



# OPINION

## More Pills To Swallow

The Army Corps of Engineers last week notified its field offices that most cropland will not be subject to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. This will free thousands of acres of agricultural land in most states from the restrictive wetlands permit process. That's a step in the right direction.

The ruling applies to acres that are now in agricultural crop production, most notably "prior converted cropland," and states that the cropping activity is the "normal circumstances" of those areas. The clarification of "normal circumstances" was addressed in a regulatory guidance letter issued to Corps field offices. It said the agency should now focus its efforts toward regulation of aquatic resources.

"This ruling by the Corps of Engineers represents a significant victory for Farm Bureau and farmers and ranchers nationwide whose lands have been unfairly burdened with federal restrictions," said American Farm Bureau Federation President Dean Klechner.

We agree. But since Section 404 is only part of the wetlands problem that hangs over the agriculture community, more legislative and administrative solutions must be forged. Top priority must be given to address the definition of wetlands. President Bush has pledged to carry out a "no net loss" wetlands policy and has set up a task force to determine what constitutes a wet land. Hopefully, the needs of farmers and the food production industry will be considered by this task force.

Meanwhile, we are deeply concerned about reports that farmers have been put in jail and have been assessed large fines for cleaning up their farms. And since wetlands are controlled by at least four different government agencies, all with different agendas, the farmer can never really know if a law has been broken or not.

So to have cropland freed from the Clean Water Act is a big relief. But farmers have a lot more pills to swallow before the wetlands issue is resolved.



### NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Exercise Dairy Cows

I know that many of our dairy farmers keep their milking cows confined to the stall barns much of the time. This is easy to do when you are short of labor during the winter months. In order to have a healthy herd, the cows should be allowed outside to exercise daily unless severe weather conditions exist. The exercise will not only keep their feet and legs in better

ing and banquet, Mercyhurst Prep School, Erie, 7:30 p.m.  
Susquehanna Co. Extension annual dinner, Montrose Methodist Church, 7:30 p.m.

Western Pa. Agronomy Ag-Service Schools, Holiday Inn, DuBois, 8:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Bradford Co. Extension annual meeting, Wysox Presbyterian Church, 7:45 p.m.

Lancaster Farmland Trust sixth annual dinner meeting, Plain and Fancy Restaurant, Bird-In-Hand, 6:30 p.m.

PFU annual state convention, Days Inn, Brookville (Jefferson Co.), thru Nov. 10.

Sullivan Co. Dairy Day, St. Francis Hall, Mildred, 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

#### Friday, November 9

Lebanon Co. Farm-City Week, thru Nov. 15.

PFU annual state convention, Days Inn, Brookville (Jefferson Co.), thru Nov. 10.

Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg.

63d National FFA Convention, Convention Hall, Kansas City, Mo., thru Nov. 10.

Berks Co. Holstein annual meeting.

Berks Co. Conservation District/ASCS fall conservation tour, Berks Ag Center, Leesport, 9:00 a.m.

Susquehanna Co. DHIA annual dinner, Dreyer Hall, Montrose, 8:00 p.m.

Western Pa. Agronomy Ag-Service Schools, Arena Restaurant, Bedford, 8:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Cambria Co. Cooperative Extension annual dinner meeting,

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condition, but will permit the cows in heat to be detected; this is often a problem when cows are kept confined too much of the time.

If the herd is turned out for 15 to 30 minutes each day, the time involved will be very worthwhile. You'll find very few days when the weather will interfere.

#### To Manage Feeding Programs

Fall is a time of year when many changes are apt to be made to feeding programs. According to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent, these changes could consist of: (1) Feeding new forages produced during this year's growing season. (2) Feeding silages that have undergone incomplete or abnormal fermentations. (3) Using recently harvested feeds that are temporarily higher in moisture content, and (4) switching from a grazing program to a barn feeding program.

These changes can have adverse effects on cattle. To help avoid costly herd problems, anticipate changes in feeds and feed quality. Have forages analyzed, and formulate rations accordingly. Make changes in feeding programs gradually and give cattle ample time to adjust.

#### To Check Fire Extinguishers

This is the time of year that our

barns and other buildings are filled to capacity with hay, straw, grain, tobacco and machinery. We want to make certain that fire extinguishers are mounted in each building, including your home.

The first step is to have the extinguisher; the second step is to be sure they are in good working condition; the third step is to be sure that all members of the work force and family know where they are and how to operate them. In many cases a good fire extinguisher can help control a fire until the fire company arrives. And finally, be sure they are checked and filled with the proper chemical.

