



## OPINION

### BST: Dairy Farmer's Decision

The opponents of animal agriculture say they are ready to launch a national advertising and public relations campaign against milk, in anticipation that BST will be approved to increase milk production on the farm. In "The Pure Food Campaign," activist Jeremy Rifkin plans to authorize full-page ads and TV commercials advocating the boycott of meat, milk, and dairy products from cows treated with BST. On April 17, more than 2,000 activist teams in 800 cities are said to be ready to hand out one million anti-BST leaflets at McDonald's restaurants in the U.S. and Canada.

The problem here is two-fold. All milk contains natural BST, and there is no test to show if the BST in any milk sample came from nature or from an injection to the cow on the farm.

In addition, since there is no way to scientifically disprove the presence of synthetic BST in the milk, you have the perfect situation for half-truths and emotional projections to be made against agriculture and in support of animal worship.

We don't think the issue here is food safety. And fortunately, we have milk marketing organizations with check-off dollars to tell the farmer's side of the story.

But the decision to use BST in the management of your cows should not be done by people who want to put you out of business because of their own hidden agenda. As New York State Commissioner Richard McGuire told the Northeast Dairy Conference in Corning last week: "Don't give in to the tactics of those who try to scare the public."

The market for BST from the pharmaceutical companies should rise or fall on the practical aspects of BST in the individual dairy farmer's operation. Will the price of BST and the inconvenience of application be outweighed by additional benefits in increased production?

Dairy farmers who have been in on the trials for BST report that you should do everything else right to get top production before you look to BST as a management tool. Do you use TMR feeding and all the other best management practices now? If not, BST most likely will not be worth the investment to you.

In many animals, the selective methods for the genetic base built into our dairy animals has advanced their inherent capacity to produce milk beyond the ability of feedstuffs and good herd management to use. We saw a cow last week that was unofficially producing 190 pounds of milk per day. Is it really practical to use BST on animals you have trouble drying off for the next calving period anyway?

Then there is the ethical question. Everyone would inject a cow to relieve pain or to cure or prevent disease. But is it right to use a needle on a cow just to increase profit?

These are questions dairy farmers will need to answer for themselves. And it could be that the answers dairy farmers give to these questions will make the supposed marketing problem for milk irrelevant. At least the dairy farmer should have the opportunity to make the decisions.

## Farm Calendar

### Saturday, April 10

Pa. Holstein Showcase Sale, Ag Arena, State College, 10:30 a.m.

### Sunday, April 11 Easter

### Monday, April 12

PennWest Farm Credit meeting, Edinboro Inn, Edinboro, 7 p.m.

### Tuesday, April 13

5-week daytime course on home landscape design, Carroll County Extension Office, 9:30 a.m.-noon, consecutive Tuesdays, concluding May 11.

Wayne Co. Green Thumb Gardening Clinic, Extension meeting room, Courthouse, Honesdale, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

PennWest Farm Credit meeting, New Englander Banquet Center, New Castle and Shadyside Restaurant, Uniontown, 7 p.m.

### Wednesday, April 14

Veterinary Nutrition Forum, Days Inn, Lancaster. 7 p.m.

### Thursday, April 15

Pa. Poultry Federation Fund Raising Banquet, Hershey Convention Center, Hershey, 5:30 p.m.

PennWest Farm Credit meeting, Morrison's Cove Memorial Park, Martinsburg, 7 p.m.

Second annual Western Pa. Pork Producers Club Feeder Pig Sale, Mercer.

Lancaster Co. ASCS Wheat and Feed Grain program enrollment evening hours, Farm and Home Center, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

### Friday, April 16

Mid-Atlantic Highland Cattle Association annual meeting, Who's Hill Farm, Sunbury, Pa., thru April 17.

Mastitis Control and Quality Milk Course, Penn State, University Park, thru April 17.

Pa. Guernsey Breeders annual meeting, Quality Inn, Bedford, thru April 17.

Franklin Co. 4-H Dairy Calf Sale, (Turn to Page A29)



## NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz  
Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

### To Lower Somatic Cell Counts

Higher somatic cell counts (SCC) mean losses in milk production for dairy operations.

It is estimated that a dairy cow will have 400 pounds less production per lactation for every point increase in SCC linear score (first lactation cows will decrease by 200 pounds). Increases in profits may be substantial for herds that lower SCC through good management.

For a 60-cow herd with 33 percent first lactation cows, every point reduction in SCC linear score would increase milk production by 200 cwt or \$2,400 at \$12.00 cwt milk. In addition, a reduction in SCC to a low level might also qualify farms for quality premiums that would be based on all milk marketed.

Also, various research studies have estimated the annual cost of mastitis, of which elevated SCC is a symptom, to be \$50-100 per cow. A savings of \$30 per cow for 60 cows would add an additional \$1,800 savings for a total of

### Farm Forum

#### Editor

Dairy farmers all across the United States have now had the opportunity to read the ads published in several dairy magazines by the National Dairy Campaign supporters.

The ads clearly illustrate the unity being exhibited by many dairy farmers throughout the country. Without any reservations dairy farmers are realizing, if anything is going to be done to correct the inadequate-unreasonable prices being paid to them, then the dairymen themselves must grasp the problem and correct it.

