



# OPINION Pennsylvania

## DHIA

### Farm Forum

Dear Editor:

The need for an article on this subject became obvious last year at our local DHIA's annual banquet — for the first time ever, the dairy goat herds in our county received recognition for the herds with the top milk, butterfat, and protein rolling herd averages (RHA).

Although about 25 percent of the herds on test in the county are goat herds (breed designation 0), and there are more goat herds on test in Pennsylvania than at least one of the bovine breeds, we have never before received any form of

recognition anywhere.

Our records cannot hope to compete with the cow DHIA records because it is impossible that an animal weighing one tenth as much as a cow could ever hope to produce enough milk, butterfat or protein to be in the top 10 places for all of DHIA. We were therefore pleased to see that at least our best were recognized by our county association.

What happened when the recipients went up to receive their awards, however, was what really indicated the prevailing attitude toward dairy goat breeders among

**NOW IS THE TIME**  
By John Schwartz  
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

#### To Cut Firewood Safely

With winter coming, people will be entering woodlots to cut firewood for the upcoming winter.

Safety in the woods, like everywhere else, starts with common sense. Do not try to do things you or your equipment are not capable of doing. Make sure you always wear proper clothing, including heavy boots, gloves, and clothing that is not so loose that it will get caught in your saw or branches.

Consider the use of chaps to help to protect the legs from cuts. Ear protection should be worn to help guard against hearing loss. Safety glasses should be worn to prevent eye injuries from sawdust, twigs, and other objects. It is also recommended that a hard hat be worn to protect the head from falling objects.

Understanding how to fell a tree is critical to the operator's safety. Making a proper undercut about 1/4 the diameter of the tree on the side you want the tree to fall will help improve safety. Always clear

our fellow dairymen.

Several people in the audience made rude animal noises.

I'm sure they just thought they were being funny, and in fact many people laughed. It is safe to say, however, that those noisemakers would never have thought to "mooooo" when one of the cow dairymen stepped forward to receive an award for such an achievement, and this points out our problem. We are different than the other dairymen, and we are not understood or respected for our efforts.

Perhaps if the cow dairymen in and out of DHIA knew us a little better, we might be able to work more effectively together.

Who are we? I can't pretend to speak for all goat breeders, but there are some generalizations that can be made.

Although it is not uncommon to see several hundred goat dairies on the West Coast with its large commercial goat milk outlets, most goat breeders in this area are small. Very small in fact.

Approximately, two thirds of the herds on DHIA test in Pennsylvania have fewer than ten milkers.

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an emergency escape route in case the tree falls in an unwanted direction. Enjoy the experience of cutting wood, but use common sense and play it safe.

#### Ask Questions

##### Before Buying Feed

Due to this summer's drought, you may need to be buying large quantities of feed. As you shop around, you may find good deals especially when buying in bulk.

However, be aware of all the costs. As the buyer, you assume the risk of quality control, accuracy of weights, moisture levels, and storage losses.

A few of the questions you need to ask are:

- Is the quality and analysis guaranteed?
- Was the load rejected by some other buyer?
- Who is responsible for unloading the feed ingredient?
- Are you equipped to unload, store and handle the purchased ingredients.

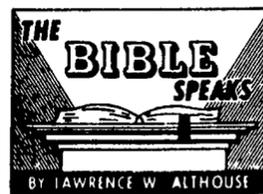
#### Improve Conception With Tender Loving Care

One key to profits in dairying is having a 12.5-month calving interval. As dairymen strive to achieve this goal, they must recognize cows have feelings. Normal ovulation is triggered by the production of luteinizing hormone.

The release of this hormone is blocked when anxieties of various sorts causes a cow's system to produce the hormone adrenalin. Excessive loss of weight in early lactation and toxins produced by coliform mastitis organisms also will block the release of the luteinizing hormone.

Therefore, it is important to keep cows calm and comfortable and to minimize changes in daily routines when breeding time approaches. Maintaining cows in a positive energy balance and protecting them from various infections are also very important.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "If you fail to plan, you plan to fail."*



#### SAD SONGS, TOO

December 15, 1991

**Background Scripture:** 2 Samuel 1.

**Devotional Reading:** Psalms 61.

It is a lot easier to sing when you're happy than when you're sad. Several times the words of a hymn have stuck in my throat as we sang during a funeral or memorial service. Nevertheless, it is well for us — and even imperative — to sing sad songs as well as glad ones.

