



# OPINION

## National Agriculture Week

Every day is national, state and local ag day for us. But it is fitting that the rest of the nation celebrated Agricultural Day on Wednesday to honor America's providers.

Agriculture Day is a national observance which honors farmers by directing attention to the important contributions they make to our economy and way of life.

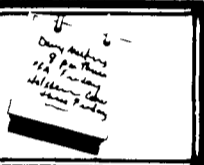
Agriculture can take credit for our high standard of living. Since a country's economy is built on an agricultural foundation, a productive ag system frees the labor pool for the development of industry, technology and services.

Although the amount spent for food has risen, food spending as a percentage of personal income has declined over the past decade, leaving more money for savings and other expenditures. According to a letter from Boyd Wolff, Pennsylvania ag secretary, food spending was just 14.7 percent of disposable income.

Our farmers are so efficient that people sometimes forget what a production miracle our food and fiber system really is. Year after year, we rely on our farmers to produce more and more food for a growing world population. But farmers only receive 25 cents from each food dollar, and the cost of farming continues to rise year after year.

We are pleased to honor farmers every day of the year. And we certainly want to add our voice of honor during National Agriculture Week.

### Farm Calendar



#### Saturday, March 23 Pennsylvania 4-H Week

- National DHIA Convention, OMNI Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, thru March 27.
- McKean/Cameron Co. Farm Accident Seminar, 4-H Center, Smethport, 7 p.m.
- Woodlot Management Workshop, Mansfield U., 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
- Penn State Dairy Science Club spring judging contest, Penn State Ag Arena, 10 a.m.
- Susquehanna Co. fruit pruning, Bender's Orchard, 10 a.m.

#### Sunday, March 24

- National DHIA Convention, OMNI Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, thru March 27.

#### Monday, March 25

- National DHIA Convention, OMNI Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, thru March 27.
- Pesticide update meeting, Middleburg H.S., 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- 1991 N.E. Dairy Conference,

- Desmond Americana Hotel, Albany, N.Y., thru March 26.
- W. Pa. Pork Producers annual meeting, Mercer Co. Extension, 7 p.m.

- Octoraro Young Farmers Association contest evaluation and planning meeting, 7:30 p.m.

#### Tuesday, March 26

- National DHIA Convention, OMNI Inner Harbor Hotel, Baltimore, thru March 27.
- Penn State Forest Resources Issues Conference, Harrisburg, thru March 27.

- Lebanon Co. Safe Drinking Water Clinic, Schaefferstown Fire Hall, 1 p.m., repeats 7 p.m.
- Tioga Co. Dairy Nutrition I, Tri-Co. Rural Electric Bldg., Mansfield.

- Pesticide update meeting, Mifflinburg H.S., 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- Lehigh Co. small-scale farming, Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.
- Small Group Farmer Workshop,

### Farm Forum

Dear Editor,

I want to express my concern about raising tobacco, after reading your front page article in the March 16 issue that asks for more tobacco acreage. Most certainly it is legal to raise tobacco, but is it moral to raise a crop that is reportedly causing harm to many tobacco users and even children who

inhale the smoke in the room.

My point is simply to ask potential and current tobacco growers to think about what they are a part of, and to find ways of saving their farms, without causing others to lose their lives prematurely.

Karl Hellerick  
Center Valley



## NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Plan For Oat Planting

I know some farmers are considering the use of feed oats for planting this spring, but this may not be a good idea. Feed oats may contain quackgrass, bindweed and other weed seeds.

Planting feed oats will generally result in lower yields. You also know the problem that any weed seeds planted will be a problem for years to come. Keep in mind that high quality seed is the smallest part of producing a crop. So, saving a few cents by using inferior or weedy seed doesn't make much sense. On the other hand, homegrown seed of varieties proven successful on your farm can be cleaned, treated and planted if the germination is 80% or better. You can place the seed in a tray with moist soil, cover with wet burlap and keep in a warm place. Then count the seeds that germinate against the total and determine the percent of germination.

#### To Care For Your Pastures

Are your pastures a source of good quality forage, and do they promote good herd health, or are they a source of parasites, poisons and disease? How productive your pastures are depends largely on how well you manage them. Here are a few hints.

Lime and fertilize in accordance with soil test results. Control weeds by frequent clipping and by the use of herbicides. Remove toxic plants or fence animals away from them. Introduce more-productive and more-nutritious species of grasses and legumes into the stand, and create compacted soils.

Divide the pasture into four or more paddocks so you can practice rotational grazing. If acreage is limited save it for the animals that need it the most and if necessary, limit their access time. Be prepared to offer animals additional feeds when pasture growth declines. When pastures are lush, harvest the excess growth as hay. Keep parasite loads low by

- Methodist Church, Hazen, 1 p.m.
- Welding Skills Class, Penn Manor H.S., 7 p.m.
- Erie Co. dairy community meet-

(Turn to Page A36)

deworming animals three weeks after the start of the pasture season, again three weeks later and a third time, after they came off pasture. Drain, or fence animals out of wet areas to help prevent foot problems.

