

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### Farmers Have Done Well

Several weeks ago, the Earth Day celebration drew a massive outpouring of homage and respect for Mother Earth and the environment. The amount of national attention the whole event received was unbelievable. It is very fashionable to be an environmentalist. I guess we all want to be one.

But there was something wrong with the celebration. It was more like a wake with the environmental fringe filling the air with their own pollution of gloom. Example:

- Farmers are poisoning the land by using dangerous chemicals in food production.
- The world population stands on the brink of global famine.
- Solid waste threatens to bury mankind.
- Our lakes and streams are polluted.
- If we don't conduct our lives differently, a "greenhouse" change in climate will destroy our planet.

Germany was praised over and over again for being the ideal environmental nation.

"What we just witnessed was not my idea of a celebration or a balanced review of where we are today, or where we have been concerning our environment," said John R. Block, president, National-American Wholesale Grocers' Association and former secretary of agriculture.

"A celebration should have included a tribute to the American farmer, the American food industry and American technology which has been able to keep the wolf away from the door all these years. Food in this country takes less than 13% of disposable family income. No other country in the world can claim the same. And what is even more astounding -- we have been able to do all of this while making a rapid improvement in our environment."

We agree with Block. The life expectancy of our population is extended every year. There is absolutely no evidence of any harm ever coming to mankind from the recommended use of farm chemicals, fertilizers, processing technology, and on and on.

We have systematically been cleaning up our lakes and streams. You can catch big, beautiful coho salmon from Lake Michigan right off a Chicago dock. They weren't there 30 years ago!

The Soil Conservation effort in this country spearheaded by USDA has built hundreds of miles of terraces, and saved thousands of tons of topsoil.

The 1985 Farm Bill established a conservation reserve which has set aside in grass and trees, 34 million acres of fragile land.

Thousands of farmers are putting together their own conservation plan.

Germany may be doing rather well in recycling bottles and papers, but they use five times as much fertilizer per acre as we do and twice as much in chemicals.

The free enterprise, market-driven economy of the United States has left the Communist-central planned economies in Europe choking in their own filthy air.

We acknowledge that there is more to be done in protecting our environment, but we think the thrust of a celebration should be to recognize something good, instead of only espousing the bad. And farmers have done something good.



### NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Continue Forage Feeding

Dairy and beef cattle producers should continue to feed some dry matter while the animals are on pasture. The feeding of hay or silage, when the cattle are turned out to pasture will result in more uniform production. Also, keeping some dry matter in the ration will help prevent serious scouring and bloating.

Some producers provide this forage by way of a portable hay bunk in the pasture area. The animals should consume some of the dry forage along with lush spring pasture. The hay should be fed early in the day, before the herd goes to the new pasture. Later in the season the stored hay or silage will continue to be useful when growth slows down due to dry weather and high temperatures.

#### To Be Aware Of Corn Insects

With the increased trend toward no-till corn planting or minimum tillage, we can expect more problems with corn insects. Past experience shows this. We urge corn growers to inspect their fields frequently to observe any feeding on small plants. You can have cutworms, stalk borers and armyworms at any time feeding on the corn plant. The Agronomy Guide lists several materials for the control of cutworms and army worms. The stalk borer is very difficult to control because they work inside the corn stalk.

Flea beetles are another insect that may feed on small corn leaves; they create small holes in the leaves but seldom do extensive damage. Sevin can be used to eliminate these small insects, if it is serious enough. Keep an eye on the corn field for the first several weeks and avoid serious insect injury. Always follow label directions when using any pesticide.

### Farm Forum

#### Editor:

I have been reading with interest the various letters relative to the \$33,000 line item for FFA that was proposed to be eliminated from the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. As a high school agriculture instructor for the past thir-

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**For Haylage and Hay Making**  
Good quality forages can help farmers generate more cash income with little to no additional expenses. And, what farmer couldn't use that right now! Cows produce more milk and livestock gain more rapidly on higher quality forages. The need for purchased concentrates is also generally reduced. So, if you are growing forages, concentrate on improving forage quality and improving nutrient yield per acres.

