



OPINION

Get Things In Order

American agriculture is graying. According to the 1987 U.S. Department of Agriculture Census, between 1982 and 1987 the number of farmers under the age of 25 fell by 42.5 percent. Twenty-one percent were 65 or older, and nearly half the nation's farm assets were held by farmers who were at least 55.

According to the spring issue of *Farmland Update*, the newsletter of the American Farmland Trust's northeastern office, in 1969, retirement-age farmers accounted for only 12 percent of the farm population. By 1987 the digits had reversed to 21 percent. Meanwhile, especially in the northeast, urban sprawl and development pressure drove property values beyond the reach of commercial agriculture. Estate and other taxes made it even more difficult for regional farmers to stay in business.

Farming takes a huge personal and financial investment. This makes farm transfer a very difficult issue. A farmer needs an estate plan to lay out a framework for a smooth transition of ownership and management. A will alone does not secure the future of a farm.

Inheritance taxes are one big reason why a will is not enough. Although land values once may have been low enough for typical farm earnings to cover taxes, this is rarely true today. Since inheritance taxes are assessed at death and based on the "highest and best use" of land, property values are often appraised well above farm earnings. Estates worth more than \$600,000 are subject to federal taxes on top of state and local taxes. With only a will, heirs to a 250-acre dairy farm appraised at \$2,500 per acre could be liable for taxes beginning at 37 percent on the land value alone! Estate plans can save unsuspecting families from having to sell their farms to settle with the Internal Revenue Service. They can offset the settlement problems that arise because land is not a liquid asset, and provide for family members' needs — even those who leave the farm. Good plans allow farmers to retire, provide for unforeseen disability and even protect their land forever. Professional advisors, from attorneys and financial planners to conservation organizations, can help create estate plans tailor-made for farmers' special needs.

No one likes to think about death, but for farm families a child is not enough to keep the farm in the family. You need to get things in order now.



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Avoid Soil Compaction
Soil compaction, whether on the surface or in the subsoil, may reduce yields and rob profits. With compaction, plant growth may be significantly reduced.

In one study at Purdue University, plant height was reduced by 20 per cent with moderate soil compaction. The increased size of field equipment used on farms, several wet seasons, and the lack of cold winters have contributed to soil compaction.

Compaction will show up in many ways, including reduced drainage, increased runoff, increases in denitrification, increase in the power requirements to work the soil, damage to a growing crop, and reduced yields.

Plants growing on compacted soils will have reduced root growth often limited to horizontal growth, uneven plant height, show signs of herbicide injury when proper rates are used, and nitrogen deficiency when adequate nitrogen is present in the soil.

Improving soils which have been compacted takes time and may involve spending money to achieve deep tillage.

The most cost-effective way to treat soil compaction is avoidance. To reduce soil compaction, avoid tillage and traffic on wet soils, avoid deep tillage in the spring on poorly drained and somewhat

poorly drained soils, limit or control traffic in fields, and avoid unnecessary tillage which hastens organic matter decomposition.

To Consider Rotational Grazing
While pastures are not a major source of feed for many local farmers, they still have some benefits. Pastures provide some fresh feed, a reprieve from concrete, and an opportunity to get some sunshine and exercise.

To help pastures become more productive and something more than a muddy exercise lot, divide them into several paddocks. Then graze the paddocks on a rotational basis.

To avoid overgrazing, fence off a small well drained area to be used as a barnyard or as a sacrifice lot. When the pastures are short or too wet to graze, cattle may be confined to the smaller area in order to protect the pasture sod.

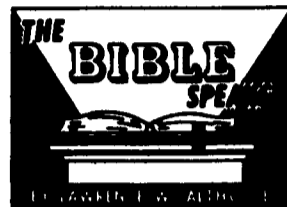
To Deworm Pasture Cattle
Unfortunately, pastures may be a place where cattle, especially young stock, may pick up stomach worms.

Heifers infested with worms are unthrifty and do not grow well. For this reason, heifers should be dewormed about three weeks after being turned out to pasture.

Just as important as the first deworming is a second deworming done three weeks after the first. This second deworming will do a lot to reduce worm buildups on pastures.

Another good practice is not graze heifers on pastures that have been grazed by older cattle. If heifers and cows share the same pasture, it may be necessary to deworm the entire herd.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "A true friend is someone who is there for you when he'd rather be anywhere else." — Len Wein



LEARNING TOMEND
May 5, 1991

Background Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:12-2:17.