#### To Evaluate Winter Wheat Topdressing

During this season of the year many farmers ask the question, does winter wheat need fertilizing? According to agronomists, topdressing with fertilizers may or may not be a good idea. There are several things that should be considered before making the decision.

In the first place, do not topdress winter wheat with nitrogen fertilizer if the wheat is to be overseeded with clover or alfalfa. Nitrogen causes heavy growth of wheat which may smother out the new seeding.

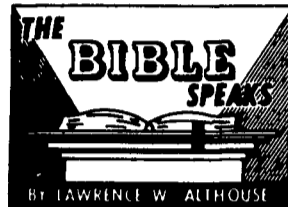
On the other hand, winter wheat fields that have come through the winter looking thin, should be

topdressed. Use only a straight nitrogen fertilizer, such as urea. Topdressing winter wheat with phosphate or potash has not given any increased wheat yields.

Apply the nitrogen fertilizer in early spring at the rate of 30-40 pounds of actual nitrogen per acre.

#### To Join 4-H

All across the county 4-H clubs are reorganizing. Each club meets between six and eight weeks, teaching a skill such as cooking, crafts, leadership, sewing, wood-working, animal care and much more. Four-H Clubs are run by adult volunteers who have a skill they wish to teach. Any youth regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin or handicap, that are between the age of 8 and 19 is eligible to join the largest "out-of-school" program in the nation. For more information on the club closest to you in Lancaster County, contact Zoann Parker, 4-H Agent, at 394-6851.



### OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS March 24, 1991

#### Background Scripture:

Matthew 25:31-46.

#### Devotional Reading:

Psalms 119:10-16.

Up until a few minutes ago I was wrestling with what I felt was a strong obligation. Tomorrow is the day our church serves a Christmas meal to several thousand people in Dallas, as well as distributing clothing and toys. Last year my wife and I found it a very meaningful day and were looking forward to participating again this year.

But this has been one of those weeks — we've worked longer, gotten to bed later, gone out more frequently, and gotten further behind in weekly tasks — like getting out this column and another one we write together. Today, I fell farther behind and I'm burning the midnight oil in order to get this in tomorrow morning's mail.

#### An Obligation

So, I was beginning to see tomorrow's event as an obligation that was hanging over my head and I have been rationalizing with myself as to whether I would be justified in skipping it this year. I had pretty well decided to do just that, when I sat down to write this piece on the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats.

This is always a shattering bit of teaching, but tonight it had really shaken me. The final judgment is portrayed as a division between the sheep and the goats. The sheep will go to the King's right hand—the place of favor—while the goats will be relegated to the left hand—the place of disfavor. And the basis for that division of the sheep and the goats has nothing to

do with what denomination we choose, the church we attend, what creeds or doctrines we subscribe to, the church offices we hold, etc. What does matter is that we have responded to our opportunities to feed the hungry, welcome the strangers, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison — in short, to help those who needed help, as Jesus indicated in the Parable of the Good Samaritan.

Of course, in the parable, Jesus puts it on a personal basis: "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me" (25:35,36). Those whom Jesus condemns for not doing these things want to know: "Lord, when did we see the hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee?" (25:44). They are protesting that they never had the opportunity to do any of those things for Jesus.

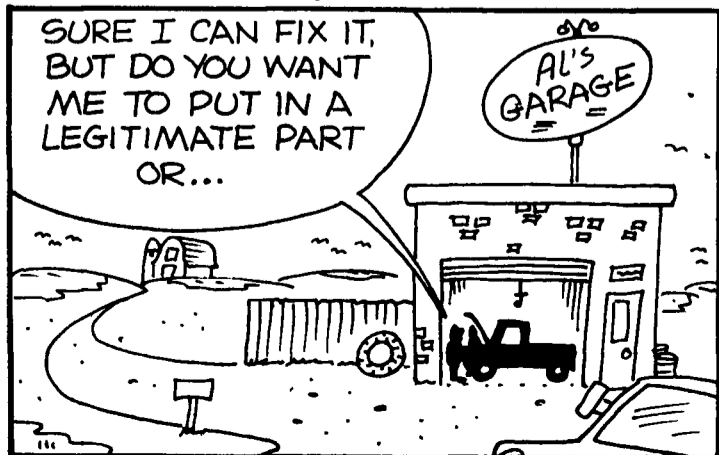
#### The Least Of These

Jesus' reply shakes us as much as it must have shaken them: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me" (25:46). There's no good in protesting that we haven't had the opportunities, for, in truth, every time we see our neighbor in need was an opportunity to minister to Christ himself.

How serious is that? Very serious, for in the parable the King says, "Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." In other words, if we fail to grasp our opportunities to serve Christ through our neighbors, we will have separated ourselves from God.

I have made up my mind not to miss the opportunity that awaits me tomorrow. I can't afford to. Can you?

(Based on copyrighted outlines produced by the Committee on the Uniform Series and used by permission. Released by Community and Suburban Press).



#### Lancaster Farming

Established 1955

Published Every Saturday  
Ephrata Review Building  
1 E Main St  
Ephrata, PA 17522

— by —

Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Steinman Enterprise

Robert G Campbell General Manager  
Everett R Newswanger Managing Editor

Copyright 1990 by Lancaster Farming