



OPINION

"None"-existent

How little is none? This question recently surfaced again when reports that milk samples collected and analyzed for The Center For Science in the Public Interest, a private advocacy group and The Wall Street Journal, showed minuscule levels of contamination by animal medicines.

Certainly, this report is a concern to every dairy farmer. And a reminder again that if you want to stay in the dairy business, you must follow the label on your animal medicines. In addition, you must withhold milk from the market from treated cows until you are absolutely sure no drug residues will show when tested at the plant.

But on the side of the dairy farmer, we must say that today's test equipment can detect certain substances at levels of .08 parts per billion. That's about the equivalent of a single pea in the Astrodome. Modern technology has given us the ability to find something wrong with everything. The doctor has his medical tests; the mechanic his computerized engine diagnostic equipment and the American food consumer has the most stringent regulation and state-of-the-art testing equipment for dairy herds and dairy veterinary practices in the world.

Of course, any residue of animal medicine in milk is clearly a matter of concern. Yet no responsible person would suggest that we should stop drinking milk because of these reports. We can only hope that parents who know nothing about the milk handling process will not erroneously think milk is not safe for their children. In this case, the health hazard from the little amount of residue found in these milk samples with super-sensitive equipment should be considered "none"-existent.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, January 20
York County 4-H Lamb Club Banquet, York County 4-H Center, York, 7:00 p.m.

Forage Conference, Carroll Co. Ag Center, Westminster, MD
Sunday, January 21

Southeast Pennsylvania Grape Growers Association meeting, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, Lancaster 3:00 p.m.

Monday, January 22
Adams County Corn Day, York Springs Firehall, York Springs, 9:00 a.m.

Estate planning meeting, Cumberland County Extension office, Carlisle, 7:00-9:00 p.m.

Field Crop Management meeting, Martville Middle School, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, January 23
Penn State income tax meeting, Chilcoat's Restaurant, Altoona, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Horticultural business management short course, Lancaster Farm & Home Center, 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Franklin County Corn Clinic, Kauffman's Community Center, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Southcentral Pennsylvania Area Holstein Association meeting, Western Sizzlin' Harrisburg, 10:30 a.m.

Berks County On-Foot, On-Rail Beef Evaluation Program,

Leesport Farmer's Market, beef evaluation, 7:00 p.m.; continues January 25 at Peter Brothers Meats, Lenhartsville, 7:00 p.m.

Kent County sheep meeting, Talbot Ag Center, Talbot, MD, 7:30 p.m.

Adams County estate planning meeting, Adams County Extension office, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, January 24
Penn State income tax meeting, Holiday Inn, Uniontown, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Tri-County Dairy and Crops Day, Ramada Inn, DuBois, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Chester County Crops Day, East Brandywine Firehall, Guthrieville, 9:00 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Greenhouse meeting, Cremer's Greenhouse, Hanover, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

York County Corn Clinic, 4-H Center, York, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Sire Power annual meeting, Sheraton Harrisburg West, Harrisburg, 10:00 a.m.

Schuylkill County DHIA meeting, Red Lion Cafe, Deturkville, noon.

Veterinary Nutritional Forum, Olde Hickory Inn, Lancaster, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Home Horticulture Seminar, Farm & Home



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin

Lancaster County Agriculture Agent

To Exercise Dairy Cows

The importance of turning out the dairy herd each day from stallion or comfort stalls should not be overlooked. As we expect more production per cow, the stresses are greater, and if not given exercise, more breeding problems will result. Dairy farmers with free-stalls have the opportunity of observing heat periods all the time. However, cows that are confined to stalls present a problem with heat detection. There are very few days that the weather is so bad that the milking herd should not be turned out for a few minutes. If the dairyman is alert and observing, cows that are in heat can be observed and bred. Exercise might help the herds with breeding problems.

To Recognize Stress In Farming

Life can become so hectic... too much to do... on the run. You've been on the tractor or in the barn almost nonstop since sunrise and there's too much on your mind to notice the beautiful sunset. Farming is still full of the best in life. Probably many of the reasons you wanted to be a farmer or live on a farm are the very things you don't pay much attention to anymore.

It's more than machinery or livestock, bills or market fluctuations — it's a way of life which in itself holds much to be desired and appreciated.

