



OPINION

Manipulated By The Powers That Be

Even with all the furor over low milk prices, dairy farmers and their farm organizations cannot agree on what's good for them.

Under the US house bill that was passed last week, farmers would receive a support price of \$12.60 per hundredweight on a base level of production. Those who produce above that level would be assessed to help pay for taking the unneeded product off the market. The "Tier" system is designed to discourage over-production, and thus stimulate market prices, or so the proponents of this system say.

But others say, in effect, the assessment of from 75 cents to \$1.00 per hundredweight of milk on the over-production would help pay for the costs of government nutrition programs. Dairy-men are already being assessed a 5 cent dairy tax to help reduce the budget deficit. These proposed assessments would do more to help pay for government consumer programs than they would do to reduce production.

We say any government program to help dairy farmers would be more objective (less consumer oriented) if the national food assistance programs were not tied to the dairy farm bill.

A sign of the frustration in the dairy industry was indicated last week when a group of farmers and agri-business people got together at the Roger Hess farm in Wayne County. These people simply believe their farm organizations and their governments are not doing enough. Hess wants to let the whole country know of the dairyman's plight. He proposes that every farmer and agri-business should put up a sign supporting a nationwide milk withholding to start on October 1, 1991. Reports of increasing sentiments in this direction are coming in.

But a Chester County dairyman said off the record that it would be against his principles to dump milk.

Last year, when milk prices to farmers were high, the price in the supermarket went up too. But since then, when the farm price for milk has made the most drastic drop in the shortest period of time since 1929, the price to the consumer has come down very little.

From all we can see and hear, the dairy farmers are being manipulated by the powers that be. And from what we can tell, it will be a long, hot summer.



**NOW IS
THE TIME**

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Conserve Water

The continuation of the recent dry weather is causing a decline in available water to farmers. We are seeing a drop in the water table, streams are drying up, and ponds and lakes are at low levels. We are beginning to hear reports of wells starting to go dry. Until we start receiving normal amounts of rain, a water conservation program should be started.

Check for water leaks and repair immediately. Reduce the amount of water used for washing items by using buckets instead of the hose. Change time of washing items and heavy household water use to early morning or late evening when livestock and poultry demand will be lower.

Become consciences of when you are using water and make sure you are not wasting or using more water than necessary. By starting to conserve water now you could prevent a serious water shortage in the future.

To Creep Feed Calves

According to Chester Hughes, extension livestock agent, the most profitable time to creep feed beef calves is during drought years.

Since the lack of rainfall reduces grass supplies, the beef cows daily milk production is reduced. With this decrease in milk production, the calf is not receiving adequate nutrition for growth. In fact, daily gains will drop to a point where the calf may actually be losing weight.

Creep feeding will increase daily gain by 0.15 to 0.25 pounds. It takes 450 pounds of creep feed to add 50 pounds of weaning weight to one calf. At 6 cents per pound feed cost, your added costs will be \$27 per calf or 54 cents per pound gained.

The bottom line with creep feed-

- Western FFA Dairy Show, Butler Co. Fairgrounds.
- 4-H Achievement Days, Penn State, thru July 31.
- Fayette Co. Fair, Uniontown, thru Aug. 3.
- Clearfield Co. Fair, Clearfield, thru Aug. 3.
- Potter Co. Fair, Millport, thru Aug. 3.
- Morrison Cove Dairy Show, Martinsburg, thru Aug. 2.
- Derry Township Fair, Derry, thru Aug. 3.

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ing is profitability. It is a tool to help you keep your calves gaining weight in dry weather and increase sale receipts. Profitable creep feeding means keeping an eye on your cows productivity level, pasture conditions, forage quality and the grain and feeder calf cash markets.

To Check Tobacco Fields For Tobacco Black Shank

Black Shank is a serious and destructive disease of tobacco. Robert Anderson, Extension Agronomy Agent, reports this disease has been found again on several Lancaster County farms this week after a ten year absence.

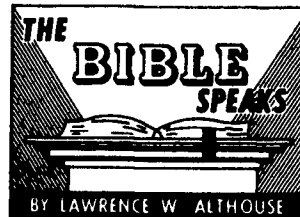
Black Shank is caused by a soil borne fungus found in many soils where tobacco is grown. This disease attacks the roots and basal parts of the plant. The roots will be black in color. When the stalk is

cut in half, the pith or center part of the stem is black and will usually be separated into discs.

The disease is recognized by a rapid uniform wilting or drooping of all leaves. Black Shank activity seems to be accelerated in hot weather. In early stages of the disease, the wilted plant recovers in the cool of the evening.

