



# OPINION

## Fight Growing Tractor Theft Problem

Theft of agricultural and construction equipment is estimated to be a nearly \$1 billion annual nightmare. And the ramifications on individual farmers and contractors can be devastating -- putting some out of business permanently or severely affecting their bottom line as they try to recoup the loss without all of the tools of their trade.

A concerted effort among law enforcement officials, industry associations, manufacturers, equipment dealers, contractors and farmers is critical to stemming this debilitating crime wave.

With theft prevention a front burner issue, we can collectively communicate and demonstrate to thieves that heavy equipment theft is not a safe business for them. This requires every person and organization affected by equipment theft to proactively take measures to discourage these crimes.

A main deterrent to equipment theft is the certainty of apprehension. If thieves know they are likely to get caught, they are less likely to attempt the crime. And there are a number of proactive measures that can be taken by individuals and organizations to ensure that equipment theft is perceived as an increasingly risky business.

All the major farm equipment manufacturers now have hot lines to help farmer's and dealers with the problem. But the farmer must be prepared before the on farm theft occurs. Here are some ways to stop theft of farm equipment:

Use security devices offered by equipment manufacturers and after-market distributors to help prevent theft. Ignition locks, stabilizer arm locks and fuel shut-off valves can be effective and are small investments compared to the sizeable investment they protect.

Record your equipment's Product Identification Number (PIN) and all component and attachment serial numbers on a document, and keep the document in a safe and accessible place.

Take pictures of your equipment, making sure to photograph features that are unique to your machine, like dents, scratches and decals. They can help identify your equipment if it is stolen.

Put decals on your machine that offer rewards for stolen equipment or indicate that there are hidden or recorded identification numbers. If they make just one thief think twice, they may save your business.

Avoid leaving equipment in remote or unlit areas that are away from public view -- easy targets for thieves.

Take frequent inventories of your equipment. Know the location of your machines at all times.

Take extra precautions on weekends. Studies show that 90% of all equipment thefts take place between 6 p.m. Friday and 6 a.m. Monday.

Never leave keys in equipment -- even if it's parked next to a police station! Not only do you make it easy for a thief to take the machine in which he finds the keys, but you can also put an entire fleet in jeopardy since keys will often fit similar pieces of equipment.

And don't forget the obvious -- lock your machine up whenever it's idle!



**NOW IS THE TIME**

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

### To Check Pastures

Before turning cattle or other livestock out onto pastures each spring, a little time should be taken to check the condition of the pasture. Winter storms and the activities of man can be hard on pasture fences. A complete check of the fence line will reveal those broken or missing sections of wire, trees across the fence which would allow livestock to simply walk out of the pasture, and other problems associated with the fence. If a single or double strand of electric fence is used to confine livestock, a close look for objects which would short the system is also necessary.

Those sections of the pasture which are located along property lines or roads should also be checked carefully for foreign objects which could be hazardous to livestock. Look for glass, metal, and plastic objects which have been discarded by passing motorists. Another category of objects to be on the lookout for is shrubbery trimmings and tree branches. Many of the plant parts are toxic to cattle and sheep. Your city neighbors may think they are helping you feed your livestock, but in reality, they may be killing them.

### To Control Weeds In Pastures

A variety of weeds will grow in pastures, some may even provide

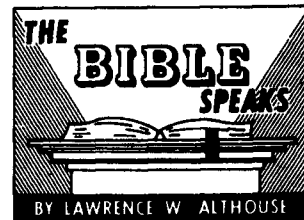
some nutrition to livestock. One weed which is a problem for dairy cows on pasture is wild garlic or onion because of the flavor it gives milk. That flavor is a less than desirable flavor for many people. Both can be controlled along with many other broad leaf weeds by the use of Banvel or 2,4-D or a combination of these materials. Treatment should be done in advance of the pasture season with careful consideration for the number of days between the application of the herbicide and the start of pasturing. According to the Pennsylvania "Agronomy Guide, 1989-1990" the following restrictions apply: 2,4-D Amine, 7 days for dairy cows; 2,4-D Ester, 7 days for all livestock; and Banvel, 7 days if less than 1 pint per acre is used; up to 60 days if over 4 pints is used for lactating dairy animals. Always read and follow all label directions when applying pesticides.

**To Sign-up For 1990 Acreage Reduction Program**  
Lancaster County farmers have

until April 13 to sign-up in the 1990 ASCS Acreage Reduction Program. In order to receive benefits, producers must reduce their corn and barley plantings by 10% of their crop acreage base. The limitation for wheat and oat acreage is 5% of those crops acreage base. Farmers participating in the program are eligible for benefits to include crop loans and the purchase and payments for the 1990 crop.

