



# OPINION

## Great Future For The American Farmer

The outlook for farmers could be quite different in a few years if all the new off-farm, nonfood uses for ag products are developed. Anything made from plastic could be made from corn, soybeans, or other crops. The technology is already at work to make this happen.

A number of advantages are obvious in this scenario. First, because of the huge markets for plastic, think of the increased farm income that would occur if farm sources were tapped instead of oil wells. In addition, since plastic made from crop products are bio-degradable, the environmental appeal is tremendous. The prospect of less waste in our landfills is appealing. And crop based products do not have many of the toxic hazards associated with oil based products.

The purchase of less oil from foreign countries would help the balance of trade. And the advanced technology that has made the American farmer and supporting agribusiness famous could be used to great advantage in the trade wars too. Japan's advantage would dissipate quickly if our great skills in production agriculture were used to produce the very products Japan thinks we can't do without.

In the future, the farmer may not only be the source of food. The farmer may also supply the source of plastics, paints, motor fuels, and pesticides. Just think of the size of these markets, and then you will see why we think there is a great future for the farmer.



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

### To Manage Milk Production

One of the challenges of the dairy industry is to match milk production with seasonal demands for milk.

To accomplish this, some milk markets encourage dairy farmers to increase production in the August-to-December period. This is the time that families return from vacations and children return to school.

The amount of milk dairy farmers ship during these months becomes their production base for the following year. Any milk shipped in excess of this base is penalized with a lower, excess price.

Recently, this excess price has been about \$2.30 less than the base price. This becomes a powerful incentive for dairy farmers to have cows calving throughout the year in an effort to have balanced milk production and high milk receipts.

### To Grout Your Well

Bacterial contamination affects more than 50 percent of the private wells in Pennsylvania.

The quality of well water is often determined by the care taken in constructing the well. If surface water enters an improperly constructed well, it can travel down the well casing and contaminate the groundwater.

To prevent surface water from entering the casing, a mixture of cement or grout should be forced

into the space between the well casing and the borehole. This process is called grouting.

The grout or cement should extend from the soil surface to bedrock.

Less than 20 percent of the residential wells in Pennsylvania are grouted. This relatively inexpensive procedure may save the cost of water treatment and ensure a clean water source.

### To Follow Water Legislation

Environmental issues will be one of the major items farmers will need to follow in the 1990s. In a recently issued report, the Joint Legislative Air and Water Pollution Control and Conservation Committee called for revision of the State Water Plan for Pennsylvania.

The "Water Resources Manage-

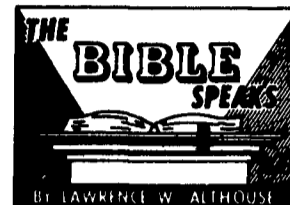
ment in Pennsylvania" report recommends the implementation of a water permitting, registration, and water use priority program for groundwater withdrawals in Pennsylvania.

The General Assembly would have to enact legislation authorizing the program. Currently, 19 of the 26 states east of the Mississippi River already have adopted some form of permitting or registration program for groundwater use.

Now is the time to become familiar with water rights and water laws. Through education and knowledge, agriculture will be able to have a very viable voice in drafting water legislation.

Agriculture is very dependent on water for its survival and must take an active role in this issue.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "It takes good people to implement good laws."*



**A BUTTERFLY NAMED "HOPE"**  
April 26, 1992

Background Scripture: I Peter 1:1-25.

Devotional Reading: Psalms 23:1-6.

Do you remember the story of Pandora's box?

Pandora, according to legend, was the bride sent by Zeus to Epimetheus. The young couple lived happily until one day Mercury brought Pandora a golden casket, telling her she should enjoy the beauty of its exterior, but never open it. In time Pandora was overcome by her curiosity and she opened the box, just a little. Out of the box surged a swarm of nasty insects that bit and stung. Pandora quickly slammed the box shut, but it was too late: the insects had escaped. Everyone in the vicinity suffered the attacks of these insects, including Epimetheus and his friends. The poison of their stings was suspicion hatred, fear and malice. Epimetheus bitterly chided his bride and Pandora wept inconsolably. As they quarreled, however, they heard a sweet voice calling from within the casket: "Let me out. Let me soothe your pain." Fearfully, the two young lovers opened the box and out flew a radiant butterfly. As it lighted on their wounds, it relieved their pains, Pandora and Epimetheus once again began to plan a happy life together for the butterfly's name was Hope.

