



OPINION

A Reason To Attend

If you want to see how much agriculture has progressed over the years, visit Ag Progress Days next week at Penn State's Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rock Springs, near State College. The Pasto Agricultural Museum on the grounds will give you a look at the machinery and other rare farm antiques of rural life of years gone by. But the field demonstrations will show you where we are now. In fact, more than 250 commercial exhibitors will show and demonstrate \$20 million worth of agricultural equipment.

Under the theme, "Food and Environmental Quality: Preparing for the 21st Century," a wide range of agriculturally related events will be featured. One of the college exhibits will show different housing options for sows. Dr. Kenneth Kephart, assistant professor of animal science, says the exhibit is designed to demonstrate that producers must review a wealth of variables affecting animal welfare before deciding what facilities to use in their own enterprise.

A wide variety of subjects will be covered by the programs, from conservation to biotechnology.

"Ag Progress Days is an opportunity to show visitors the many ways that agriculture touches our lives today, and to look to the future," said Dr. Lamartine Hood, dean of Penn State's College of Agriculture. "We want to show visitors the scope of issues that their college of Agriculture is addressing and how the research conducted at Penn State is transformed into programs that reach all citizens of the Commonwealth.

"We'll also give them the opportunity to talk with people in agribusiness, watch some of the latest farm machinery in operation, tour several research and conservation demonstration areas and have a great experience in a family-oriented atmosphere," Hood said.

Anyone who has an interest in agriculture, for any reason, will have a reason to attend Ag Progress Days Aug. 14 to 16. See you there.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Use Equipment Safely

We are fast approaching the harvesting of nearly 168,000 acres of corn in Lancaster County. This harvest is the result of a big investment of time, effort and money. A good yield depends on your farming skills, land resources and a smile from Mother Nature. But whether it's free from a costly mishap depends on how well you prepare your equipment and how safely you and your help run that equipment. Here are some suggestions:

- * Operate and maintain all machines according to the operator's manual.
 - * Keep all shields in place.
 - * Shut off the power before unclogging or servicing. Wait until all parts have stopped.
 - * Adjust ground speed to field and crop conditions.
 - * Use caution on highways with SMV signs in place.
 - * Keep children and non-workers off and safely away from harvesting equipment.
 - * Look up as well as to the front and back when driving, moving or positioning tall equipment near overhead power lines.
- Safety requires practice ... let's practice it every day.

To Apply For Liquid Fuel Tax Refund

I would like to remind our farmers that application for the Pennsylvania Liquid Fuel Tax Refund should be filed before September 30.

Farmers may apply for a 12-cent per gallon refund on all liquid fuels used in non-licensed tractors when used off the highway for agricultural purposes, or non-licensed power farm machinery used for actual farm work. This includes fuel used in all auxiliary engines on balers, elevators and other stationary equipment.

The liquid fuel tax is for all farm production fuel used between July 1, 1989 and June 30, 1990. This includes gasoline and diesel fuel.

The people who have not already received an application

should apply by writing: Board of Finance and Revenue, Room 409 Finance Building, Harrisburg, PA 17120 or by calling 717-787-3365.

Remember, applications received after September 30 will not be honored; they must be filed on time. The time to do it is now.

Keep in mind -- this is not money the State is giving you -- it's money you already paid; you are just applying to get it back. It may not seem like much but 12 cents on 5,000 gallons is \$600.00.

To Be Aware Of Poisonous Plants

A number of plants are poisonous to animals. Fortunately, animals will avoid most of these plants as long as they have ample supplies of other feeds.

Thus, as pastures dry up and become dormant during the summer it is important to provide additional feed to pastured animals so they are not forced to consume poisonous weeds.

Many ornamental plants are poisonous. Thus, prunings should

not be tossed into pastures or fields.

Wilted wild cherry leaves are very toxic, so be sure to pick up broken branches soon after a wind storm.

Immature, drought stricken or frost damaged sudangrass can also be poisonous. It should be at least 18 inches tall before being harvested.

To Fertilize Strawberries

The new strawberry patch that you planted this spring should be pushing runners by this time of year. It's a good idea to fertilize these new plantings during August. A fertilizer high in nitrogen would be best.

The objective is to encourage more runners and develop a stronger plant. It will also increase yields for next summer. Another thing, weeds must be controlled at all times to have a healthy strawberry patch. The earlier in the summer we can get the runner plants to take root, the better they will be established for next year.