Participants in the acreage reduction program must devote eligible cropland to Conservation Reserve. The acreage must be protected from wind and water erosion throughout the year. Crops cannot be harvested from diverted acreage.

Producers may request an advance portion of the projected deficiency payment at sign-up which is payable in cash. The advance will be made on the basis of 40% of the projected total deficiency payment. Additional program details are available at the ASCS Office.



**LEARNING TO DIE**  
April 8, 1990

**Background Scripture:** John 19: 17-42

**Devotional Reading:** Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12.

Leonard da Vinci is reported to have said shortly before his death, "All these years I thought I was learning to live, but instead I have been learning to die." Actually, a Christian must learn to do both. That may seem somewhat ironic, because it is obvious that we die, ready or not. But the question has never been if we die, but how.

That is what makes the death of Jesus so different and instructive for us. Here was a man who knew both how to live in a way that was different and to die in a manner that was unique. As Jesus refused to play by the world's rules in his life, so he also refused to play by the world's rules in death. Although he was condemned to die, he died, not as a victim, but as a victor.

### STILL IN CHARGE

Look at his last moments on earth. Although he hangs nailed to a cross, it seems to me that he is still in charge - if not of others, at least himself and the situation. Crucifixion was an extremely painful way to die. Nevertheless, in the midst of the pain, Jesus was enough in control of himself to take care of his mother and the beloved disciple: "Woman, behold your son!" Then he said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" (John 19: 26,27). Jesus had every reason to focus solely on his own needs in this terrible

experience, but his love was greater than his pain and concern for others overcame everything else.

His last two statements from the cross, according to the fourth gospel, are simple and to the point: "I thirst," and "When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, 'It is finished;' and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." His tormentors probably felt cheated. Jesus had not railed or cursed against his enemies, he had not made ominous prophecies against them, or whined about the unfairness and injustice of it all. Jesus was a victor even, perhaps especially, in his death.

L.P. Jacks, the British theologian, once wrote: "Most of us die of something; of disease, accident, old age. But occasionally there appears in our midst a man who resolves to die for something..." That is a good description of the death of Jesus: he died, not of something, but for something. And more than something, he died for someone - you and me and all humankind.

### A DEATH-CONQUEROR

That is something to which we too are called. That is why we must, as a part of our Christian living, learn to die. We need to learn to die for something and be a death-conqueror as Jesus was. Jacks says: "Christianity... came into the world as a death-conquering religion. It centered in the figure of a death-conqueror..." We will all die; the only question is how? Will we be the conqueror or the conquerors?

Jacks also said: "No religion is worth its name unless it can prove itself more than a match for death." That is why Christians make so much of the death of Jesus. As I see it, by the time Jesus was resurrected from the tomb, he had already conquered death - for him and for us.

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## Farm Calendar

### Saturday, April 7

- Win Blu Stables Young Show
- Horse Training Clinic, Win Blu Stables, Peach Bottom, contact Vicki Greer, (717) 548-3884, 1:00 p.m. rain or shine.
- Adams Co. Beef Ball, McSherrystown Fire Hall, McSherrystown, 6:00 p.m.
- Pa. Holstein Association Supreme Creations and Showcase Sale, Ag Arena, State College.
- 1990 Pa. 4-H Leaders Forum, Atherton Hilton, State College, 8:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
- Cecil Co. Sheep Update, Cecil Co.

- Library, Elkton, Md., 9:00 a.m.
- Farm Machinery Consignment Sale, Gratz Fairgrounds, 9:00 a.m.
- Md. Sheep Shearing School, Ridgely Thompson farm, Linwood, 9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- Frederick County, Maryland Holstein meeting, 7:00 p.m.
- Pa. Holstein Calf, Bred Heifer, and Young Cow Sale, Ag Arena, State College.

### Monday, April 9

- Allegheny Co. Ag Security Area Program meeting, Allegheny Co. Cooperative Extension

(Turn to Page A39)

## Farm Forum

Editor,

I am expressing my support of the opinion presented by Ron Frederick in your last issue of the Lancaster Farming. As a teacher of Vocational Agriculture for 20 years in Pennsylvania, I have seen many changes. Most of these occurring when Agriculture was securing a firm grip on being Pennsylvania's number one industry and employer.

I have had the opportunity to spearhead many meetings with Bureau of Vocational Education Directors, Secretaries of Education and Legislators in Pennsylvania about the diminishing importance of Agriculture Education to

(Turn to Page A43)

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