



OPINION

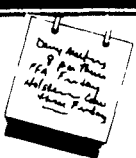
Practical Farmer Knowledge

A glass of skim milk each day can keep excess cholesterol away. That's the report summary of several university findings. According to a national tabloid, volunteers drink a quart of skim milk every day for eight weeks. These volunteers for Penn State researchers made no other dietary or lifestyle changes, but when the test was completed most of them had a noticeable improvement in blood cholesterol levels.

Dr. Daniel Cramer, assistant professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Harvard Medical school, said the switch to skim milk would most likely benefit young people in their 20's and 30's but everyone should see some benefit. Evidently, skim milk has components that reduce the body's ability to manufacture cholesterol.

Of course, we know that the high levels of calcium in milk help reduce the risk of high blood pressure too. Three glasses of skim milk each day provide enough calcium to cut your risk of high blood pressure by 22 percent. The tabloid called this an "astounding university discovery." But those of us who have worked on the farm have known for a long time that "milk is fitness you can drink" and "does a body good." The doctors in this world just take a little longer to catch on to our practical farmer knowledge.

Farm Calendar



Sunday, December 10

Alexander Schaeffer Farm candle-light tour, Christmas drop in party, Schaefferstown, 2:00 p.m.

Monday, December 11

Salmonella informational meeting, Clayton Hall, University of Delaware, Newark, Del., 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.; to register, call 302/856-7303.

Wednesday, December 13

16th annual Mid-Atlantic Conservation Tillage conference, Maryland State fairgrounds, Timonium, Md., 9:15 a.m. to 3:15 p.m.

Newspaper bedding meeting, Weaver Homestead, New Holland, 10:00 a.m. and Robert Wagner farm, Quarryville, 7:00 p.m.; call the Lancaster County Extension office for directions.

ARHMA executive committee meeting, Penn State Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, 1:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 14

Alternative grain crops meeting, Hegins Fire Company Hall, Hegins, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Mercer County DHI banquet, Mercer County Extension Center, Mercer, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 15

Pennsylvania Seedmen's Association winter meeting, Eden Resort Inn & Conference Center, 9:30 a.m.

Pennsylvania Egg Marketing Association dinner, Olde Hickory Inn, Lancaster, 6:00 p.m. social hour, 7:00 p.m. dinner.

Tuesday, December 19

Farrowing Short Course, 111 Henning Building, Penn State, University Park; runs through December 20.

Wednesday, December 20

Pennsylvania Forage & Grassland Council meeting and banquet, Sheraton Inn, Altoona, noon.

Thursday, December 21

Grain drying and storage meeting, Conference Center, Penn State, Schuylkill Campus, Schuylkill Haven, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 27

Lebanon County 4-H Livestock Club Winter Roundup, Lebanon Area Fairgrounds, Lebanon, pig show at noon, beef and lamb shows 1:00 p.m. December 28, and sale 6:00 p.m. December 28.

Monday, January 1

Red Rose Alliance pork and sauerkraut dinner, Churchtown Fire Hall, Churchtown, 11:00 a.m.

Tuesday, January 2

44th annual meeting of the Northeastern Weed Science Society, Sheraton Boston Hotel & Towers, Boston, Mass.; runs through January 5.

Wednesday, January 3

Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Program second annual banquet, Holiday Inn, Grantville, general session at 2:00 p.m., banquet 5:30 p.m.

Lancaster County home horticulture seminar, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, Lancaster;



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Sort Tobacco

Tobacco stripping is under way in this part of the state and many hours will be spent removing the leaves from the stalk. The days of special handling and sizing seem to be over; however, it is still very important that growers sort the injured and ground leaves from the good tobacco. This will be required if the crop is being sold on grade. With some "pull off" crops this is less important. On the other hand growers should be fair enough to sort out the undesirable leaves. If this is not done, the buyer will be unhappy and look elsewhere for their tobacco supplies. Some sorting is necessary with every crop regardless of the method of selling.

To Take Inventory

An area of our operation that is very important at this time of year is inventory. With the close of the year most of our farmers close out their records for the year. This means that if you are going to have a Farm Analysis made you should take inventory of all your

Readers Write

Editor:

I get your Lancaster Farming every week and I saw in the "Opinion" column about "Your Right to Farm." Our farm is located across from a mushroom farm or grower. They have been adding more houses. Also the smell's awful. I keep my farm clean and haul my manure out. What's the setup on these mushroom growers? How close can they come to your property?

