC really set themselves up as shadow regulatory agencies. Playing on the public mistrust of government institutions, they constantly churn the waters to assure their own special-interest survival.

So the next time you pass the apple bin in your local grocery store, grab a few to take to the checkout counter. Despite the fear-mongering, apples are safe to eat. Besides, whether you take some or not, you'll be paying for them.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Be Careful During Silo Filling

Two problems occur during silo filling time. One is overloading wagons causing broken spindles, twisted frames and bent axles. Corn silage is heavy this year and overloaded wagons crossing ditches or ruts in fields causes excessive strain on equipment. If your wagon is full when you are only half way around the field, change wagons; the "down time" to make repairs is more costly than the time to change wagons.

The other problem is "silo gas". I've discussed it before but it is important enough to review again. One farmer called to inform us that chickens walking under the chute of his recently filled silo dropped over dead from the gases coming down the chute. These gases can develop from one day to 14 days after the silo is filled. Most of these gases have a chlorine-laundry bleach odor. Some are yellow and some are colorless. Don't take any chances -- never enter a partly filled silo without running the blower for at least 15 minutes. These gases are heavier than air and will come down the chute into the barn. For more information on how it affects your lungs, contact the Lancaster County Lung Association. Be very careful around recently filled silos.

To Control Weeds In New Alfalfa

Recent growing conditions have favored the growth of alfalfa and weeds. In many cases the broadleaf weeds will crowd out the small alfalfa plants, if not controlled. Early seedings of alfalfa without a nurse crop need some weed protection.

One practice suggested in the Agronomy Guide is to spray with 2, 4-DB when the weeds are one inch tall. This will knock out the broadleaf weeds without harming the alfalfa plants. Follow label directions.

If the weeds are permitted to develop larger, they will be hard to kill without hurting the alfalfa. Alfalfa seeding is expensive; this investment needs protection by controlling the weeds. Many good stands of alfalfa have been ruined by excessive weed growth.

To Store Pesticides Safely

Most producers are about finished with their spray materials for the year. Many of these can be held over until next year with

good results. However, it is always best to buy only enough for one season at a time. When storing spray materials, always keep them in their original containers and away from children, pets and livestock. It is best to have a separate room or building for pesticide storage. Wettable powders are easy to store; however, emulsions and liquids may be harmed by freezing weather. Producers are urged to follow the label and instructions in this respect. It may be necessary to keep some of them in a heated building. Be sure they are not near feed supplies because accidents can happen. Pesticides kept in a room or building under a lock is a good way to prevent costly mistakes and tragedies.

To Check Fan Louvers

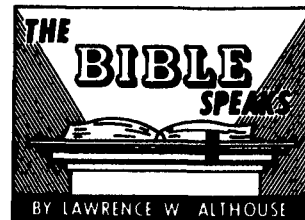
Fan louvers on poultry and

swine operations should close tightly when a fan is not operating. If they don't air will enter through the open louver and be discharged by the nearest running fan, giving you no ventilation value.

When the fan is on, louvers must be fully open; otherwise, they will restrict the flow of air from the building. Tests have shown that a little dust on fan louvers can restrict air flow by more than 1,000 c.f.m. per fan. A restricted fan operates longer and bears a heavier load using more electricity, which costs money.

In many cases, you can repair louvers that are sticking open or shut just by cleaning them and applying oil or rust solvent to the hinges.

Penn State Cooperative Extension is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.



TURN AND LIVE
September 10, 1989

Background Scripture: Ezekiel 34: 1-31.

Devotional Reading: Matthew 9: 35-38.

Often it is assumed that in taking the step between unbelief and Christian discipleship there is but one great chasm there to be crossed: belief in God. Actually, however, there are two great chasms. Belief in a Creator God is only the first of two great leaps that must be made and many find it easier to contemplate than the second: the conviction that the Creator God is also a Father God who loves each of us.

A scientist who came to Dallas to speak to the Isthmus Institute told me that his work in science had helped him move from absolute atheism to an "uneasy agnosticism." "The more I learn about this world," he told me, "the harder it is for me to believe that there is not some Great Mind behind it all." He went on to say: "But to believe that the great Mind has created and sustains the universe also knows and cares about me, that is something I cannot fathom."

INCREDIBLE CONVICTION

The Judaic-Christian claim of a personal Father-Redeemer-God does seem incredible. If you have never been awed by the wonder of that conviction, you haven't given it much thought! I confess that it has occupied my mind with some frequency since my earliest days. Often it has been when I have contemplated the sheer majesty of God as the creator and sustainer of the universe and tried to reconcile those thoughts with the comparatively insignificant concerns with which I come to God in prayer. As

a college student, for example, I frequently wondered how the Lord of Creation could possibly concern himself with my pleas for help in passing a tough exam, let alone millions upon millions of others like me with their own personal agendas.

Yet, incredible as that claim may seem, it is one that is a recurrent theme in the Bible. God the Father is the picture that comes to us through Jesus in the four gospels. But there are similar pictures in the Old Testament and none are more compelling than that of the Good Shepherd in Ezekiel 34. The God we find in this chapter is awesome, not for His creative power, but for the sheer magnitude of His love. This is a love not only for humanity in general, but each of His children in particular.

Note the particularity of his concern: "I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the crippled, and I will strengthen the weak...I will provide them with prosperous plantations so that they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land..." (34:16,29). Like the good shepherd, God is concerned about the everyday needs of members of His flock.

SHEPHERDS OF ISRAEL

This 34th chapter of Ezekiel is not only a prophecy of consolation and hope to those who have suffered, but a warning to the shepherds of Israel, the leaders who have served themselves and neglected the people. "Ho, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep?... The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the crippled you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them" (34:4). Is it not a warning also to us in this day when taking care of one's self seems to be the ultimate universal obligation.

Not only does Christianity present a God who loves each one of us as if there were but one of us to love, but who requires of us the same kind of love and compassion.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, September 16

Days of the Past, Washington Crossing State Park, Titusville, N.J., 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Frontier Day, Warwick Park, Pottstown, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; rain date September 17.
Pride of York County all breed swine sale, York fairgrounds, York, 12:30 p.m.

Morgan Horse Training Clinic, Win-Blu Stables, Wakefield, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 17

Delaware 4-H Horse Show, Richard and Betty Niblett farm, Bear, Del., 9:00 a.m.
Mercer County Holstein Club picnic, Art Baxter farm,

Stoneboro, 1:00 p.m.

York County 4-H pig roundup, Weikert's Livestock Buying Station, Thomasville, 4:00 p.m. show; sale Monday, 7:00 p.m.
Beaver Community Fair, Beaver Springs; runs through September 23.

Monday, September 18

Reading Fair, Reading; runs through September 23.
Gratz Fair, Gratz; runs through September 23.

Tuesday, September 19

Harmony Fair, Westover; runs through September 23.
Great Frederick Fair, Frederick fairgrounds, Frederick, Md.;

(Turn to Page A39)

Lancaster Farming

Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
— by —
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinman Enterprise
Robert G. Campbell General Manager
Everett R. Newswanger Managing Editor

Copyright 1989 by Lancaster Farming

