



OPINION

Precautions and Procedures

This week we again saw a field of corn where an unclean field sprayer inflicted crop damage to corn because of residues left in the tank from the previous spraying operation. Farmers should be careful to clean the sprayer before using a different material in a different field.

The Alliance For A Clean Rural Environment (ACRE) suggests that farmers dispose of all excess chemicals in the sprayer by adding water and spraying on the crop for which it was intended.

In addition, you should not rinse out the sprayer at the same site repeatedly unless water containment facilities are used. To protect wells, be sure they are properly constructed to minimize contamination risks, locate storage, mix-load and container disposal sites away from wells, sinkholes or surface water. Never calibrate or clean spray equipment near wells.

Spraying equipment should be properly prepared. Check tanks for leaks, accurately measure all chemicals, mix only enough product for the job at hand. Also, never over-fill the tank and keep fill hose out of the solution.

Certainly, farmers would not want to go back to earlier days when grass and weeds in the fields could only be controlled with hand hoes and tractor cultivators. Chemicals have made the farmers' lives easier and contributed to the abundant food supply we enjoy. And when farmers handle their chemicals with common sense and use the label recommendations to determine application rates, they help insure these chemicals will continue to be available in the future.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, June 23

National Holstein Convention, Charleston, South Carolina, thru June 27.

Pa. Junior Holstein bus trip to Charleston, South Carolina.

Lancaster Co. Honey Producers Assoc., Marlin Kreider, Peach Bottom, 1:30 p.m.

Hickory Ridge Antique Farm Show, 10th Anniversary, Horace Potter Residence, Milford, Del., thru June 24.

Schaefferstown Cherry Fair, Schaeffer Farm, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Wool Pool, Rutgers University, Hackettstown, NJ Livestock Market, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 24

National Holstein Convention, Charleston, South Carolina.

PAFC Summer Youth Institute, Shippensburg University, thru June 27.

Hickory Ridge Antique Farm Show, 10th Anniversary, Horace Potter Residence, Milford, Del.

Wool Pool, Rutgers University, Machinery Building, Farm Road, Cook College, New Brunswick, 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Day at the Farm, Somerset Co.

Farmers Assoc., Error Hill Beef Farm, Somerset, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

2nd annual Pa. Floral Industry Expo, Flower Growers, thru June 26.

2nd annual Maryland BEEF Festival, Back Acres Farm, Mount Airy, Md.

Monday, June 25

National Holstein Convention, Charleston, S.C.

PAFC Summer Youth Institute, Shippensburg U., thru June 27.
Shepherd's Night, Venango Co. Extension Office, 5:00 p.m.

Tuesday, June 26

National Holstein Convention, Charleston, S.C.

PAFC Summer Youth Institute, Shippensburg U., thru June 27.
Southwestern Pa. 4-H Dairy Overnighter, thru June 27.

1990 Summer Fruit Tour, Erie County, Adams Co. Fruit Growers Assoc., from Kime's Cider Mill, Bendersville, 1:00 p.m., thru June 28.

Centre Co. manure management tour, Centre Co. Conservation District, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Beekeeper's summer meeting, Keeney and Ziegler Apiaries, Bethel, Berks Co., 6:30 p.m.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Prepare For Grain Harvest

We are preparing to harvest barley and winter wheat in only a couple of weeks. Both of these crops require mechanical harvesting equipment and good weather. From the amount of volunteer grain I've seen growing after barley and wheat harvests, the last several years, it is evident that too much grain is being left in the field.

I am concerned that high combine speed might be part of the reason that grain is thrown out with the straw. The manufacturer recommendations should be followed in this respect. Also, there are times when the grain may be too tough to combine. This is often the case when the crop is quite weedy. The important thing is to have the combine adjusted to the best of your knowledge and drive at recommended speeds. You'll need every bushel of grain and every bale of straw from your crop.

To Clean Pesticide Sprayers

The use of various kinds of spray materials in one sprayer is risky. This is especially true when you are using any type of weed killer. In too many cases the sprayer carries sufficient residual weed killer material to injure a susceptible crop. Farmers who are spraying corn fields with weed killers one day and then spraying alfalfa or tobacco plants the next day with the same equipment had better do a real thorough job of cleaning the sprayer.