#### To Be Aware Of Lawn Problems

A number of people have called about small holes all over their lawns. The holes are 3-5 inches deep and 2-3 inches wide and are found scattered throughout the lawn. These holes are the work of a skunk looking for grubs in the soil. Skunks do most of their feeding at night so you rarely see what is causing the damage. There is little you can do now, except fill in the holes with loose soil and sift a little grass seed on it. As the weather continues to get colder the grubs will move deep into the soil and insecticides will have no effect. Mark your calendar to do something about it next spring.



### Farm Calendar

#### Saturday, November 3

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents annual conference, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., thru Nov. 7.

#### Sunday, November 4

Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, thru Nov. 9.

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents annual conference, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., thru Nov. 7.

#### Monday, November 5

McKean Co. DHIA annual meeting, Robbin's Nest, Port Allegany, 7:45 p.m.

Chester Co. DHIA banquet, West Fallowfield Christian School, 7:00 p.m.

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents annual conference, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., thru Nov. 7.

Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, thru Nov. 9.

Greene Co. pesticide license exam, FFA Dept., McGuffey High School, 8:00 p.m.

#### Tuesday, November 6

##### Election Day

Greene Co. barn meeting, Jim Pettit Farm, Holbrook, 8:00 p.m.

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents annual conference, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur

Springs, W. Va., thru Nov. 7.  
Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, thru Nov. 9.

#### Wednesday, November 7

National Association of Extension 4-H Agents annual conference, The Greenbrier, White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, thru Nov. 9.

Western Pa. Agronomy Ag-Service Schools, Days Inn, Meadville, 8:45 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Swine producers meeting, Gratz Fire Company Hall, Gratz, 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Montgomery Co. Ag Center annual meeting, Ag Center, 8:00 p.m.

#### Thursday, November 8

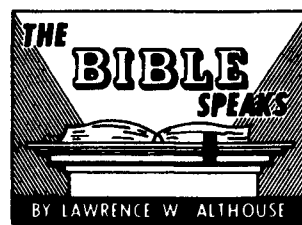
Pa. Standardbred Horse Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, thru Nov. 9.

63d National FFA Convention, Convention Hall, Kansas City, Mo., thru Nov. 10.

Seventh annual Farm-City Banquet, Riveredge Restaurant, Reading, 7:00 p.m.

Cumberland Co. DHIA banquet, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale, 6:30 p.m.

Erie Co. Co-Op Ext. annual meet-



### LOST OPPORTUNITY

November 4, 1990

Background Scripture: 2 Kings 22.

Devotional Reading: Psalms 119.

Years ago one Sunday morning I was explaining to a church school class that when it comes to the grace of God, it is never too late to repent and receive God's forgiveness. One man in the class said, "If that's so, I think I know how to beat the system!" He was jesting, of course, but at the same time he was pointing to what seemed to be a flaw in the system. "Why don't I wait until I'm dying and then repent? That way I can live the way I want to until then and still be assured of salvation!"

How would you have answered him? Was he right? Is there a "flaw in the system"?

What I said to him was that the flaw was more apparent than real, for part of the value of receiving God's grace is, not only that it brings us eternal life after death, but that it makes real life possible before death. The power of God's grace not only affects our lives in the hereafter, but also in the here-and-now. The person who waits until they are on their deathbed will receive God's grace if their

repentance is sincere, but they will have already lost out on the privilege of living by that grace right now.

**WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN**  
Somewhere I read the testimony of a British literary figure who became a Christian as he lay dying. "Damnation!" he is recorded as having exclaimed, "to think I could have had all this years and years ago!" His soul was saved for eternity, but he had lost some grand opportunities during his earthly life.

That's what happened to King Josiah and the people of Judah when the scroll of the law was rediscovered in the temple by Hilkiah the high priest. When the scroll was brought to King Josiah and he read the ancient laws of Israel, he felt a profound sorrow for all the years that his people had lived in ignorance of it. Now that he could read the law, he was suddenly aware of how evil that life had been. So he expressed his sorrow and repentance in the traditional way: "he rent his clothes." Tearing off one's garments was an ancient expression of shame and sorrow.

#### INQUIRE OF THE LORD

Josiah, because of his sincere contribution and dedication to the Lord was exempted from the ruin to follow. But not that nation. Although God accepted their repentance, their sinful ways of so many years brought consequences which forgiveness would not erase. Under Josiah the future of Judah might be secure, but it was the past that they had lost.

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