



OPINION

FFA'ers Know They Belong

On Veterans' Day next Wednesday begins the 65th National FFA Convention, which lasts through next Saturday in Kansas City, Mo.

What an appropriate place and time to begin a convention which takes time to honor the labor and achievements of the thousands of FFA'ers across the country. The same day we honor members of our military forces that have preserved freedom for us is the kickoff for a celebration for those that preserved our heritage and our number one industry — farming.

What brings these FFA'ers together?

In the August-September 1992 issue of the official FFA publication FFA New Horizons, editor Andy Markwart speaks about FFA'ers and why they join the many chapters across the country. Markwart writes: "It's because we all want to feel like we belong."

"A guy named Abraham Maslow figured out a long time ago that people have a common set of needs. After the basics of food, water, shelter, and a sense of security, the need to feel accepted is next on the list. No matter what people may say, there are very few loners out there."

To belong.

It's the sense of belonging to something greater and more important than oneself that draws FFA'ers together, whether they're working on Building Our American Community (BOAC) projects or working to improve any segments of their community. Or donating their time to charitable causes. Or simply taking responsibility for something in their school, home, or community.

Those who can't fill that need end up belonging to "cliques" at school, writes Markwart. Or they join gangs. Or, given the right guidance, they become active in a social club, including churches, schools, or other organizations.

Or they become the loners that don't contribute and, at best, fade into the background. At worst, they become criminals.

But according to Markwart:

"Your local FFA chapter, on the other hand, is a gang of people who have chosen the positive road. In many schools, the relationship between FFA members and their advisors/agriculture teachers is different than with other teachers. The advisor is a friend, a counselor, someone who takes a personal interest in your life."

FFA now numbers 401,574 members, by last estimate, with about 7,456 local chapters.

Ask any chapter member to think back, before FFA, if they felt they really belonged. Then ask them how they feel now to be part of a powerful, influential, richly rewarding association that is the FFA.



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Redefine A Farmer

Who is a farmer?

Today, we have less than two percent of the United States population engaged in the production of food.

However, we have an additional percentage of the population employed in jobs that were once performed on the farm. These include meat and poultry processing, feed manufacturing, retail selling, animal breeding, and seed selection.

The transfer of these and other jobs off the farm has allowed today's farmer to concentrate on production. This specialization and ability to adopt new technology has made American agriculture the envy of the world.

This has been made possible by an excellent working relationship between farmers, government, business, research, and education. The government, research, and education partners of this successful partnership have been coming under criticism lately. We need to do a better job of explaining the total food production system extends beyond the farm gate and every person is served by agricultural programs, not just farmers.

If we are to continue to have a safe and abundant food supply, we need government programs for food inspection, statistics, research, and education.

As we face emerging food safety, animal welfare and environmental issues, history has shown us research and education — not mandatory government regulations — have been the most effective way to deal with the issue.

We need to start expanding the definition of a farmer and defend the programs that have been very important to us. Otherwise we will find these programs discontinued.

To Review Swine Husbandry

Chester Hughes, extension livestock agent, reminds us of the importance of good swine husbandry skills.

Northumberland County Cooperative Extension banquet, Otterbein Church, Sunbury, 7 p.m.
Potter County DHIA annual meeting, Penn York Camp, Ulysses, 7:30 p.m.

Chester County Extension annual meeting, East Brandywine Fire Hall, Guthriesville, 6:30 p.m.
Agronomy Ag Service Schools, Arena Restaurant, Bedford, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Annual Cooperative Extension meeting, Immaculate Conception Church Hall, New Germany, 6:30 p.m.

DHIA meeting, Alba Church, 7:45 p.m.

Centre Co. Holstein annual meet-
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To Rebalance Rations

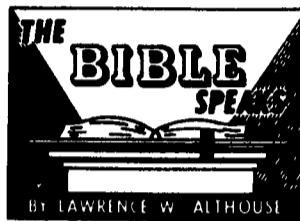
As the harvest season draws to a close, you will be introducing your herd to a new supply of feeds.

These could be of a different quality than what you have been feeding. For best results, it is essential that these new feeds be tested now and at periodic intervals throughout the winter.

Many testing laboratories have installed computer communication systems that will allow you to receive your test results three or more days sooner. Contact your laboratory for details.

Just as important as testing is accurate reformulation of your rations based on test results. If you are feeding a total mixed ration (TMR), it is also a good practice to test the TMR mix to check on accuracy of formulation and mixing.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Change starts when someone sees the next step." — William Drayton



IS GOD EVER WRONG?
November 8, 1992

Background Scripture:

Amos 2:6 through 3:2.

Devotional Reading:

Amos 2:6-16.

Is it possible that sometimes God is wrong?

