



OPINION

Food Safety Trivia

The cranberry scare of the early 1960's and the Alar hysteria of the late 1980's turned out to be nothing more than witch-hunting in the pretext of protecting the public welfare. In retrospect, both of these events turned out to be tempests in teapots. But they defamed innocent people and inflamed public inclinations to believe the worst while pinning blame on a scapegoat--agriculture.

A USDA study estimates losses to the apple growers in Washington state alone in excess of \$140 million, with 10 percent of the growers forced out of business because of false publicity.

According to Nancy Ragsdale, environmental programs coordinator for agriculture and natural resources at the University of Maryland, the real tragedy of Alar goes beyond economic impacts on apple producers. It lies in the deliberate distortion of scientific data, ready public acceptance of flawed information, and subsequent effects of the hysterical outcry on the regulatory process.

In a recent talk at the University, Dr. Ragsdale commented that a person would have had to drink 19,000 quarts of apple juice per day for 70 years to even approximate the risk level that appeared to be carcinogenic to rodents used in the notorious Alar study.

Rather than focusing on food safety trivia, the nation's public information people should focus on public health concerns like smoking, alcohol, unbalanced diets, and high-dose exposures to harmful environments for industrial workers.



NOW IS THE TIME

By Jay Irwin
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Incorporate Manure

Many barns, poultry houses and feed lots will be cleaned out in the next few weeks. We repeat the suggestion that this material be either injected into the soil or worked into the topsoil within a few days after application. This will not only preserve more nutrients but will reduce odors and maintain good public relations with your neighbors. Discing, chiseling or plowing after the manure application is strongly recommended. Livestock and poultry manure have considerable fertilizer value when applied into the soil before exposed to weathering. We urge our farmers to recognize this organic fertilizer and utilize it fully.

We hope our non-farm people understand that applying manure to our fields is part of farming and part of rural living. It may be unpleasant for a short time, but as far as I know, rural odors have never been proven to be a health hazard. We hope everyone tries to understand the needs and cares of others.

To Evaluate Dairy Expenses

When milk prices fall, the first inclination is to look for ways to cut costs. This is always a good practice, but according to Glenn Shirk, Extension Dairy Agent, be careful not to cut costs foolishly. Don't jeopardize your ability to make wise decisions and manage efficiently. This is a time to fine tune management decisions, not to retreat back to sloppy decision

making.

For example, rather than to drop DHIA, force yourself and your consultants to utilize DHIA records more effectively. Rather than "firing" consultants, rely upon them more heavily for improved feeding, for improved herd health, for continued genetic progress, for efficient cropping, and for better financial management. In other words, push everyone to give you a greater return on each dollar spent.

To Start Grazing Gradually

With the amount of warm weather and good growing conditions, we're seeing pastures growing very rapidly. This is also true with producers that are planning to graze winter grains such as rye or barley. The herd or flock should be controlled at first and not allowed on the area for more than a half hour; bloating and scouring may result if they consume too much of the lush forage the first few days. Also, it's best to feed the animals some dry matter such as silage, hay or straw before turning

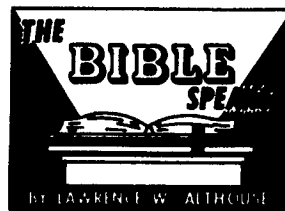
them out to pasture the first few times. Dairy farmers should keep milking cows from the grazing area at least 4 to 5 hours before the milking period.

To Remove Bagworm Cases

Right now is a good time to check evergreens and shrubs for overwintering bagworm cases.

These insects are especially fond of arborvitae, junipers, and cedars, but may be found on other plants. Where only a few infested plants are involved it may be practical to remove and destroy the bagworm cases. Each case may contain up to 500 eggs. Young caterpillars will hatch from these eggs in late April if the cases have not been destroyed.

If there are too many overwintering bagworm cases to remove by hand, wait until after the eggs have hatched and then use a spray such as Sevin, Malathion, Orthene or BT's. Follow label directions when using any pesticide. Check for young caterpillars in late April and early May. It is best to control them when they are still small.



TROUBLE AT THE CHURCH SUPPER

April 7, 1991

Background Scripture: I Corinthians 11:17-34.

Devotional Reading: I Corinthians 10:14-22.