John Oleyar
Bradenville

beginning beekeeping at 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. and home gardener's guide to fruit production at 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 7

Pennsylvania Farm Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg; runs through January 12. Times are 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Friday.

supplies. You'll need this to do any kind of farm analysis, because the amount of grain, hay and other supplies that are in storage will vary from year to year, and unless this is taken into consideration, you cannot have an accurate analysis of our year's operation. So, as accurately as possible, record the amount of hay, grain, feed, seeds and fertilizer that are on hand. This is the first step in an accurate farm analysis.

To Use A Real Tree For Christmas

This is the time of year that most people are considering the type of Christmas tree to buy. And, I hear objections to using real trees as being wasteful. So let's take a look at this situation.

Actually, the Christmas tree farmer is raising trees as a crop and a source of income. This is much the same as the farmer who raises wheat, corn or soybeans to sell or use on his own farm. Christmas trees are raised on land not suited for other crops -- not even pasture land. It's mostly rolling land and highly acid.

Also, remember that these Christmas tree farmers are putting this land to good use; by conserving the soil and providing an

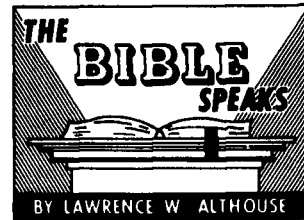
excellent watershed. Keep in mind that Christmas tree farmers have a very slow turnover in their capital -- from the time they plant the tree till it's ready for your living room can be from 5 to 6 years for small trees and 10 to 15 years on the larger trees. Another fact to consider is there is nothing like the fresh aroma of a real tree in your home during the Christmas season.

To Appreciate Farm Labor

Farmers should not neglect opportunities to reduce production costs by carefully using family and non-family labor to maintain productivity at a high level.

There is more to using labor other than just wages paid or family tradeoffs to run the farm. The returns received from your help should always be based on their productivity.

Attention to keeping the farm "labor force" happy and contented will really return more in production than an increase in wages. Put more emphasis on: kindness, praise, respect, concern for the employee's family, some free time, recognition, fair treatment and other non-cash approaches. These will increase production more than wages alone.



DO YOU PREFER THE DARKNESS?
December 10, 1989

Background Scripture:

John 3:1-21.

Devotional Reading:

John 3:18-21.

As a boy, I was always skeptical about this verse: "And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). Because I was somewhat afraid of the dark, I couldn't imagine anyone loving it. Today, of course, I realize that, strange as it may seem, people often do choose darkness instead of light because, for some perverse reason, they love the darkness more. That is the supposition that underlies the newspaper business today: they focus on human darkness -- crime, corruption, decay, tragedy, and anything that is essentially negative. "Bad news" sells newspapers, books, and television advertising time. If your daily newspaper were to focus on "good news" instead of "bad," people wouldn't buy it.

NEGATIVELY TUNED

Unfortunately, many of us are tuned in to negativity. If we are ill, we can describe our feelings in great detail. But if we are well, we are hardly aware of our wellness at all. If someone has a "juicy" story about someone we know, perhaps even a friend, we are much more

likely to listen to it. Even our prayer lives may be dominated by negativity: how much of your prayer time is devoted to asking and how much to thanking? Some people even practice a Christianity that is negatively oriented: seeing and expecting the worst in people and the world. Still others are attracted to satanic religious practices that seem to glory in the darkest and lowest elements in our human nature.

When Nicodemus, a member of Sanhedrin, the Jewish religious council, came to Jesus he came by night because he didn't want anyone to see him in the presence of the Nazarene. He also chose darkness, but in this case he chose darkness to hide, not his sin, but his virtue. The reason, of course, is that his society saw sin as virtue and virtue as sin. Associating with Jesus would threaten his "virtuous" religious standing in the community. So, he chose darkness.

PLAYING "DUMB"

We don't know what he expected Jesus to say to him, but he was obviously perplexed when Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (3:3). Did Nicodemus really not know what Jesus was saying, or was he simply playing "dumb" because he didn't want to deal with it? I suspect the latter, because it is a lot easier to discuss being born physically than it is to be spiritually reborn. If the first seem impossible, the other must seem highly undesirable to others.

The fact is that all of us need to be transformed so that we will seek the light rather than the darkness.

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