For example, take the prophecy in Amos 2, those ringing pronouncements warning that God will bring judgment and punishment upon the people of Israel. Surely God has the wrong people! A celestial clerical error, perhaps? We can understand dire prophecies against Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, Moab, and even step-brother Judah. These were ungodly, unrighteous people.

But Israel—how can Amos bring Israel under God's judgment? Are they not the Chosen Race? Do they not crowd into the Temple to worship and offer their sacrifices by the thousands and tens of thousands? Do they not honor God with their words, their rituals, and their customs? In what ways do they, of all peoples, deserve the wrath of God?

THE CHOSEN PEOPLE

I am certain that those who heard Amos's prophecy must have been dumfounded and asked similar questions, perhaps we can better appreciate if we imagine that we are in church and listening to a guest speaker making judgment against our friends and enemies alike—stinging indictments of Yugoslavia, Russia, China, Cuba, Iraq, Britain, and Mexico. Who among us would not get some delight in those searing judgments?

But then, the speakers say, "For three transgression of the USA and for four, I will not revoke the punishment" (2:6). At that moment we would know how his listeners felt when Amos turned his attention to Israel. With what was it that Amos indicted God's people? Heretical beliefs? Esoteric rituals? Occult teachings? No, none of these.

What angered the Lord, Amos said, was not how the people went about their religion, but how they lived their lives. In their day-to-

day living they were greedy and corrupt—"because they sell the righteous for silver and the needy for a pair of shoes" (2:6c). For their own gain they oppress and exploit people—"they that trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth" (2:7a). They have no moral standards—"a man and his father go into the same maiden" (2:7b). Staying within the letter of the law, they are nevertheless able to take advantage of the weak and the helpless—"they lay themselves down beside every altar upon garments taken in pledge; and in the house of their God they drink the wine of those who have been fined" (2:8). (They even pervert religion so as to legally take the garments and wine given as collateral.) Yet, at the same time, these people are going to the temple, making their sacrifices, and maintaining an air of respectability.

MUCH REQUIRED

God's judgment of Israel is even more detailed than those prophecies delivered against other nations. We can understand—if not approve—of Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, Ammon, and Moab. These people did not pretend to follow the Lord. Their evil was the natural consequence of their beliefs. But Judah and Israel know better and thus God expected more from them. So his judgment falls more heavily on them. As Jesus is quoted in Luke 12:48, "Every one to whom much is given, of him much will be required."

All of this took place more than 2,600 years ago in the 8th century B.C. Life was different. The world was different. People were different. But, the words of Amos nevertheless have a familiar ring, do they not? Do we not have corruption as they did? Are the poor and hopeless not oppressed now as then? Does our society not suffer from sexual license and the perversion of religion?

No, God does not make mistakes, but we still do.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, November 7

North American International Livestock Exposition, Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, Louisville, Ky.

75th annual dinner, Carbon County Extension Association and 4-H Leaders Association, Luther Hall, Trinity Lutheran Church, Lehighton.

Mid-Atlantic Forest Stewardship Seminar, Frederick Community College, Frederick, Md., 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Solid Gold Milking Herd Dispersal and Select Consignments, Emlenton, 11 a.m.

Sunday, November 8

Monday, November 9

Northampton Co. DHIA/Holstein Association annual meeting and banquet, Stockertown Memorial Hall, 7 p.m.

Agronomy Ag-Service Schools, Days Inn, Meadville, 4 p.m.-9 p.m.

Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider Farms Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Pa. State Rabbit Breeders Convention committee meeting, Ivan Lutz, Spring City, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 10

Small fruit advisory meeting, York County extension office, 7:30 p.m.

ADA/DC District 3, KFC, Chateaugay, N.Y., noon.

Lancaster DHIA members meeting to explain Raleigh records, Farm and Home Center, 10 a.m.
Franklin County DHIA banquet, Kauffman's Community Center, 7 p.m.

Agronomy Ag Schools, UNILEC Building, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Dairy Herd Management Conference, Williamston Inn.

S.W. Pa. Hay Auction, Westmoreland Fairgrounds, 11 a.m.

Fall barn meeting, Bob and Nellie Jones, Stoneboro, 1 p.m.

Fall barn meeting, John Pfaff, 8 p.m.

Bradford Co. Dairy Herd Management Conference, Williamston Inn, 9:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 11

Veterans' Day

1992 National FFA Convention, thru Nov. 14.

Northeast Greenhouse Seminar, Luzerne County Community College, Nanticoke, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

DHIA meeting, North Orwell Community Hall, 7:45 p.m.

Fall barn meeting, Debbie and Jerry Moose, Mercer, 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, November 12

Franklin County On-Farm Composting Field Days, Clifford Hawbaker's Farm, Chambersburg, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Columbia County Cooperative Extension annual meeting, St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Lightstreet, 7 p.m.