HOW CAN YOU TELL? August 12, 1990

Background Scripture:
Matthew 7.

Devotional Reading:
Romans 8: 1-2, 31-39.

People tell me that they are confused about religion. With all the claims from this group and that group, many of them really quite divergent in their teachings, how can you know which is the "right religion"?

Part of the problem, I think, is in that concept of "the right religion." Actually, I do not believe there are any "right" religions. Religions are systems made by human beings around their faith experiences. Although their faith experiences are indicative of their encounter with God, the expressions, formulations, and organizations they devise are at least partly tainted with human error and distortion. For example, I am a United Methodist clergyman and I love my denomination and am reasonably comfortable in the way it is structured and expressed. Not for one minute, however, would I want to equate the United Methodist Church with The Church or God's Kingdom. It seems to be "right" for me and many others, but it is not "the right religion."

THE RIGHT RELIGION

Not even Christianity (I am using this term in the sense of the sum total of all the Christian denominations, branches and churches) is "the right religion." There is much in these organizations that is a distortion -- and perhaps even the negation -- of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These human-made institutions are but, in the terms of the Apostle Paul, the earthen vessels in which the treasure of the gospel is contained. I have also found a great deal of unlabeled "Good News" of Jesus

Christ in some other religions.

So, how can you judge what is true and what is not? In Matthew 7, Jesus sets forth some guidelines that Christians too often tend to forget. First of all, he warns against the deceit of appearances. "Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves" (7:15). In religion, what you see is not always what you get. Prosperous, powerful churches are not always indicative of a faithfulness to the gospel of Jesus Christ. They may be representative of an obsession with material things, respectability and social mores which are considerably less than the gospel. Cathedrals and temples, impressive and beautiful as they are, may be a testimony, not to God but to human pride. (I am not saying they are, but that they may be.)

WORDS, WORDS, WORDS

The way to tell, says Jesus in Matthew 7, is to look, not at appearances, but at results: "You will know them by their fruits" (7:16). What are these "fruits"? For one thing, they are generally not words. "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (7:21). That is rather disquieting for some of us, for given a choice between words and deeds, many of us would pick words. But Jesus says that what God really wants of us is to do his will -- not talk about it. "Every one who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock..." (7:24)

What confuses so many people today are the oceans of words they hear about religion. If we focus on fruits instead of words, our task of discernment should be substantially simplified!

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, August 11
South Central Pa. Championship Show, Shippensburg, 9:30 a.m.
New Carlisle Fair, Carlisle Fairgrounds.

Antique Steam and Gas Show, C.V. Antique Engine and Machinery Association, Chambersburg, 8:00 a.m.-dark, thru August 12.

Bedford Community Fair, Bedford.

Butler Farm Show, Butler.

Elk Co. Fair, Kersey.

Huntingdon Co. Fair, Huntingdon, thru August 18.

Sunday, August 12
Antique Steam and Gas Show, C.V. Antique Engine and Machinery Association, Chambersburg, 8:00 a.m.-dark.
Huntingdon Co. Fair, Huntingdon, thru August 18.

Monday, August 13
Huntingdon Co. Fair, Huntingdon, thru August 18.

McKean County Fair, Smethport, thru August 18.
York Co. 4-H Hog Sale, Weikerts Market, 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 14
Ag Progress Days, Rock Springs, thru August 16.

Huntingdon Co. Holstein Show, Huntingdon, 9:00 a.m.

Pa. Hay Show at Ag Progress Days, Rock Springs, thru Aug. 16.

Twilight Landscape Walking Tour, Reading Rehab Hospital, 6:30 p.m.-8:00 p.m.

Huntingdon Co. Fair, Huntingdon, thru August 18.

McKean County Fair, Smethport, thru August 18.

113th annual Transfer Home Festival, Transfer Community Park, Transfer, Pa., thru August 18.

Wednesday, August 15
Ag Progress Days, Rock Springs, thru August 16.

Pa. Hay Show at Ag Progress Days, Rock Springs, thru Aug. 16.

East-Central Holstein Sale, Hughesville Fairgrounds, 7:30 p.m.

Pa. Dept. of Ag 13th Performance Tested Boar Sale, Ag Arena Complex, Penn State, 6:00 p.m.
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