



OPINION

A Great Injustice

A terrible thing happened last week. An unlicensed caterer for a birthday party made lasagna in her home two days before the party. After the food containing eggs was partially cooked, the caterer set the food out to cool for dear knows how long before finally refrigerating it.

Then on the day of the party she warmed the lasagna before transporting it to the party. At the party, the food was kept warm on Sterno cans for four hours before the party guests ate the food.

Needless to say, 23 people got sick, complaining of food poisoning after the birthday party.

Any first grader knows bacteria will grow in food that is not properly cooked and refrigerated. So this is a clear case of mis-handled food that contained eggs.

If people want to make themselves sick or hire others to do it for them, that's their right as an American citizen. But what they should not be allowed to do is to blame the farmer for their own misconduct. To go back to the farm to try to find bacteria in the hen house and in the birds is unthinkable in this case. But that is what has happened. A local farm family is blamed for producing the eggs with Salmonella enteritidis in them. And if the authorities find the bacteria, the flock will be depopulated, and costly clean up requirements will be initiated.

If you look for Salmonella, you can find it anywhere in the environment. Anywhere includes in the hen house. And the bacteria will likely be found in this farmer's flock.

But everyone who handles food should be responsible to know that the reason you cook and refrigerate food is to kill and slow the growth of bacteria. Ignorance is no excuse.

If the transporters and preparers of food after it leaves the farm would be legally held responsible for any sickness or death from the food they handled or prepared, we would eliminate a lot of the unfair investigations that come back to the farmer.

Certainly, the consumer has a right to know the food supply is safe. But in this case, a great injustice has been done to the local farm family that has had their livelihood ruined by this uncalled for investigation.



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Be Positive About Farming

We are in a new ball game. With fewer and fewer people knowing anything about agriculture, we need to be very careful on how we say things.

This is especially true for the emerging environmental issues and animal welfare concerns. Words like wastes, toxic, chemicals, crowding, and abuse are very emotional and rally people behind causes.

We also must be very careful not to shift blame between the various agricultural industries, i.e. poultry, swine, dairy, beef, mushrooms, etc. This will weaken agriculture's position.

There is still truth in the phrase "united we stand, divided we fall." Instead, leaders from the various agricultural commodity groups must work together to address these issues.

In public (at church, social groups, etc.), we need to be telling people about the good things agriculture is doing, the environmentally positive things farmers do every day, and the care and concern farmers have for animals.

Words such as organic instead of waste, care instead of abuse, and safety instead of carelessness must become a part of our actions and vocabulary.

Today, with tight government budgets, regulatory agencies will be responding more to neighbor complaints and taking necessary regulatory actions. This makes it very important to build good neighbor relations and practice good stewardship. By developing and practicing a good stewardship philosophy, we will be able to reduce a lot of problems. Remember, it is what we say and how we

McKean Co. DHIA annual meeting, Robbin's Nest Restaurant, Port Allegany, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 19

Penn State Tax Institute, Souder-ton, thru Nov. 20.
Schuylkill Co. Estate Planning Workshop, 7 p.m.-10 p.m.
PFA annual meeting, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, thru Nov. 20.
North American International Livestock Expo, Kentucky Fair (Turn to Page A30)

act that affects people's perceptions of agriculture.

To Tell The Good News About Farming

Farming has changed a lot in the last 10 years. However, the consumer still believes we are not making any changes and still are farming the way we did in the 1960s and 1970s.

With Farm-City Week coming up, we are reminded of the importance of educating the public about farming. Did you know:

- Chemical use on farms has been declining since 1982.

- Per cent of income spent on food: U.S. - 10.3, Japan - 18.0, USSR - 28.0, Mexico - 31.9 and China - 47.8.

- Number of people fed by one U.S. farmer: 1940 - 18.5, 1950 - 27.2, 1960 - 46.2, 1970 - 73.1, 1980 - 115.1, and 1990 - 128.

- Farmers provide food and habitat for 75 per cent of the nation's wildlife.

- U.S. per cent of income spent on food has been declining: 1990 - 10.3, 1980 - 16.6, 1975 - 17.0 and 1951 - 23.0.

These numbers have been made

possible by our farm families utilizing the latest technologies and scientific research. We must remind people that the high standard of living we enjoy is a direct result of our farms.