Some materials can be cleaned by using warm water and soap detergent. However, materials such as 2,4-D had better be cleaned with one pint of household ammonia in 25 gallons of HOT water. Allow the mix to remain in the sprayer overnight and then spray it out through the

Wednesday, June 27

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system on the lane or driveway. Don't be guilty of harming good plants. One of the best practices with small sprayers is to have one for weed killers and another for other purposes.

To Control Pasture Weeds

Pastures can be more productive if weed competition is reduced, and if rotational grazing is practiced. Rotational grazing also makes pasture management tasks easier to perform. When cattle have grazed one pasture, and are rotated into another, clip the grazed area. Besides keeping the vegetation more productive, it will also help reduce weed competition. However, some weeds cannot be controlled solely by clipping. The use of herbicides may be necessary. A mixture of 2,4-D and dicamba (Banvel) is effective in killing the most pasture weeds, as well as legumes. Repeated applications may be needed for some weeds. Be sure to comply with label instructions.

Liming and fertilizing is also a good weed control practice; it helps the grass to become more competitive with the weeds.

To Consider Lightning Rods on Trees

How many times have you driven past a pasture field or exercise lot and noticed dozens of cattle or other livestock grouped together under one or two large trees? During severe thunderstorms, livestock will gather under these trees. If lightning strikes the tree, many of the animals will be killed. A number of farmers in the county can attest to that. For the protection of valuable livestock, we suggest that some of these individual trees be fitted with a lightning rod system. If there is a woodlot or a number of trees in the pasture, it may not be practical.

There is a Lightning Protection Institute at Harvard, IL 60033 that lists the Certified installers in your area. You can call them collect through their LPI Hotline 815-943-7221.



AMBUSHING YOURSELF!

June 24, 1990

Background Scripture: Proverbs 1.

Devotional Reading: Philippians 2:1-11.

Several months ago the city of Dallas was rocked by the arrest of a number of star football players in a local high school that won the state championship. The charges against them were based on a string of armed robberies in the community. What was most surprising of all was that none of these young men came from underprivileged homes. Economic deprivation was not the reason for their crime spree.

I won't pretend to be able to fully understand their motivations, but a substantial clue may have surfaced when one of the repentant young men admitted that he had gone along in these robberies because it seemed "the smart thing to do." Smart, not in terms of wisdom, but of cleverness. These football players were the idols of their student body; they were the really "smart" guys of the community. While they pursued their extracurricular lives of crime, they were amazed at how easy it was. They believed they were outsmarting everyone and that was what appealed to them so much. Actually, although they were very clever, they were not that smart, not really. Too late they realized their stupidity and they are having ample opportunity to contemplate their cleverness behind bars.

DRUNK ON CLEVERNESS

The key to their downfall is the same as it is for many people today. Many of those who criminally lie, cheat and steal do so, it

seems, because they were intoxicated by their own cleverness. Chuck Coulson and John Ehrlichmann, two of the prominent Nixon administration figures who were convicted in the Watergate scandals, have both indicated that they were caught up in their own cleverness. It is strange but true that often our cleverness keeps us from seeing how truly stupid we are behaving. Cleverness is arrogant, never humble, and no matter how intelligent we may be, arrogance negates intelligence.

If arrogance spawns criminal activity in a few of us, it also tends to generate legal but stupid behavior in many of the rest of us. How much of the troubles we experience in life are the result of being too smart, too clever, but unwise? There have been times in my life when I have been barely unable to restrain my glee in some clever plan or project. I have been so "full of myself" that I have failed to see that SMART doesn't equal WISE.

CLEVERNESS VS. WISDOM

What about you? Are you ever done in by your own cleverness? Many years ago I had a parishioner who was in trouble most of the time. Because of the way in which he conducted himself, he lost his job. Destitute, he decided on what he thought was a clever plan for getting some money; he literally shot himself in the foot. But after he had seriously wounded himself — preventing him from working for many weeks — he discovered that his insurance policy did not cover the injury!

Few of us are ever that stupid. But how stupid have you been? When did you last "shoot yourself in the foot"? The Psalmist has another analogy: "...these men lie in wait for their own blood, they set an ambush for their own lives" (1:18).

So the message of Proverbs is not for the village idiot so much as it is for those who are oh-so-clever. "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple?" (v.22).

Lancaster Farming
Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
— by —
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinhilber Enterprise
Robert G. Campbell General Manager
Everett R. Newswanger Managing Editor
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