



# OPINION

## Christmas Without Animals

What would Christmas be without animal use? Without Mary riding into Bethlehem on a donkey, without camels carrying the Three Wise Men, without the sheep in the manger? And shepherds who harked as the herald angels sang? Indeed, without animal husbandry where would the baby Jesus have been born?

Many of the benevolent acts at Christmas could not be done without the use of animals. For the hungry in shelters there are donations of meat, cheese, and eggs from farmers, venison from hunters and coats from furriers.

And Hanukkah would be unthinkable without animal use for the candles in the menorah, not to mention the original oil that miraculously burned for seven days.

What about romance? What would happen to "The Twelve Days of Christmas"?

By Twelfth night, the singer has received 42 swans a-swimming, another 42 geese a-laying (with an untold number of eggs!), 36 calling birds, 30 french hens, 22 turtle doves, and twelve partridges—for a total of 154 birds! And let's not forget the 40 cows, yielding a grand total of 194 non-human beings.

What's a true lover left to give?

We're stuck with twelve drummers not drumming (drum heads are made from animal skins), 22 pipers not piping (flute pads are felt), 30 lords a-leaping and 36 ladies dancing (neither doing very well in their plastic shoes), 40 maids not milking and 12 pear trees, without partridges.

And heaven forbid there's a spotted owl nesting in one of those trees. If that's the case, the party's over! Human activity, most definitely dancing and drumming, is prohibited in a nesting area because of endangered species regulations.

At the very most we may have a dozen pear trees and 40 gold rings left. But according to environmental extremists, cutting down trees is off limits, and so is gold mining.

So Kathleen Marquardt, chairman, Putting People First says, we're stuck with 164 people—with no animal, plant, or mineral products—gobbling up oxygen and emitting greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide.

To all farmers who take seriously their call to care for the environment and look out for the welfare of animals while they provide food for the world -- Happy Holidays.



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

### To Know Problem Weeds

In February 1991, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture conducted a survey to determine which weeds farmers in the state were having the most problems with.

They sent survey forms asking which weeds were present and how abundant they were, which were the most difficult to control, and if they were resistant to herbicides.

The most common weeds found in the state were common chickweed, velvetleaf, canada thistle, hemp dogbane, chicory, bull thistle, johnsongrass, jimsonweed, bur cucumber, water hemlock, and shattercane. The most abundant weeds found in cropland were chickweed, velvetleaf, canada thistle, and hemp dogbane. In corn, the worst weed to control was hemp dogbane followed by johnsongrass, then quackgrass.

The next most abundant and difficult weeds to control were shattercane, bur cucumber, and pigweed or redroot, as it is locally named. In hay fields, the only two weeds that were rated as problems were chickweed and dock.

Johnsongrass was rated as the most difficult weed to control in soybeans. For more information on weed control in various crops, consult the new 1993-1994 Agronomy Guide. You may purchase the new agronomy guide at your local county extension office for \$6.

### To Consider Wool Incentive Payment

Many Pennsylvania sheep producers have become discouraged with the recent low wool prices. However, when comparing the high prices of the late 1980s with the low prices in 1991, producers often overlook the income from the Federal Wool Incentive Program.

According to Chester Hughes, extension livestock agent, the incentive payment was 29 percent in 1988 compared to 250 percent in 1991.

The Wool Incentive Program

Sunday, January 10

Monday, January 11

Tuesday, January 12

New Jersey annual vegetable meeting, Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, thru Jan. 14.  
Evergreen Plant Identification, Lehigh Co. Ag Center, Allentown, repeats Jan. 13, 19, 20.  
Pa. Flying Farmers, Farm Show Complex, Room D, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Dairy Cow Nutrition Short Course, Cecil County Extension (Turn to Page A31)

has been in place since 1954 and was recently renewed by a vote of sheep producers across the United States. The program is not supported by tax monies, but is funded by import duties on foreign wool, which is imported into the United States.

The percent of the incentive payment is based on the difference between the average national price of wool in regard to a target price. The net effect is that, during years with good prices, the payment is smaller. But in years with poor prices, the incentive payment is more than the wool's price.

Hughes calculated the wool income per ewe in 1988 was \$7.02 (\$5.44 from wool and \$1.58 from incentive payment) compared to \$6.06 in 1991 (\$1.73 from wool and \$4.33 from incentive payment). The calculations was based on 7 pounds of wool per ewe.

For more information on the wool incentive program, contact your local Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (ASCS) office.

### To Spread Manure Wisely

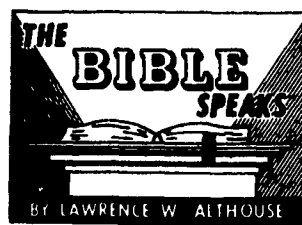
If you must spread manure during the winter months, you need to follow appropriate guidelines to reduce runoff and possible water contamination.

