



# OPINION

## Another Vo-Ag Going?

All parents and landowners living in the Berks County political subdivision known as the Kutztown Area School District need to make some free time Monday evening to attend the school board meeting.

Promising to be the focus of attention at the meeting is the district's vocational agriculture program.

According to what we've been told and what we've read, the vo-ag program is at risk of disappearing.

Dr. Richard J. Karr, the district superintendent, told us that there are only 22 students currently enrolled in the Kutztown vocational program. According to newspaper reports, others say there are more if you count the students that are enrolled with less than two-credits worth of classes.

Our opinion is that vo-ag programs in Kutztown and elsewhere should be growing; that what the United States and Pennsylvania and, yes, Kutztown School District, needs is more production, especially production agriculture.

Instead of breaking vo-ag into many small parts and distributing them among the other classes, we think that all students would gain if vo-ag were strengthened and could serve as a proving or hands-on laboratory for science classes and health classes.

We see the issue this way: we have lost so much and many kinds of production in the past 25 years because of union-management failings, failures to modernize and expand, and because we made international trade deals that effectively eliminated the need for U.S. production. We can not afford to lose production agriculture.

All the ingenuity and creativity that is supposed to be allowed to grow under a democratic lifestyle is not being given a chance to take seed.

We think that thoughts and ideas learned in the classroom can be practiced and made practical in a vo-ag program. The academic and practical need each other, but they should not be merged into one; they should go hand-in-hand.

The district board meeting is set for 7 p.m. Monday in the library of the Kutztown Area High School your opinion won't be known or felt, if you don't make time to attend.



### NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Be Aware Of "Kids and Farm Safety"

A great deal of effort is being placed on safety for farm kids. This is excellent because far too many children are injured and killed on farms.

In another month the spring cropping season will be starting. That means that a lot of farm machines will be put into operation and things will really be moving. Small children like to become a part of this action and ask to ride on machinery or even operate some of the smaller tractors. It might take nerve to refuse them at times; however, for their own protection they should not become involved. Many serious accidents have happened because "Dad" or "Grandad" took them along.

Where there are small children, all machinery operators should be especially careful of their exact location. Farm machinery and small children do not mix.

#### To Control External Parasites

External parasites, such as lice, mites and mange can become more severe as the winter progresses, according to Glenn Shirk,

Extension Dairy Agent. In addition to causing rough hair coats, slower weight gains, lower milk production and discomfort for animals, excessive parasite loads can cause anemia and a host of secondary anemic-related problems such as a weaker immune response, slower rates of healing, poorer response to treatments and lower conception rates. Parasites can also spread skin diseases such as ringworm.

To reduce the risk of parasites, clip dairy cattle that are housed for the winter, and apply approved insecticides in accordance with label directions.

#### To Recognize Lime For Weed Control

You have never heard us recommend lime for weed control; however, indirectly lime is important to obtain good herbicide weed control. Both research and farm experience has indicated that herbicides are not as effective in sour soil. So, for best control with chemicals, the soil test requirement must be satisfied.

Many poor weed control experiences have been reported in sour soils. A complete soil test will indicate the amount of lime

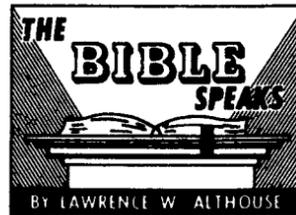
needed. There are many other advantages to crop production in addition to better herbicide action.

#### To Know Sewage Sludge Content

The use of sewage on farmland is becoming more common. As the amount of this material increases, the farmers should be aware of the danger of excessive application. There can be a problem of too much sludge causing a build-up of heavy metals such as zinc, copper, cadmium and cobalt. When these metals become too high in the soil they are toxic to plants.

Farmers that utilize sewage sludge are urged to require a test of the materials in order to know the exact mineral and fertilizer content. Disposal plants must provide this test information for their farmers in order to know what is being done. Both the sewage and the soil can be tested through the Penn State Testing Laboratory. Don't apply sludge without knowing the mineral build-up in the soil.

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HOW LOW SHOULD YOU STOOP?  
February 11, 1990

ly and literally stoop so low. But if that is so, how could Jesus do it? How could the Son of God, the Messiah, permit himself to stoop to such a demeaning position? The answer, it seems to me, is that Jesus did not feel demeaned by this act. His self-worth was never dependent upon what others thought of him. To willingly serve another person is not demeaning to us, unless we think it is and act as if it is.