This passage of scripture — I Corinthians 11:17-34 — ought to be read in every Christian congregation at least once a year and perhaps more often. I don't mean to imply that all or even most congregations have a serious spiritual problem with their church suppers, but the issues Paul raises with the Corinthians in this passage are no less a problem in the churches today than they were in the first century A.D.

What was the problem in Corinth? It appears that the Corinthian church periodically held a church supper during which the bread and the cup of the Last Supper were taken, quite possibly at the end of the meal. It would seem that instead of an occasion of unity in Christ, the church suppers in Corinth had become rife with factionalism. We don't know if Paul is referring to the same leadership factions that he mentioned in Chapter I, or, as some have suggested, that these "divisions" are more social in nature: the have's and the have-not's.

DIVISIONS VS. UNITY

Sometimes it is amazing how many different ways a congregation can be divided. I'm not as concerned that there are divisions — some grouping is natural — but that often these divisions keep us from experiencing the unity that the church is called to manifest. It

is understandable in a church when the youth stick together for their activities and when senior citizens do much the same. But these groupings should never keep us from sharing, worshipping and witnessing together.

Apparently, that's what happened in Corinth. The idea of the church supper with Communion was a good idea, but the way it worked out was not! Some people came early and didn't bother waiting for those who probably could not get there so soon. If you've ever wondered where the idea of the carry-in supper (or by whatever name it is known in your church) originated, perhaps it was Corinth. It seems that everyone brought his or her own food and some had lots to eat and others virtually nothing. So there was little or no sharing.

BLASPHEMY!

Paul saw their divisive, selfish behavior as a virtual blasphemy against the Lord's Supper. We have no idea what was Paul's concept of the Lord's Supper — whether he regarded it as a sacrament, a simple memorial, the physical or spiritual presence of Christ, and so on. Nevertheless, although Paul doesn't give us a theology of the Eucharist, he does give us some clearly-defined ideas.

For one thing, it is a commemoration of Christ's cross and resurrection, a crucial victory already won — "Do this in remembrance of me." Secondly, it is a communion or sharing in the presence of the living Lord at his table — "This is my body which is for you." Third, it is an anticipation of the final victory of Christ to be established when he returns — "...you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." In an experience focused on the self-giving of Christ, how can Christians come to this table selfish and divided?

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, April 6

- Pa. Holstein Spring Sale, Ag Arena, State College, 10:30 a.m.
- N.E. Pa. regional sheep meeting, Towanda.
- Fruit pruning demonstration, Bertrams Fruit Farm, Honesdale, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
- Income Opportunities For Rural Areas Seminar, Allegany Community College, Cumberland, Md.
- Tractor and machine operators safety course, Edinboro Borough Building, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
- York Co. Forum, thru April 7.
- Lancaster Co. Sheep Shearing School, Ed Harkins Farm, Pequea, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Northern Tier Sheep Producing Seminar, Wysox Presbyterian Church, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Sunday, April 7

- York Co. Forum.

Monday, April 8

- Mercer Co. Sheep Shearing School, Carl Gadsby Farm, Grove City; repeats April 9.
- Wayne Co. drinking water clinic, Extension Office, Honesdale, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.; repeats 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- Berks Co. ASCS banquet, Ag Center, 7 p.m.
- PFA state legislative tour, Harrisburg Hilton and Towers, 11:15

a.m.; dinner at Harrisburg Inn, 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 9

- Poultry Sales and Service Conference, University Park, thru April 10.
- York Co. Computer User Group, Gettysburg H.S.
- Lehigh Co. small-scale farming, Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.
- OCIA weed control meeting, Room 1-A, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, 7 p.m.
- Snyder Co. ag labor meeting,

(Turn to Page A31)

Farm Forum

Editor:

About Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management Bill- HB496.

I have some real concerns about the misleading statements being tossed around about farmers putting nutrients in the Chesapeake Bay. I think farmers are taking a bad rap. They are being used as a "whipping boy" to cover for someone else. Mainly, industry, sewage treatment plants, PennDot road spraying as well as salting during winter. People having their lawns sprayed, wildlife, and others.

The farm associations state they

are in favor of this bill. The leaders of farm groups are not speaking for the average farmer. They are not the ones putting in long days working and paying their bills. The average farmer is too busy to run to all these meetings and hearings. Thus the average farmer is usually not heard from.

We do not need any new laws. There are laws on the books now to take care of a person who is really polluting the waterways. We most certainly, do not need government telling us how many

(Turn to Page A35)

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