



# OPINION

## Ag Science Touches Your Life

The annual Ag Progress Days extravaganza is scheduled for next week. And as usual, the large number of research and educational projects assembled in one location boggles the mind.

"Ag Science Touches Your Life" is a great theme for the three-day event. And this theme tells us what we can expect. Tours of the research farm will be leaving the corn barn on a set schedule. Conservation and sustainable agriculture are on the menu too. In addition, the Penn State faculty will have presentations on food safety, nutrient management, computers and information on how to start a small business.

New this year, the equine educational program will include training clinics, therapeutic and 4-H champion riding demonstrations.

But we can't overlook the \$20 million worth of farm equipment that the 250 commercial exhibitors will bring to the show. The exhibition area will be filled with the newest models of machinery. And field demonstrations will show off the work that they do.

Truly, agriculture and its sciences touch everyone's life. And one of the best places to see how this happens will be at Ag Progress Days next week.

## Farm Forum

Editor,

I have been following with much concern the unfair treatment that is being experienced by our area dairy farmers.

As a consumer who enjoys fresh wholesome dairy products; I would hope that our elected officials come to their senses and establish a Fair Pricing Formula before our family farmers become extinct.

I can't believe that dairy farmers are only receiving \$11.00 per cwt. for their milk. I understand this is the same price they received (12) twelve years ago. I'll tell you one better. Twenty years ago on our dairy farm in Mississippi we received over \$13.00 per cwt. for our milk.

Evidently consumers and dairy farmers are being ripped off. I

urge all consumers to rally around the efforts of area dairy farmers as they attempt to have a new dairy policy established in the United States.

I would also urge you dairy farmers that have been sitting back to become involved with the organizations that are trying to help you.

Consumers and local Agri Business people will be at a severe disadvantage if our family farmers are gone.

I urge everyone to stand up and be counted. Contact your legislators and tell them you have had enough of the imitation food products and insist they take proper steps to safe guard our food supply and maintain our family farms.

Susan Tesluk  
Mehoopany

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## Farm Calendar

### Saturday, August 10

- South Central Championship Show, Shippensburg, 9:30 a.m.
- Tioga Co. Fair Open Holstein Show, 9 a.m.
- Antique Tractors, Engines, and Farm Equipment Field Day, Twin Bridge Campground, thru Aug. 11.
- Timber '91 Forest Productions Equipment and Technology Expo, Bloomsburg Fairgrounds, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
- New Carlisle Fair.
- Butler Farm Show, Butler.
- Cochranon Community Fair,

### Cochranon.

- Warren Co. Fair, Pittsfield.
- Clinton Co. Fair.
- Schuylkill Co. Fair, Summit Station.
- Wayne Co. Fair, Honesdale, thru Aug. 11.
- Bedford Co. Fair, thru Aug. 11.
- Union Co. West End Fair, Laurelton.
- Greene Co. Fair, Waynesburg.
- Wayne Co. Fair, Honesdale, thru Aug. 11.
- Elk Co. Fair, Kersey.
- Extension Extravaganza/4-H Fair, Harrisburg Farm Show



## NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

### To Attend Ag Progress Days

August 13-15 is Penn State Ag Progress Days at the College of Agriculture's Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center near University Park. This three-day event is the largest display of agricultural science and technology in the Northeast.

This year will mark the first year of using the new horse facilities. Educational horse demonstrations will be featured all days. In addition, there will be other educational presentations and exhibits, guided tours of research facilities, commercial exhibits, soil and water conservation tours, machinery demonstrations, and antique farm and home implements on display.

Also, many groups will be meeting and holding reunions. Plan now to take the whole family and make a day of it at Ag Progress Days. The grounds are open 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Aug. 13 and 15 and 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Aug. 14. Remember, admission and parking are free!

### To Make Corn Harvesting Decisions

Crops are maturing much earlier than usual this year because of the early arrival and continued hot weather. Small grains matured about two weeks ahead of schedule and we expect corn will also mature a few weeks early.

Once corn matures, it will probably dry down very quickly. When harvesting corn for silage, this means you may have a smaller window of time to cut corn at the proper moisture for good fermentation.

Because of the drought and intense heat, many corn fields are starting to fire very badly. Some farmers are thinking about ensiling the crop in an effort to salvage what they can.