#### Gaining, Not Losing

Look at Jesus. At no point in this narrative does Jesus look even slightly humiliated or demeaned. Even though he stoops low before each of his disciples, Jesus looks no less authoritative in these verses. He is still the Lord and Teacher they have respected and honored. He has lost nothing. In fact, he has gained something by virtue of this humble deed.

All too often, I have considered that I am "too important" to stoop to this or that activity. That's why these words hit me — and perhaps you? — right between the eyes: "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master..."

If Jesus was not "too important" to stoop to wash his disciples' feet, neither is it possible for me to be "too important" to perform humble acts of service. So, how low should I stoop to meet the needs of a brother or sister?

The obvious answer: just as low as he did.

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Background Scripture: John 13:1-30.

Devotional Reading: John 13:21-30.

Apart from the Church of the Brethren and a few small sects, footwashing has never really caught on in Christianity. If you really want to be unpopular, just try recommending it at the next meeting of your church board.

It is true that this practice would not have quite the same practicality in today's world where almost all of us wear shoes instead of sandals. In Jesus' day, washing the feet of visitors met both a practical need — after tramping the dusty roads and streets — and customs of hospitality.

#### A Personal Reaction

Still, having said all that, it strikes me that the real objection to this practice today is more personal than historical. To wash the feet of another person seems just too subservient for most of us. Many of us would find ourselves humiliated by doing this. It would seem that this would be stooping too low and be too threatening to our own self-respect.

Today we place a great deal of emphasis upon looking out for our own selves and interests, of maintaining our own self-esteem. Nothing seems so threatening to self-esteem than such a menial act that requires us to both figurative-

## Farm Calendar

**Saturday, February 10**  
Tioga Co. Woodlot Management Workshop, Mansfield U.  
York Co. Sheep Producers annual meeting and banquet, Blymiers Church, Dallastown, 7:00 p.m.

**Monday, February 12**  
Pa. Statewide Nursery Career Day, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center; held in conjunction with the Pa. Nurserymen & Allied Industry Conference, Feb. 12-15.  
Atlantic Breeders Coop. meeting, Penn Township Fire Hall, Hantsdale, 7:30 p.m.  
Dauphin Co. Co-op Extension Assoc. 72nd meeting, Agri & Nat. Res. Center.  
Penn State Soil Fertility meetings, Watsburg Grange Hall, Watsburg, Pa. 8:00 p.m.-9:30 p.m.  
Clarion County New Pesticide Study and Exams, Clarion Co. Park, Feb. 12, 13, 15, 7:30 p.m.-9:00 p.m.  
Lycoming County Crops Day,

Eldred Firehall, Warrensville, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Holiday Inn, Lancaster, noon.  
Lancaster County Sheep and Wool Growers annual meeting, Farm and Home Center, 7:00 p.m.  
Pesticide Certification Update training meeting, Penns Valley Area High School, Spring Mills, 7:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 13**  
Lancaster County Crops & Soils Day, Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
Atlantic Breeders Co-op banquet, Central Lancaster County, Harvest Drive, Intercourse.  
Capital Region Fruit Day, York.  
Atlantic Breeders Co-op banquet, Southern Lancaster County, Hoffman Building, Quarryville, 7:00 p.m.  
Pa. Nursery Conference, Hershey, continues thru Feb. 15.

New York State Vegetable Conference, Sheraton Inn, Syracuse, Liverpool, N.Y., thru Feb. 15.  
Aquaculture meeting II, Kennedyville Community Center, Kennedyville, Md., 7:30 p.m.  
1990 Cambria-Somerset Potato Day, Days Inn, Johnstown, 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.  
N.E. Regional Fruit Growers meeting, Ramada Inn, Chinchilla, 8:30 a.m.  
Low-Input Farming Workshop, Seneca Highlands Vo-Tech School, Port Allegany, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
York Co. Holstein Club barn meeting, Gary and Gail Thoman's farm, Loganville, 7:00 p.m.  
McKean Co. Low-Input Sustainable Ag Workshop.  
**Wednesday, February 14**  
Happy Valentine's Day!  
Lancaster County Dair Day, Good & Plenty Restaurant, Smoketown.

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