



OPINION

A Pivotal Year

Last year showed us how volatile conditions can be in a free market environment. And in December, prices would have fallen to lower levels if price supports had not continued to be a part of dairy policy. Current supply and demand conditions can be summed as follows: 1 percent increase in sales, 3 percent increase in production, and virtually no export sales of non-fat solids.

Dr. Paul Hand, general manager, Atlantic Dairy Cooperative, said that in 1989 and the first six months of 1990, only butterfat was produced in excess of market needs. Since late summer, however, production of butter, non-fat solids and cheese has been excessive. Prices of these commodities are all at or below support levels. This will mean substantially lower farm prices for 1991 and early 1992.

The 1990 Farm Bill provides an area where supplies can be influenced, resulting in improved pricing. Provision has been made for the USDA and the industry to develop an "inventory management" program. Such a program can be substituted for all the across-the-board assessments that will otherwise be made if production exceeds commercial sales by 7 billion pounds or more. Currently, the support price floor of \$10.10 per hundredweight prevents any further price reductions. However, additional assessments from producers can be utilized, thus reducing prices to those affected.

This initiative contained in the 1990 Farm Bill is only a beginning step toward addressing the problem of balancing supplies with demand. The mechanism or programs to be developed will require substantial unity among all dairy interests — and support from USDA.

The difficult task of developing action programs will require the positive effort of all dairy farmers. Already, some so-called leaders are developing extreme positions and creating confusion among producers. 1991 will be a year of opportunity to develop needed programs for long-run solutions to both supply and inventory management. Wild rhetoric will not be productive.

The free market works. However, the roller coaster effect on prices is too damaging to much of the industry. Surely alternatives can be developed that will receive the support of the great majority of dairy farmers. This makes 1991 truly a pivotal year.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Be Patient

This is the time of year that we are under strain and pressure to get a lot of jobs underway for the planting season. It also means that we are not as patient with people and livestock. Let's be careful, as we move our cattle around, and not give them that extra slap or prod to try to speed up movement. Keep in mind, that extra shove or push could have an effect on production. Cows can "sense" the change in pace and temperament and respond with a little less production.

There is a great deal of activity in the spring season, but let's not take it out on our cattle. Be patient and try to maintain a relaxed schedule as we move our livestock around. It'll pay off in the milk check.

We find that in the best producing herds the animals are relaxed and the workers are relaxed. This tells us something about the tender loving care that cattle need.

To Practice Farm Safety

Spring is traditionally a pleasant time on the farm. It is a time to get out in the field and enjoy the change in the weather and the anticipation of a new cropping season. All the anticipation of good things to come can be ruined by one accident. According to Robert Anderson, Extension Agronomy Agent, following a few rules can help keep the spring season a happy one on the farm.

Operate and maintain equipment in accordance with the operator's manual. Shut off power before unclogging, adjusting, or servicing equipment. Keep children off all equipment. Adjust ground speed to field conditions. Stay clear of ditches, steep slopes and other obstructions. Check tires, hitches, lights, SMV emblems and brakes daily. Don't over-

load or overwork equipment. Adjust road travel speed to load and road conditions.

To Apply Poultry Manure Sparingly

With the large poultry population in this region, poultry manure is in good supply. Since poultry manure may contain from 15 pounds to nearly 50 pounds of nitrogen per ton, depending on moisture and litter content, over application can burn crops and result in disappointments. Gardeners should not be using heavy amounts of fresh manure in their soils. On cropland it is recommended that poultry manure applications be limited to not more than 5 to 7 tons of 75% moisture content per acre.

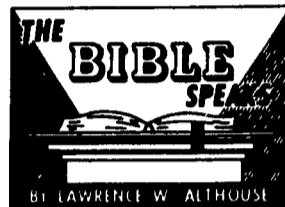
Keep in mind that some poultry manure may contain up to 50 pounds of nitrogen per ton and can burn seeds and crop roots. Poultry manure is also the highest in phosphorus and potash of any of our farm manures. It has excellent fertilizer value when used properly.

The 1991-92 Agronomy Guide (pages 24-25) gives additional details about the fertilizer values of farm manures. The Agronomy Guide is available through any extension office in Pennsylvania for a \$6.00 fee.