To Examine The Pennsylvania Spring Oat And Barley Performance Study

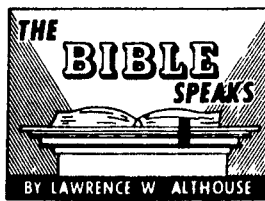
Penn State College of Agriculture has been comparing plant varieties for many years and has released the 1990 comparison of spring oat and barley varieties.

Tests were conducted at the Penn State Research Farms in Lancaster and Centre counties. All results are for 7-inch row spacing and corrected for 12 per cent moisture.

Results are reported for single year and two and three year averages. For the spring oats, yields ranged from 93 bushels per acre to 139 bushels per acre.

For a complete copy of the report, contact your county cooperative extension office.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Do not let what you cannot do interfere with what you can do."



MADNESS OR SOBER TRUTH?

November 17, 1991

Background Scripture: Acts 27 through 28.

Devotional Reading: Romans 8:18-30.

Men of authority abound in the last chapters of Acts. There is the Sanhedrin that heard and split over Paul's defense. There is the Roman tribune, Claudius Lysias, who protected Paul from the mob and secreted his prisoner out of Jerusalem to safety in Caesarea. There is Felix, the Roman Governor who kept Paul in his custody for two years, and Festus, who succeeded Felix and also held Paul's fate in his hands. There is also King Agrippa, who, having heard Paul, said to Festus: "This man could have been set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (26:32). All of these men at one time or another seemed to be in charge of Paul's fate.

During the journey itself, there was a centurion named Julius who was in charge of taking Paul to Rome for his appearance before Caesar. When unfavorable winds greatly delayed their ship, Paul cautioned them to postpone their departure from Crete. "But," as Acts tells us, "the centurion paid more attention to the captain and the owner of the ship than to what Paul said" (27:11), and they sailed on into the rough weather.

THE MAN IN CHARGE

As time goes on, however, it becomes evident that this prisoner is the man in charge. Acts tells us, "And when neither sun nor stars

appeared for many a day, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned" (27:20). In this moment and from then on, it was Paul who rallied the crew and passengers: "I now bid you to take heart; for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship. Even when they arrived in Italy and Paul was placed under house arrest, he seemed to be more a guest than a prisoner. He is a man quite undeterred by the restrictions of secular authority: "And he lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed who came to him, preaching the kingdom of God and eaching about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and unhindered" (28:30,31).

OPEN-ENDED STORY

That's where the writer leaves the story. We don't know if Paul finally did appear before Caesar, was acquitted or condemned. One tradition says he was freed and spent several years in more missionary travels, including Spain, before returning to Rome and being martyred in the persecutions of Nero. Various theories have tried to explain this curious ending to Acts, the most probable of them being that the readers already knew Paul's fate and the writer had never intended to tell Paul's life story, but only the narrative of how the gospel spread from Jerusalem to Rome. Regardless, this story is an amazing testimony to the pre-eminence of God's will vis-a-vis the will of powerful human beings.

As I write these words, the world has just anxiously watched a coup against President Gorbachev in the Soviet Union and the subsequent collapse of the coup. Possibly, by the time you read this, there may have been several other crises of power. In the midst of them, the foremost question always seems to be.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, November 16

Berks Co. livestock banquet, Kutztown Grange, 7 p.m.
North American International Livestock Expo, Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, Louisville, thru Nov. 22.
National FFA Convention, Kansas City, Mo.
Farmers and Environmentalists, Food and Science Building, Cook College, New Brunswick, N.J., 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
4-H Livestock banquet, Kutztown Grange, 7 p.m.
Forestry annual meeting, Montrose.

Sunday, November 17

Old Time Plow Boys Club Open Gate Tour, Seidel Farm, Mertzown, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.
North American International Livestock Expo, Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, Louisville, thru Nov. 22.

Monday, November 18

North American International

Livestock Expo, Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, Louisville, thru Nov. 22.

Cumberland Valley Adult Farmers, Manure Solutions, Cumberland Valley H.S., 8 p.m.
Dauphin Co. annual meeting, Ag and Natural Resources Center, Dauphin, 7 p.m.
Northampton Co. DHIA/Holstein Association, Stockertown Memorial Hall, 7 p.m.
PFA annual meeting, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, thru Nov. 20.
Penn State Tax Institute, Wilkes-Barre, thru Nov. 19.
Holstein Steer Meeting 3, Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
DHIA annual meeting, Hepburnville Fire Hall, 7 p.m.
Maryland Holstein Association, Bittinger Fire Hall, Bittinger, Md., 9:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Berks Co. Ag Extension board meeting, Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.

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