Most important to quality is stage of maturity at time of harvest. For established stands of alfalfa, harvest the first cutting at the late bud stage; later cuttings can be harvested in the late bud to early bloom stage . . . about 35 to 42 days after the previous cutting. To enhance the vigor and longevity of the stand, at least one of the cuttings should be allowed to bloom. Similarly, the first cutting of a new seeding of alfalfa should be made in the early bloom stage.

Grasses should be cut in the boot stage of maturity, just as the heads are beginning to emerge.

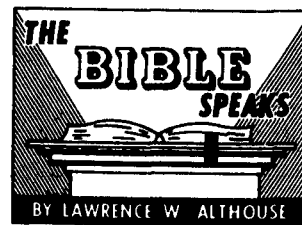
**To Safely Dispose of Shrubbery and Plant Trimmings**  
As we begin to trim the trees

and shrubs in our yard and dispose of these trimmings and other plants around the home and garden, it is important to dispose of them in a manner that will not be hazardous to livestock, according to Bruce Hellerick, Extension Horticultural Agent.

Plant debris is often thrown over the fence into a field or pasture. Many times we feel the trimmings will help feed the cattle or horses. However, many plants found in the house or yard are toxic to livestock. Cherry, peach and plum trees are extremely toxic to livestock. When wilting, the leaves are very attractive to animals, but a few leaves may contain enough prussic acid to kill a mature animal.

Other plants which are toxic to livestock are: Yews, Laurels, Rhododendrons, Pieris and most other broadleaf evergreens which contain toxins. Several flowers including Oleander, Foxglove, Delphiniums, Lobelia, Lily of the Valley and Lupines all contain toxic amounts of alkaloids when eaten by livestock.

Care should be taken not to dispose of plant materials into pastures.



**IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD**  
May 13, 1990

**Background Scripture:** 1 John 4:7-21.

**Devotional Reading:** 1 John 4:1-9.

A little girl was busy at work with a piece of paper and some crayons. "What are you drawing?" asked her mother. "A picture of God," was the confident reply. The mother smiled and said, "But, darling, no one knows what God looks like." Without looking up from her work, the daughter snapped, "They will when I'm finished!"

The writer of 1 John said: "No man has ever seen God" (4:12). But he also goes on to suggest that, although God can not really be seen, he can be known. The key is love: "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God" (4:8).

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He goes even further: "He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. Notice, 1 John is not saying that loving God is enough: "...we also ought to love one another" (4:11). And to make it even plainer: "If any one says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar, for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (4:20).

We are not talking about loving just those who are closest to us.

Jesus said that anyone can love those who love us. It is something else to love those who are strange to us. It is difficult for a Democrat to love a Republican, or a Conservative to love a Liberal. Methodists may not find it all that easy to love Baptists and Baptists may find difficulty in loving Jews, Moslems or Hindus. And then there are Castro, Khadafi and the Ayatollah! Must we not love them?

#### TRUST VS. FEAR

The prerequisite is not lovability. Thomas Merton says, "If a man has to be pleasing to me, comforting, reassuring, before I can love him, then I cannot truly love him." This is true whether he be Jew or Christian, black or white. "If he has to belong to my political party or social group before I can love him... then my love is no longer love because it is not free... It is dominated by an appetite other than love. I love not the person, but his classification..."\*

Why do we find it so hard to love the "unlovely"? Often it is fear that lies behind the hate. Hatred becomes our means of responding to and protecting ourselves from what threatens us. And if fear lies behind the hate, it is lack of faith that is the bedrock on which the fear is founded. If we are afraid of God's other children, it is because we do not trust God as Creator. It is as if we think he fouled-up in creating people who are different from us. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear." If we live in fear, if we cannot bring ourselves to love others, then we cannot know God. For when we love, we are as close to God as we can be.

\* (Quoted from *Seasons of Celebration in Blaze of Recognition*, edited by Thomas P. McDonnell, 1983 Doubleday).

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## Farm Calendar

**Saturday, May 12**  
Western Pa. Sheep and Club Lamb Sale, Mercer Co. 4-H Park, 6:00 p.m.  
Maryland Eastern Shore 4-H Show, 4-H Club Park, Centerville, Md., 10:00 a.m.

**Sunday, May 13**  
**Happy Mother's Day!**  
Gum Tree 4-H Open Horse Show, K.A. Equestrian Center, Derry Meeting Road, Cochranville (rain date May 19).  
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