



OPINION

Let's Give Urban Pollution Some Attention

We have heard a lot of discussion about nutrient management during the past four years. Now everything is coming to a head in the form of mandatory state regulations in Pennsylvania. This week the newest version of the State House of Representatives' bill on nutrient management, with amendments a little more protective of farmers, passed with very little opposition. Apparently the Senate will also agree, and Gov. Casey will sign the legislation when it gets to his desk.

We have a number of concerns about the public impressions this process has given. From all the rhetoric, you would think, if you didn't know better, that all farmers ignore environmentally sound practices for the sake of the almighty dollar. Two major points seem to be overlooked.

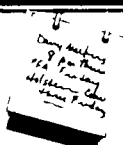
First, more and more evidence shows that septic systems, suburban run off, factory and air pollution, and municipal waste are major non-point excess nitrogen sources in the "Bay." Why would anyone interested in this subject, especially environmentalists, not insist that these sources also be identified and forced into compliance with sound "save the Bay" procedures?

Secondly, no one seems to grasp the information that farmers already have made magnificent progress toward cleaning up their pollution in the environment. John Schwartz, Lancaster County agricultural agent, told us this week that Lancaster farmers already have written more than 1,600 nutrient management plans and have them in place. This is more than half of the bona fide farms in Lancaster County. We also know farmers in other agricultural areas of the state have also written plans.

For these excellent farmers who are true environmentalists, and others who practice good farm management methods, the new expected state legislation will have very little impact on their operations. It's simply the direction the ag community has already gone.

From media attention to this issue, the uninitiated may believe agriculture is the only culprit in this environmental issue. But agriculture already has taken seriously its part in the problem. Let's make sure the urban side of the problem (which is also addressed in the new nutrient management bill expected to become law) receives the same attention and enforcement of regulations as the urban community wants to impose on farmers.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, February 6

EAYFA annual banquet, Mt. Airy Fire Hall, 6:45 p.m.
Benefit Auction for Lancaster 4-H, Farm and Home Center.
Delmarva Beef Spring Meetings, Wye Research and Education Center, Arthur Houghton Library, 9 a.m.-11 a.m. and Calvert Grange Hall, Elkton, Md., 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
Penn State Animal Products Spectacular, Nittany Mall, State College, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday, February 7

U.S. Feed Grains Council membership meeting, Washington, D.C., thru Feb. 10.
Delaware Valley Milk Goat Association meeting, Boyertown Borough Hall, Boyertown, 1:30 p.m.

Monday, February 8

Annual Shade Tree Symposium, Host Conference Center, Lancaster, thru Feb. 9.
Dairy/Crops Day, Ramada Inn, DuBois, 9 a.m.
Crops and soils meeting, Adams County extension office, 9 a.m.
Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider Restaurant, Manheim, noon.
EAYFA officers meeting, EHS Ag Dept., 7:30 p.m.
ABC Dist. 2, Delaware State, Fel-

ton Fire Hall, 7 p.m.
ABC Dist. 8, Franklin, Kauffman Community Cntr., 7:15 p.m.

Tuesday, February 9

Pa. Young Farmers' Association Winter Convention, Sheraton Berkshire Hotel, Reading, thru Feb. 11.
Lancaster Co. Crops Day, Farm and Home Center.
Crop Production Satellite Seminar, Forage Crops.
Beef Producers meeting, Adams Co. Extension Office, 7:30 p.m.
Schuylkill Co. vegetable meeting, Pine View Acres, Pottsville, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Northeast Regional Fruit Growers meeting, Ramada Inn, Chinchilla, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Nutrient Management Workshop, County Depts. building, Pleasant Acres, 7:30 p.m.
Lycoming Co. Crops Day, Penns- dale Fire Hall, 10 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
Farm in the Family Workshop, St. Anne's Parish Hall, Lancaster, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
ABC Dist. 4, Northern Lanc. (West), Country Table, Mt. Joy, 7 p.m.
ABC Dist. 1, Ontelaunee Grange Hall, Leesport, noon.
ABC Dist. 8, Fulton, McConnells- burg Fire Hall, 10:30 a.m.
ABC Dist. 9, Southern Blair and



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Prepare Heifers For Calving

As calving season arrives, Extension Livestock Agent Chester Hughes reminds us it is important to prevent calving problems, especially with first calf heifers.

A heifer needs to reach 85 to 90 percent of her mature body weight before delivering her calf. That may require her to gain one to one and quarter pounds per day.

To achieve this gain, the type of ration you choose is important. Avoid high protein rations such as alfalfa hay with 20 percent protein. High protein feeds may cause more calving problems because they increase the calf birth weight and overcondition the heifer. A 12 percent growing ration is best because it has enough energy for added gain without getting heifers too fat.

During calving season, first calf heifers must be given extra attention because they are structurally smaller than mature cows.

Separate heifers from the herd for closer management and observation before calving. Provide shelter to protect newborns from extremely low temperatures. Be prepared to give calves colostrum if they do not nurse within six hours.

Finally, keep birth weight and calving ease records to identify sires and dams responsible for calving problems. Cull those females with a history of calving problems and avoid selecting replacement heifers from those dams.

To Stay Competitive

Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, says dairying is a very competitive business. Those who are the most efficient will survive.