John Pardoe, president of Pro Ag recently announced that Pro Ag was going to join forces with the National Dairy Campaign and help stimulate unity among dairy farmers across the United States.

Many of the dairy farmers and organizations that make up the dairy campaign are the same ones that diligently labored in support of the Leahy Dairy Bill in November of 1991. The bill was defeated in the United States Senate on a 51-47 vote.

Everyone involved in the battle swore to come back in 1993 with greater unity and work for passable dairy legislation that can and will correct dairy farmers' inadequate pay price.

The supporters of the Dairy Campaign have two major goals: •Replace the M and W Price Series as the basic formula price in all federal milk marketing orders and, in its place, use the national average cost of production as

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\$4,200.

Often the management strategies to reduce SCC are fairly inexpensive. Work with your dairy herd advisors and discuss ways you may reduce your SCC counts and place more money in your pockets.

### To Obey The Law

The recent problems President Clinton had with cabinet appointees for not following laws have lessons for all of us.

First, when you least expect an issue to develop, one will.

Second, there is little reason to find comfort in the counsel of others who tell you "do not worry, the government does not enforce that law." Someone will find out about you at a time when you may least afford to be embarrassed or humiliated.

Third, you are placing your own assets at risk and losing everything, such as the farm, the car, the bank account, etc.

Some areas we need to be concerned about are speeding (one county DA is charging speeding motorists with manslaughter if someone is killed in a car accident), environmental regulations, health papers for animals, and

withdrawal of drugs.

Remember the lessons from this administration and do not gamble away your reputation and assets.

### To Promote A Good Farm Image

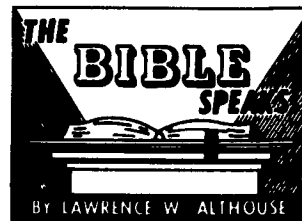
Spring has finally arrived. Now would be a good time to look at ways you may improve the appearance of your farmstead.

The appearance of buildings and the surroundings consistently generate images, good or bad, to our neighbors. Paint, trees, shrubs and fences, which beautify and screen our farms, are one of the best investments we may make to improve our relations with our neighbors and community.

Also, we need to improve our relations with our neighbors. Take time and learn who your neighbors are. Do neighborly things. Visit, take gifts, talk, and be friendly are a few things you may do.

Most people will tolerate other people and their problems if they know them and have some understanding of their problems. Therefore, initiate positive actions today to ease the pressure and head off complaints.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "Pay attention to details and sweat the small stuff."*



BELIEVING IS SEEING  
April 11, 1993

#### Background Scripture:

John 20:1-18.

#### Devotional Reading:

John 20:19-23

I'll bet you thought I got that title turned around? Usually, we say "Seeing is believing." But, no, I meant it as it appears: believing is seeing.

Some people believe only what they see. Like Thomas. I'm sure that some of us sometimes react to the Easter message with just a little wistfulness: it is fine for the early disciples to have seen and believed in the Risen Lord, but we are asked to do so sight unseen. It seems a bit unfair, doesn't it?

#### NO NEAT PACKAGE

That may be because we have failed to grasp something important about the Easter story. Make a careful listing of all the experiences of the Risen Lord recorded in the gospels and then compare them. It is virtually impossible to put these all together in a nice, neat package. Whatever his disciples experienced when they saw the Risen Lord, there is no common agreement of what that experience was like.

In the Emmaus road experience in Luke 24, he walks with them, talks with them, and sits at supper with them. But then he disappears in a way that is not physical at all. Matthew 28 says they "took hold of his feet and worshipped him." In Luke 24, he says to them: "See my hands and my feet...handle me and see; for a spirit has not flesh and bones as you see that I have." Matthew then tells us "They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it before them." In John, however, Jesus warns Mary Magdalene: "Do not hold me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father" and he appears to the disciples in a locked room.

Even more important is the fact that often the disciples did not rec-

ognize him. If Jesus appeared to them in the same physical body they had come to know, why would Matthew say, "And when they saw him they worshipped him; but some doubted?" Or why would Luke say of the two on the Emmaus Road, "...their eyes were kept from recognizing him?" And of the band of disciples, "But they were startled...and supposed that they saw a spirit?" And why would John tell us of Mary: "...she turned round and saw Jesus standing but she did not know that it was Jesus," or of the disciples in Galilee, "...yet the disciples did not know it was Jesus?"

#### BEYOND THE PHYSICAL

My point is that the appearance of the resurrected Lord was not just a matter of experiencing a physical being. For his disciples to recognize him, something more was required: faith. Whatever the resurrected Lord was—physical, spiritual or something in-between—it was not simply a physical encounter. Some people, Matthew tells us, were present but did not experience him at all.

What makes the difference? The answer: faith. Because there was an element of faith in them, some experienced the Risen Lord, while others who lacked that faith experienced nothing. Before some of the disciples could see Jesus, they had to believe in him. Faith helps to determine what we see and experience, just as doubt also helps to shape our experience. That is the whole point of John's Gospel. His words "are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name" (20:31).

We have no less an opportunity than the disciples did, for, if we believe, we too can experience the Risen Lord.

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