I was brought up in a culture— Pennsylvania Dutch (actually German) — that placed an inordinately high value upon keeping feelings within. Expressing them was regarded as a kind of weakness. About 40 years ago I was in the audience of a televised quiz show. At the close of it, I was selected with several others to be interviewed as possible contestants for a future program. At one point, the show's host asked me, "And how would you react if you won the grand prize?" Without stopping to think, I blurted out, "Oh you wouldn't have to worry about me; I'd be calm, cool and collected!" Immediately I sensed that I had said the wrong thing although it didn't dawn upon me that what they were not looking for was "calm, cool, and collected."

**POISONED WITHIN**  
I had placed such a high value upon stoicism that it escaped me that other people might not view it so positively. Later, but still early in my ministry, I saw that what often hurt some of my parishioners was not what they said, but what they left unsaid. It was their very controlled emotions, boxed-

in, denied and covered-up, that often poisoned them from within. I also discovered that one can express feeling without going off the deep end.

So, we need to learn to sing sad songs as well as glad ones, for sadness is every bit as powerful as gladness and often we only deal with it once we have recognized it and consciously responded to it. This is what David is doing in what is often called "David's Lament", 2 Samuel 1:17-27. Did he actually sing this song, but then what we call a song today would not have been recognized as such by David in his day. Not only did he probably sing it himself — possibly to the accompaniment of the lyre — but he intended that "it should be taught to the people of Judah" (1:18).

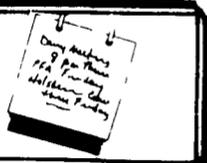
#### WHEN GOD'S MISSING

That which David and his people sang is not particularly religious or spiritual. God, faith, and prayer are not mentioned. We know that David was a man who believed strongly in all three, but in this utterance he seems to have forgotten his faith. And that is understandable, because it sometimes happens to us, too. We can become so wrapped up in our grief that we momentarily forget our religious faith. There is nothing wrong with this kind of "Godless" expression, so long as it does not become a permanent condition. In the midst of our sorrow we need to be reminded that we are still in God's love and grace.

Maybe that's why God is missing from this lament (and some of ours). David is so hurt by this tragedy that he lashed out so that others might feel this hurt, too: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew or rain upon you..." Biblical commentators sometimes refer to this as "David's curse."

When we experience loss through death, we can become momentarily irrational and unspiritual. And that is why eventually, we must allow God to come into our sad songs and our grief so that he can cleanse them and heal us.

### Farm Calendar



Saturday, December 14

Sunday, December 15

Monday, December 16

Holstein Steer Meeting 5, Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Northern Tier Hardwood Association annual meeting, Guthrie Inn, Sayre, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, December 17

Wednesday, December 18

Mid-Atlantic Conservation Tillage Conference, Hagerstown Ramada Inn, Hagerstown, Md., 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

Forage Day, Lehigh Co. Agricultural Center, Allentown, 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

DHIA directors meeting, Co. Office Building, Montrose, 1 p.m.

Thursday, December 19

Pa. Holstein Assoc. board of directors meeting, State College.

Whole Farm Business Plan Workshop, Midway Diner, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Lancaster Co. Safe Drinking

Water Workshop, Farm and Home Center, 1 p.m.-3 p.m. Repeats at Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Forage Day, Old Maple Inn, Honey Brook, 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Ag Issues Forum, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

DHIA annual meeting, Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, December 20

Forage Day, Midway Diner, Berks Co., 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Tax Planning Update Workshop, Holiday Inn, Bethlehem, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pennsylvania Seedsmen's Association annual meeting, Eden Resort, Lancaster, 9:30 a.m.

Thursday, January 2

Three-Week Short Course in Professional Turfgrass and Landscape Management, Hunterdon Co., N.J., thru Jan. 20.

Friday, January 3

Three-Week Short Course in Professional Turfgrass and Landscape Management, Hunterdon Co., N.J., thru Jan. 20.

### 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

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