To increase your competitive edge, Shirk recommends you focus on:

- Getting cows to milk well.
- Keeping the herd healthy so

Southern Huntingdon, Central H.S., Martinsburg, 7 p.m.
ABC Dist. 14, Ohio, Dutch Valley Restaurant, Sugar Creek, noon.
ABC Dist. 14, Ohio, The Barn Restaurant, noon.
ABC Dist. 14, Ohio, The Barn Restaurant, 7:30 p.m.
ABC Dist. 15, Vernon Central Hose, Meadville, 7:30 p.m.
ABC Dist. 16, Erie, Erie, Asbury U. Methodist Church, Waterford, noon.

Wednesday, February 10

York Co. Crops Day, Winterstown Fire Hall, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Berks County Dairy Day, Berks Ag Center, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
Franklin County Swine Producers meeting, 191 Franklin Farms

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they may conceive well and stay in the herd longer.

- Breeding and selecting for genetic improvement.
- Reducing replacement costs and overhead costs.
- Reducing operating expenses.
- Producing high quality forage.

When land, labor, and capital resources are scarce, use them where they have the greatest and quickest return — on efficient, high producing cows. Then you must keep them healthy, have them bred, and keep them in the herd longer.

To help cut costs, consider hiring custom operators, purchasing the grains you need, and contracting heifer raising in order to reduce the equipment, facilities, and labor to grow crops and raise replacements.

As price structures change (cost of equipment, labor, interest rates, etc.) you need to re-examine the economics of the various segments of your operation and make the necessary adjustments.

Do not get caught in the trap of never making any changes. That is the sure way to lose your competitive edge.

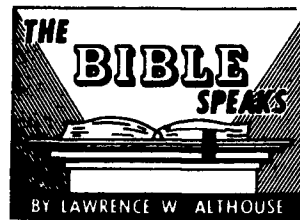
To Be Aware Of Pesticide Law

Starting January 1 this year, farmers applying pesticides are required under the provisions of the 1990 Farm Bill to keep records for restricted use pesticides they apply.

The new rules will have little impact on Pennsylvania farmers, since Pennsylvania Law already requires that pesticide application records be kept.

Starting in 1993, private applicators will be required under the farm bill to keep the following records when applying restricted use pesticides: the month, day and year of application, the brand or product name used, the formulation used, the EPA registration number, the total amount used, the rate of application, the address and location of where it was applied, the size of area treated, the targeted pest, the crop or commodity the pesticide was applied to, and the name, address, and certification number of the applicator or applicator's supervisor.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."



NOT AN ELECTIVE
February 7, 1993

Background Scripture:

Luke 24: 13-33

Devotional Reading:

Acts 1:1-18

As in school, we find in life that there are some things which are generally 'required', while others are 'elective'. This is also true in the life of the church: some activities are essential to Christian discipleship, while others are valuable, but not essential. When people join a local congregation, we usually indicate that faithful worship attendance and stewardship of one's self and substance are required of all members. For many people that may be as far as it goes.

The New Testament indicates that it is therefore easier to be a church member than it is a disciple or follower of Jesus, for the requirements of discipleship are considerably higher than the support of a local congregation. For one thing, witness was not optional in the early church. If you were a Christian you were a witness, nothing less. Today, lots of Christians regard witnessing as an elective in the life of the church.

WHAT'S A WITNESS?

Maybe some of the problem is that we are unsure about what it means to be a witness. Witness is an Old English word that originally meant 'knowledge' or 'wisdom'. Later, 'witness' came to mean 'knowledge gained by observation and first hand experience' and eventually it was expanded to mean 'observed knowledge given in testimony'. So a witness is a someone who both personally experiences something and testifies in some way as to what has been personally experienced.

What intimidates a lot of Christians is the testifying part. We think that it will be difficult to verbalize our Christian faith. But I suspect that our basic problem is not so much with testifying as it is in having something about which to testify. Witnessing may overawe us because we are not sure we

have enough faith to share with someone else.

We can point to Jesus' apostles and say, "Well, they had a pretty convincing experience of the resurrected Christ, but I've never heard a heavenly voice or seen a vision." But the experience on the Emmaus Road is suggestive for those of us who think we may not have something to share with the world.

RECOGNIZING THE CHRIST

The resurrected Jesus, says Luke, walked with two disciples on the Emmaus road. But note that "their eyes were kept from recognizing him" (24:16). It was only in the breaking of bread that they recognized his familiar manner and then they realized that for miles they had been walking with the resurrected Christ without realizing it. "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road...?" (24:32).

Are there not likely to be many times in our lives when Christ walks with us and we do not recognize or see him? Are there not times in our Christian experience when, looking back, we recall that there was a strange warmth or burning in our hearts in certain experiences? In reading a passage of scripture, in hearing a sermon or a prayer, in helping someone in need, or lying in a hospital bed? Perhaps the problem was not that Christ was not there, but that we failed to see him in our experience.

What we have experienced personally, that is what it is to which we are called to witness. We don't have to be theologically learned or eloquent in speech—all we are called to do is to find ways of means of telling others what we have experienced of Jesus in our lives. Jesus said, "You are witnesses of these things" (23:48). We must share what we have found it means to be followers of Jesus Christ. That is never an elective.

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