Devotional Reading: Philipians 4:4-13.

Back in the 19th century, a denomination (which shall remain nameless) was torn asunder by a conflict that was fought under the banner of the theological disagreement on the doctrine of "entire sanctification." Today church historians acknowledge that essentially this split was the result of a personal conflict between two bishops, Smith and Jones (not their real names) who refused to acknowledge their antipathy and elevated the conflict to the level of doctrinal dispute. Members divided into "Smithites" or "Jonesites" and a small denomination became two even smaller ones. In 1962, when I became pastor of a church in a small town in Pennsylvania, I found that that conflict had split not only the community, but also whole families. And some of the wounds still had not healed.

LIVING SKIM MILK
Although church conflicts usually appear as matters of principle, all too often they are really clashes of personalities and they have done the cause of Christ a great deal of harm over the centuries. As someone had put it, "we preach whipped cream and live skim milk."

Our professions of love and reconciliation are often negated by our examples of strife and alienation, for people expect a higher level of behavior from Christians. The problem is not just that churches are prone to the same personal conflicts as other human institutions — after all, churches are composed of acknowledged sinners — but that after almost 2,000 years they still are woefully

deficient in healing their human conflicts. Church people, I have found, are much more likely to "fight for their convictions" than to "reconcile for the sake of Christ."

Church disputes have been with us since the beginning and 2 Corinthians give evidence of a serious one between the Apostle Paul and some members of the church in Corinth. Unfortunately — for the sake of our curiosity, at least — Paul doesn't tell us what was the cause of that dispute. He knew what it was about and he knew the Corinthians knew, so we can only infer some of the issues from his letters. Apparently some of his critics had accused him of vacillating because he first planned to visit Corinth and then later called it off. Some of the Corinthians may have interpreted this as a slight. At any rate, although we can only guess at what happened, the conflict was very serious.

REAFFIRM LOVE
But, although one of Paul's purposes is to defend himself against some of these charges, his greater purpose is to effect reconciliation. It appears that someone in the Corinth church was punished in some way as a result of this conflict: "For such a one this punishment by the majority is enough; so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him...So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him...Anyone whom you forgive I also forgive" (2:6-10).

I have rarely seen congregational conflicts end in reconciliation. Expulsion or walk-out is the usual result. Seldom, in the midst of these conflicts, have I even heard the word "love," let alone seen it in action. (I hope my experience is the exception rather than the rule.) It is understandable that in our churches we should sometimes disagree and even that sometimes these disagreements might cause personal and congregational disruption. But in the midst of these conflicts we need to hear Paul saying to us: "I beg you to reaffirm your love for him" (her, them).

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Farm Forum

Editor:
I almost entered the June Dairy Month Recipe Contest. I changed my mind when I looked at the picture of the prizes on B4, May 9 issue and realized I wouldn't know what to do with a prize if I became a winner.

Here at Ralaine Jerseys we don't have those black and white (generic?) cows. Ours are the basically brown kind that produce the high percentage of protein that adds the quality to milk and especially the cheese and yogurt.

Those who make country crafts invariably use the black and white cows for their focus. I understand that the crafters are probably not

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Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 16
Armed Forces Day
4-H Tractor Safety, Warner Tractor Company, East Troy, 9 a.m.-noon.
Bedford County second annual Sheep and Wool Field Day, Bedford Fairgrounds, Bedford, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
Pa. Draft Horse and Mule Association annual spring clinic, Mannheim Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Monday, May 18
field Fairgrounds.
Tuesday, May 19
Solanco Young Farmers Barn Meeting, Ed Harnish farm, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, May 20
Thursday, May 21
Hay Field Day, Joe Ferris Farm, Wilmington Township, Mercer Co., 2 p.m.
Rural Issues Forum, Mansfield

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SO LONG, FROM UNCLE OTIS!

I'm afraid that this will be the last time that I will be visiting with you folks. With plans to move into other areas of the cartoon business it seems like the best time to officially retire UNCLE OTIS. I want to thank the folks at LANCASTER FARMING for giving me the opportunity to visit with you each week, for the past ten years. It has been fun. I want to sincerely wish you all the very best, and take care.

David Carpenter