To Remove Trash

Landowners along rural roads are the victims of people who have little respect for the property of others. Too many people are dumping trash in fields along the road. In all cases when this is dumped on pastures or cropland, the trash should be removed before spring growth begins. This trash will be hard on farm equipment when on cropland and may be poisonous to livestock when on pastureland.

We urge property owners to remove the trash in the next week or two. If any type of identification can be made, as to the owner of the trash, this should be reported to Township officials; prosecution can be made for dumping trash along the highway.



WHAT WE REALLY NEED

March 17, 1991

Background Scripture:

Matthew 18:21-34.

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 103:1-14.

If you are the one doing the forgiving, sometimes Jesus' command to "forgive one another" seems rather unfair. Some people, it seems, take advantage of our forgiving nature. They come back for forgiveness repeatedly. Really, there ought to be some limits on forgiving!

In one of my parishes was a man who kept a little notebook in which he chronicled all his marital conflicts and spats. He took literally what he thought were the limits that Jesus placed on forgiveness: "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven" (18:22). In other words, he believed that Jesus had set the limit for forgiveness at 70x7 or 490! He didn't realize that Jesus was not setting a limit when he said this, but expanding Peter's horizons. Peter obviously thought that seven times was pretty magnanimous, for he said: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Peter must have been dumbfounded when Jesus said "seventy times seven!"

AS WE FORGIVE

That's why it is important to follow these words of Jesus with the parable he told, the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. This parable illustrates two things in Jesus' teaching about forgiveness. First, it shows us that the forgiveness we receive from God is

linked directly to the forgiveness we give to others. In the Lord's Prayer he taught his disciples to pray: "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matt. 6:12). In this parable he asks us to realize that if we want forgiveness, we must give forgiveness.

The servant in the story owes his master ten thousand talents, which scholars estimate to be roughly comparable to \$1,000. Unable to pay this debt, the man begs his lord not to sell him and his family into slavery. He promises to eventually pay his master, but the master goes a step beyond and actually forgives him the debt. In turn, the debtor was owed one hundred denarii, or about \$20 by a fellow servant. Although the latter begged for patience, the man who had been forgiven his debt of \$1,000 refused to extend mercy to the man who owed him \$20 and had him thrown into jail.

IF YOU DON'T FORGIVE

Secondly, this parable teaches us that there are no limits to forgiveness. The disparity between the \$1,000 and \$20 is meant by Jesus to indicate the difference between our indebtedness to God and our indebtedness to each other. If God can forgive such a huge debt, should we not be able to forgive a small one? So when the master learns of his servant's unforgiving treatment of the other servant, he comes to him and wrathfully condemns him to jail. "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?" (18:33). And just to make certain that we get the meaning of this parable, Jesus concludes: "So also my heavenly Father will do to everyone of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart" (18:35).

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, March 16

Mid-Atlantic Herding Stock Dog Club herding clinic, McVeytown.

NFO annual meeting, Plumstead Fire Hall.

Potter Co. Accident Seminar for Farms, First National Bank, Ulysses, 7 p.m.

Philadelphia Flower Show, Civic Center, thru March 17.

Maryland Guernsey meeting, Grasonville VFW, Grasonville.

Susquehanna Co. Lakeside Maple Festival, Lakeside.

Sunday, March 17

St. Patrick's Day

Philadelphia Flower Show, Civic Center.

Monday, March 18

Pennsylvania 4-H Week

Small poultry flock health meeting, Leader Nursing Home, Sunbury, 7:15 p.m.

Using newspaper bedding/how to calibrate a manure spreader, Lehigh Co. Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.

Erie Co. pesticide safety meeting,

Moose Club, Union City, 1 p.m.-4 p.m.; repeats at Fort LeBoeuf Middle School, Waterford, 7 p.m.-10 p.m.

Pennsylvania 4-H Week, thru March 23.

Tuesday, March 19

Pennsylvania 4-H Week

South Central Cattleman's Association annual banquet, East Berlin Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

York Farm Computer User Group, Gettysburg H.S.

Clarion Co. Swine Health Seminar, Clarion Co. Park, 7:30 p.m.

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Farm Forum

Editor:

This is to wish Jay Irwin a happy retirement.

I'm sure his service to Lancaster Countians as Extension Director will long be remembered there. As one who has read Mr. Irwin's column "Now Is The Time" for

years, I selfishly hope it will continue to run in your fine paper. His tips and reminders are invaluable; they obviously come from a man with real insight into the work of farm management.

Dave Wilder
Phoenixville

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