We must not let the excessive stress on the farm interfere with our home and family life. Medical research estimates as high as 90% of today's illness and disease is stress related. Farming is one of the most stressful occupations today. We must admit stress before we can deal with it. Most importantly, take time to "smell the flowers," and say to yourself — just for today, I will live through the next twelve hours and not try to tackle all life's problems at once.

Center, Lancaster, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 25
Penn State income tax meeting, Days Inn Motel, Butler, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Cumberland County Corn Clinic, Penn Township Firehall, Hantsdale, 9:00 a.m.

Cameron, McKean, and Potter Counties Dairy Day, First Baptist Church, Port Allegany, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

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To Be Aware Of Hay Quality
Many farmers have an abundance of poor quality hay this year as a result of last year's wet growing season. This poor quality hay will not support high levels of milk production. Therefore, some farmers may be tempted to feed it in generous amounts to non-lactating animals such as dry cows and heifers. According to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent, this could be a serious mistake since these dry cows and heifers will be our lactating cows tomorrow.

How well our herds produce in the future and how long cattle remain in the herd will be affected by how well we care for our heifers and dry cows today. Poorer quality forages can be fed to dry cows and heifers without affecting future performance if fed in limited quantities.

To Prune Shade Trees

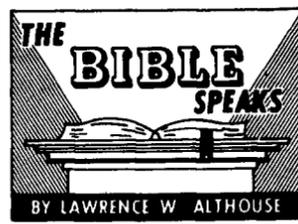
Winter is a good time to prune the shade trees on your property because the trees are dormant and won't be affected by the trimming as much. The bare limbs let you see where and how much to prune.

And it's easier to reshape tangled and low-hanging branches.

Most trees need thinning when they approach maturity. But, corrective pruning is important when trees are young. While the young tree is growing it's important to remove a branch starting in the wrong position because this branch could change the whole tree structure.

Pruning consists mostly of cuttings that train the tree... but it generally involves more and more thinning out of weak and dead wood as the tree matures. There is a saying that "as the branch is bent, so will the tree grow." With pruning, the results are even more drastic, for a limb which is cut will not grow back. So it's important to know the proper methods of pruning before you start. The pruning of dormant shade trees while they are young will determine to a large measure, the beauty and health of a tree in later years.

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WHEN ARE YOU REALLY FREE?
January 21, 1990

Background Scripture:

John 8:12-59.

Devotional Reading:

John 8:31-36.

A woman encountered one of her next door neighbors, a little girl, striding down the sidewalk. Turning to the woman as she passed, the little girl announced "I'm running away from home!" Before the woman had a chance to respond, the little girl disappeared around the corner. A few minutes later the little girl passed her again headed in the same direction, announcing, "I'm running away from home." Amused, the neighbor lady waited for her to round the corner again and this time she asked, "If you're running away from home, why do you keep going around the block?" Replied the little girl, "Because I'm not allowed to cross the street!" **NEVER IN BONDAGE**

I like this story because it is so representative of many of our more "sophisticated" attempts to assert our independence. We are like the teenager who argues with his parents to give him more independence so that he can dress "like all the other kids." On a more sobering level, it is the story of any of us who rebel against something or someone and in the process become subservient to something or someone else. A recent study indicates that lots of people take up smoking to assert their independence. Unfortunately, in a

short time they have lost their independence to a nicotine dependency.

So, when are we really free?

Often, when we are enslaved by something, we persist with the illusion that we are free. This is what Jesus is referring to in John 8:32 when he says: "...you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." The response from his listeners is indignant: "We are dependents of Abraham, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How is that you say, 'You will be made free'?" This is a very strange response when you consider that the people of Israel had been in bondage to the Egyptian Pharaoh, to Assyria, to Babylonia, to the Hellenists, and were currently in bondage to Rome. Perhaps they meant that, although politically they had been in bondage, their spirits never were.

CLAIMS OR DEEDS

Jesus doesn't buy that bit of reasoning: "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin" (8:34). They are in bondage because they are slaves to their sin. It rules them; they do not rule it. Although they think they are free to do what they want, it is really their sin that calls the shots. "If God were your Father, you would love me..."

Just as the Pharisees' study of the scriptures had not enabled them to recognize Jesus as the Christ, so the people who claimed to be heirs to Abraham were no more understanding and receptive. We may wonder at their lack of perceptivity, but the real relevance of their story for us has to do with our own receptivity today. As these people claimed Abraham to be their father, so we claim Jesus to be our Lord and Savior. But the question is not what do we claim, but what do we do?

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