The best time to check fields is during the heat of the day. Suspected plants should be pulled and the roots and stems checked for symptoms.

Black Shank is very difficult to treat after an infestation is found in the field. The best control suggestions include long rotations and planting resistant tobacco varieties. None of the Pennsylvania type 41 varieties are resistant and only Maryland 609 is resistant to this disease.



**ON NOT
COMING DOWN**
July 28, 1991

Background Scripture:

Nehemiah 6.

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 87.

"I am doing a great work and I can not come down."

If Nehemiah had left us no other words than these, they would be enough. They are the kind of words that we need to put on our desks or our workplaces. Because all of us, like Nehemiah, are, constantly tempted to step down from what it is we are called by God to do.

All of us can put ourselves in Nehemiah's shoes. He is trying to get the Jerusalem wall rebuilt, but the Jews' enemies want to squelch this project before it can be successful. From time to time, all of us find ourselves in similar situations. Something needs to be done but there are those who will do all they can to make sure that we are unsuccessful. They may try to trick us, they may attempt to intimidate us, and they may threaten us. Even though we believe we are doing the right thing, we find it difficult not to be swayed from our course.

Nehemiah's enemies tried to lay a trap. "Come and let us meet together in one of the villages in the plain of Ono" (6:2). It sounds like a reasonable request, doesn't it? Let's get together and talk this thing over. Conciliation is always a good idea, but we must also be careful that the other side is sincere. Nehemiah was sure that they were not: Ono was quite some distance from Jerusalem and he realized why they wanted to get him away from Jerusalem: "...they intended to do me harm."

DOING A GREAT WORK

That's when Nehemiah makes

his famous reply: "I am doing a great work and I can not come down. Why should the work stop while I leave it and come down to you?" (6:3). How often that which would distract us from our tasks is reasonable and compelling. It is the sheer reasonableness that grabs us. When Satan tempted Christ, he used the most reasonable approaches. But Jesus and Nehemiah both kept their attention focused on the tasks they were trying to accomplish. I must keep myself focused on what is absolutely essential: "I am doing a great work" and then I know that "I cannot come down." Once we start examining the distraction, we are hooked. And making one affirmation may not be enough — Nehemiah had to do it four times — we may have to do it daily, hourly or even minute-by-minute. Next, his enemies try to unnerve him with rumors: "It is reported among the nations ... that you and the Jews intend to rebel: that is why you are building the wall; and you wish to become their king, according to this report" (6:6). I'm sure those words made Nehemiah tremble at least a little. Nothing could be more ruinous than were the Persian king to hear these rumors and believe them.

LIES SPREAD FASTER

Once again, we understand how he must have felt. We all find ourselves devastated when false rumors are circulated about us. It is so difficult to counteract false rumors: lies spread much faster than retractions (they also get more space in newspapers!). I like Nehemiah's forthright response: "No such things as you say have been done, for you are inventing them out of your own mind" (6:8). These are brave words, but he must have felt the need for some reassurance for he then prayed: "But now, O God, strengthen thou my hands." It is a little like the man who prayed, "I believe; help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24). We too need to speak bravely and pray for the courage to back up our brave words.

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, July 27

- Camden Co., N.J. Peach Festival, Cooper River Park, Curtis Memorial Stadium, North Park Dr., Pennsauken, N.J., thru July 28.
- Erie Co. Holstein picnic, Creek Side Campground, Little Hope, 1 p.m.
- Cambria Co. 4-H Horse and Pony Roundup, Fairgrounds.
- Pa. Cattlemen's Association annual field day, Venango Co.
- N.W. Pa. PHA Field Day, Vido-vich Farm, Midland, Pa.
- Conneaut Valley Fair, Conneautville.
- Jefferson Township Fair, Mercer.
- Troy Fair, Troy.
- Kemberton Fair, Phoenixville.
- Plainfield Farmer Fair, Plainfield.
- Fayette Co. Fair, Uniontown, thru Aug. 3.
- Penn State Master Gardener Open

House and Garden Tour, Lancaster area, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, and Guernsey Field Day, Frederick Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.

Bucks Co. Holstein Club Field Day, Holly Hill Farm, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, July 28

- Mercer Co. Grange Fair, Mercer, thru Aug. 4.
- Camden Co., N.J. Peach Festival, Cooper River Park, Curtis Memorial Stadium, North Park Dr., Pennsauken, N.J.
- Fayette Co. Fair, Uniontown, thru Aug. 3.
- Erie Co. Holstein picnic, Creek Side Campground, Little Hope, 1 p.m.
- Lebanon Fair, Lebanon, thru Aug. 3.

Monday, July 29

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