Be careful, though, not to make

### Complex.

### Sunday, August 11

- Northampton Co. Dairymen's picnic, Klein Farms, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.
- International Society of Arboriculture 67th Annual Conference, Adams Mark Hotel, Phila., thru

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this decision too quickly. With a little moisture, many of these fields still have an opportunity to produce more feed dry matter.

You will want to monitor these fields very closely. You may want to chop a few stalks, grind them up, and test them for moisture content to determine when to harvest.

Also, have your corn silage tested for nitrates. Our office has been sampling whole corn plants from a field low in soil nitrogen and from one high in soil nitrogen. Samples were taken during the drought, a few days after a rain, and about two weeks later. All samples were high in nitrogen, ranging from 0.5 to 2.2 percent. Anything above 0.4 percent is considered risky.

### To Check On Federal Drought Assistance

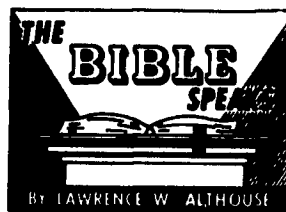
The federal government is beginning to declare many Pen-

sylvania counties federal disaster areas and making them eligible for certain federal assistance programs.

Grazing and harvesting of set-aside acres, low interest loans, feed grain assistance, and disaster relief payments are a few of the programs.

However, these programs are very complicated and vary from farm to farm. The best thing to do is contact your local USDA Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) Office and discuss your situation with them.

Remember, to qualify for assistance, you must have ASCS establish your loss. This means if you are planning to harvest corn planted for grain as corn silage, ASCS must determine yield loss before the corn is cut. By talking with ASCS now, you will know what you need to do in order to maintain your eligibility for federal drought relief.



MORE THAN SORRY  
August 11, 1991

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 9:1-37.

Devotional Reading: Psalms 24.

Someone — and I've forgotten who — one said, "The universe is remarkably arranged: God loves to forgive sins and I love to commit them."

Whoever he was, I think he didn't really understand the Christian faith he thought he was mocking. His misunderstanding of God's forgiveness is a common one, even, it would seem, among some Christians. According to this view, Providence has arranged a rather salutary cosmic division of labor: it is our job to be sinners and God's to forgive.

I call it the "spoiled-brat syndrome." We've all seen it in real life: a child who has learned that it is okay to get in trouble so long as he or she says "I'm sorry," and gets a doting pat on the head. Very often these children become "spoiled-brat" adults. They never worry about their wrongdoings because they have found that there are always some people who are willing to dispense what German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer called "cheap grace" — forgiveness that doesn't cost anything — to the forgiver or the forgivee.

But forgiveness that does not cost anything isn't worth anything. Grace isn't 'cheap' but the most expensive commodity on earth. Just because God is willing to give it to us as a gift doesn't mean it doesn't cost him anything. In fact, he paid a terrible price: his own Son, Jesus Christ, on a cross.

And how do we come to realize

the cost of God's grace? The answer: through sincere confession and contrition. When we confront ourselves with the gap between what God has created us to be and what we have done with our lives, there must be a genuine remorse at having so greatly missed the mark. None of us who takes a hard look at our lives can come away from that inventory with satisfaction. Actually, the more we grow in God's grace, the more we realize just how greatly we have missed the mark. The closer we are to God, the more we realize our failures and shortcomings.

When Ezra assembled the people of Israel to confess their sins, he wasn't looking for or expecting a divine "quick-fix." Both Ezra and the people knew that real contrition meant more than saying "I'm sorry," which is really just the starting-point. God looks for more from us than just being sorry and we want more than just a pat on the head and an indulgent smile.

Ezra recited the outline history of his people, noting the faithfulness of God and the recurrent faithlessness of his people. Note that he does not offer any excuses, alibies or self-justification. Note that he does not lay the sins of Israel to ignorance. Some sin, to be sure, is mostly ignorance. But more often it is what Ezra describes, willful disobedience: "Yet they acted presumptuously and did not obey thy commandments, but sinned against thy ordinances, by the observance of which a man shall live, and turned a stubborn shoulder and stiffened their neck and would not obey." (9:29).

On the human plane, true contrition rarely goes beyond being "sorry." We seldom hear a confession that admits that the sinner simply did that which he or she knew was wrong and against God's will. Maybe that's why so many people have a hard time believing that they have been forgiven — because their repentance has never gotten beyond "being sorry."

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