**FRUITLESS?**  
There is really nothing that soothes the aches and pains of life like hope. The problem is that much of that in which we hope is not substantial or long-lasting. Very often we hope in the wrong things or even the wrong persons. If we have been disappointed in

our hoping, we are likely to become cynical or untrusting. Misplaced hope can destroy us because it destroys our capacity for faith. If there is any real basis for hope, or is all hope fruitless?

I Peter says: "By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1:3). A "living hope," what is that? One commentator Archibald M. Hunter, says that just "as 'living waters' are those that flow from a perennial spring, as a living hope is one which no trials and tribulations can ever quench." In other words this "living hope" has a source that does not expire, play out or become depleted. It cannot let us down, for it is based upon the same power that cracked open the tomb and raised up Jesus from the tomb.

In his book, *The Kingdom of God*, John Bright says that "Jeremiah could never believe that the national ruin was the end. True, he could see no cause to hope; but he never lost hope, because he never lost God." That is why our hope is a "living hope": as long as we do not lose God, we do not lose hope, for God is our hope. And the resurrection of Jesus assures us that we will not lose God even as we experience death. Easter means, not just that Jesus made it through death, but that we will, too. If death cannot defeat us — because it cannot defeat God then our hope is secure.

**A LITTLE WHILE**  
Just to make sure we get the enduring message, the writer of Peter follows up his assurance of a "living hope" with a promise of "an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading..." (1:4). All of this must be seen in the context from which I Peter is written. The people receiving it are undergoing persecution and so the writer says, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith... is tested by fire..."

Our hope is set in the midst of the everpresent possibility of trials and tribulations.



### Saturday, April 25

- Beef Field Day, western Berks County.
- Lehigh County Small-Scale Farming Trip.
- York County Dairy Princess and Dairy Miss Pageant, 4-H Center, 8 p.m.
- Safe Drinking Water Clinic, Bradford Water Filtration Plant, Bradford, 11 a.m.
- Opening celebration of the Animal and Poultry Science Building, Regent's Drive at Farm Drive, Campus, 10:30 a.m.
- Small Poultry Flock Husbandry Workshop, Harford County Extension Office, 8:30 a.m.
- Beef and Sheep Grazing Tour, Montgomery County 4-H Center, Creamery, 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m.
- Spring plowing contest, Shellbark Farm, Accord, N.Y., thru April 26.
- Delaware Valley College Ag Day, Townsend Hall, Neward, Del., 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Endless Mountains Maple Festival, Alparon Park, Troy, thru April 26.
- Penn State Dairy Expo, State College, Ag Arena, 9 a.m.
- Spring Stock Dog Clinic, Heartwood Sheep Farm, Bedford, PA.
- Ag Accidents and Rescue Prog-

ram, Penn State, University Park, also April 26, May 9 and 10.

Northwestern Pennsylvania Polled Hereford Association Spring Show, Mercer County 4-H Park, Mercer.

### Sunday, April 26

Old Time Plow Boys Club Spring Plowing Show, Seidel Farm, Mertztown, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

### Monday, April 27

4-H Capitol Days, Harrisburg, thru April 28.  
Estate Planning, Bradford County Extension Office, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

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## Farm Forum

### Editor:

I'm a subscriber of Lancaster Farming paper. I just wanted to drop a line to let you know how much I enjoy your paper. Sections A & B are more for me. I enjoy Lou Ann Good's Homestead Notes - the different recipes, Joyce Bupp, & Ida's notebook - I do enjoy even the little articles put in about different families.

When I was missed one Saturday - I almost went \_\_\_\_\_ - I mean I read your paper that day & Sunday and let's not forget Mailbox Market - we advertised twice & sold both times quickly. One item went to New Jersey. So - to let you know just how important your paper means to me - I wanted to say thanks for an excellent paper.

Janice Rehmeyer  
York

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