The following are a few guidelines you should follow:

- Spread manure on a cover crop, small grains, or substantial amount of crop residue.
- Do not spread manure within 100 feet of an open sinkhole.
- Do not spread manure within 100 feet of springs or wells.
- Do not spread within 100 feet of streams or creeks.
- Do not spread on soils subject to flooding.
- Develop and maintain filter strips between spreading areas and streams.

By using some common sense, we may prevent serious problems later.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "Today's preparation determines tomorrow's achievement."*



JOY TO WHOM?  
December 20, 1992

### Background Scripture:

Luke 2:1-40.

### Devotional Reading:

Luke 2:8-20.

Even God can be misunderstood. When he told the people of Israel, "and I will take you for my people, and I will be your God..." (Exodus 6:7), I think they misunderstood what he was saying. Assured of a special relationship with the Lord God, they wrongly assumed that it was an exclusive relationship. When he assured them that he would be "your God," he did not mean that he was their God alone. But that is not how the people of Israel interpreted it—except for a few prophets who realized that God was the Lord of the nations.

That is why the Good News of Jesus' birth came as a shock to many. An angel proclaimed: "Be not afraid; for behold I bring you good news of a great joy which will come to all the people; for to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10,11). Perhaps that message went over the heads of many, but there were certainly some who realized that the Good News was given "to all the people". This was good news, not only for the Jews, but the Samaritans, the Greeks, the Romans—whoever would receive it. And the heavenly host reinforced that message, singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased" (2:14).

### LIGHT TO THE GENTILES

This message was intended for the whole earth, not just Palestine of the Middle East. The "peace" that is given is for all "men with whom he is pleased". It is indicative that Matthew's account of Jesus's birth tells us of the visitation of the wise men who represented, not Judaism, but the gentiles of the world. And later, when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple for ritual

purification, Simeon prophesied: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation which thou hast prepared in the presence of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to thy people Israel" (2:29-32).

Yes, the people of Israel had a special relationship and Simeon spoke of the "glory to thy people Israel". But the message was "for all peoples", "a light for revelation to the Gentiles". So it was not that God belonged to Israel, but that Israel belonged to God. The specialness of their relationship was the role that he wanted them to play in bringing his message to all people.

### WHO BELONGS TO WHOM?

It is strange that Christians often have that same misunderstanding. When we recognize him as "our God", we too often use "our" in its possessive form. God no more belongs to us than he belonged to the people of Israel. We belong to him and, if we do, we need to recognize that, in doing so, we belong to an inclusive, not exclusive group. There are multitudes, multitudes who, although quite different from us in belief and practice, are no less his children than we are.

So, God does not belong to the Church, but the Church surely belongs to God. We do not have exclusive access to God and the "great joy" of Christmas does not even belong to the churches, "but to all the people". And, if God does not belong to the church, neither does Christ. Even our carols acknowledge this: no one sings "Joy to our little corner", "Joy to the Methodists, or "Joy to all Christians", but "Joy to the World".

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**TO ALL MY READERS-- AND TO THE WHOLE WORLD: A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

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## Farm Calendar

Saturday, December 19

Sunday, December 20

Monday, December 21

Tuesday, December 22

Forage School, Grove City Intermediate Unit.

Corn Silage Clinic, Hegins Fire Hall, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Maryland Dairy Task Force Listening Session, Carroll County Ag Center, Westminster, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Wednesday, December 23

Maryland Dairy Task Force Listening Session, Howard Johnson Lodge, Millington, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Thursday, December 24

Hay Auction, Westmoreland Fairgrounds, 11 a.m.

Friday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Saturday, December 26

Sunday, December 27

Monday, December 28

Tuesday, December 29

Wednesday, December 30

Thursday, December 31

Friday, January 1

Happy New Year!

Saturday, January 2

Sunday, January 3

Monday, January 4

Water Rights, Water Law, and Irrigation Management meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, January 5

Northwestern Pa. Forage Schools, Log Cabin Restaurant, Waterford, thru Jan. 6.

Wednesday, January 6

Farm/Municipal Composting Field Days, Preston Boop's Briar Patch Farm, Mifflinburg, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Dairy MAP-Managing For Success, Family Time Restaurant, York, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., repeats Jan. 20.

Franklin County Dairy Day, Kauffman's Community Center, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 7

Regional tomato growers meeting, Thompson's Dairy Bar, Lackawanna County, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Farm Financial Management Workshop, Mahantongo Fire Company Hall, Pitman, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Friday, January 8

Northumberland County Winter Conference, Oterbein United Methodist Church, Sunbury, 10 a.m.-3:15 p.m.

Saturday, January 9

Pa. State Farm Show, Harrisburg, thru January 14.

Leader's Conference, Linganore United Methodist Church, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.