



OPINION

Out Of Control

In an article from *The Plain Dealer* in Cleveland, Ohio, Keith Epstein reports that:

You can pour it on your baby carrots and romaine, but don't try moving salad oil by truck or train - the government says that's hazardous.

* "As hazardous as petroleum," complains Sen. Richard G. Lugar, R-Ind. "It just makes no sense."

The Department of Transportation was only following instructions.

"An interpretation of the Oil Pollution Act," explains spokeswoman Patricia Klinger.

Four years ago, after the Exxon Valdez fouled the Alaskan coastline, Congress ordered the agency to safeguard the environment from large spills of "volatile, highly toxic and sometimes frightening hazardous materials."

Such as? "Oil of any kind," the legislation said.

Bureaucrats hungry for - well, something a little more precise - turned to a definition of oil by the Environmental Protection Agency: Anything that causes "a film or sheen upon ... water."

An average citizen doesn't have to pore over scores of pages of government documents to figure that one out. It means, besides Seven Seas or Newman's Own: Coconut oil, whole milk, cocoa butter, and even sun tan cream.

As a result, the government now wants large shipments of such products to include expensive anti-spill packaging, labeling for emergency response teams and disaster plans.

And all those requirements could mean slightly higher costs to - well, guess who?

"Inappropriate and illogical," objects Robert Dietz, a lawyer for producers of vegetable oils.

"Overly legalistic," rails Lugar, who predicts Indiana and Ohio soybean farmers will be hit even harder than consumers.

"Good intentions run amok," observes M.J. Fiocco, a lobbyist for companies that ship goods by train and truck. "I just don't think Congress was worried about a spill of salad oil."

Tossed into the fray, bureaucrats at the Transportation Department agency that did the deed have fielded more than 100 complaints, including letters from 30 members of Congress.

The complaints point out, among other things, that vegetable oils never hurt anyone, nor caused significant environmental harm.

Before reversing anything, DOT's Research and Special Projects Administration must hold a public hearing. On May 13 the agency will "gather additional information," spokeswoman Klinger confirmed.

"Everybody agrees that after Prince William Sound we have to protect the environment from petroleum and other harmful products," says Fiocco. "But foodstuffs? It defies common sense. Things got a bit out of control."



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Clean Fan Louvers
This past week I had the opportunity to visit several poultry farms to check ventilation fans in preparation for the upcoming summer heat.

What we observed was many dirty fan louvers reducing the amount of air the fan could move. On one farm, the farmer had spent the day before cleaning five of his 26 fans. The clean fans were moving more than 24,000 cubic feet per minute (cfm) per fan compared to 7,000 cfm for the dirty fans.

Based on this farm, the farmer needed more than three dirty fans to do the job of one clean fan. This was costing him extra electricity now, but this summer, these dirty fans will cause increased mortality and decreased egg production.

To gain the most from your fans, you need to clean the louvers at least once a week. The first key to success in raising confinement animals is proper ventilation.

The fans are the heart of your ventilation system. By keeping them operating at top performance, you are now able to work on achieving top performance from your animals.

Make cleaning fan louvers a regular job on your farm. Otherwise, you are letting dirt eat money right out of your wallet.

To Protect Sinkholes
Jeffrey Stoltzfus, extension agent-nutrient management, reminds us sinkholes are environmentally sensitive areas that need to be treated with care.

Sinkholes are depressions that occur in areas underlain by carbonate rock, such as limestone or dolomite. As water passes through

cracks or fractures in the bedrock, the carbonate bedrock is gradually dissolved until the openings become large enough for soil to settle into the hole.

Since the soil in the bottom of sinkholes is often thin, it provides little filtering of surface water entering the sinkhole. Contaminated water that enters sinkholes will enter the groundwater very quickly and could contaminate wells and springs in a large area.

Minimize the damage from a sinkhole by keeping the following things in mind:

- Do not use sinkholes as dumping sites. The rain water and drainage that flows through trash filled sinkholes carries contaminants directly in the groundwater.

- Never dump water from spray tanks or any other hazardous liquids into sinkholes.

- Keep the area around sinkholes planted in grasses. This buffer of vegetation will help filter runoff.

By voluntarily following good stewardship practices, you will help reduce government rules and regulations and possibly keep yourself out of serious fines and lawsuits.

To Improve Herbicide Effectiveness
The effectiveness of a weed control program may be improved by following five easy steps:

1. Match the control program, including the herbicide, to the weed problems in the field.

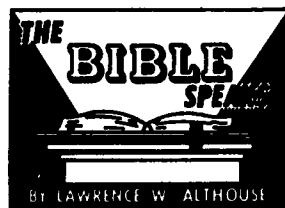
2. Plant and apply pre-emergence herbicides as soon after the last tillage operation as possible. Many herbicides are only effective on germinating seeds and will not control weeds after they have germinated.

3 Use a rotary hoe or spike tooth harrow to incorporate herbicides if rain is not received within 5 to 7 days after application of the herbicide.

4. Take advantage of cultivation to control escape weeds whenever possible.

5. Develop realistic goals for the weed control program. Crops will tolerate some weeds with little or no impact on yields. However, watch for escape weeds which could become problems in the future.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Many new ideas are simply clever adaptations of old ideas." — Thomas Edison



FIRST, THE WATER
May 2, 1993

Background Scripture:

John 1:19-34.

Devotional Reading:

John 1:35-42.

When I was a boy during World War II, I began to build a lot of models of airplanes being used by the Allied forces. Notice, I said I "began"—I said nothing about finishing these models. My problem was that I was impatient and wanted to get to the completed model too quickly. I didn't want to take the time to fool with all the details and wait for the glue on all those small pieces to dry.

Today, I suppose you might try to cover my impatience with the term "results oriented." Yes, I was more interested in the finished product than all the stages in-between starting and finishing. But, just as no clever arrangement of bad eggs can make a good omelette, there's no way to excuse my desire to get results without working and waiting for them. The fact is that results are usually made up of those little details — like putting piece to piece. So in our spiritual lives too: very often, we cannot see the desired outcome unless we are willing to work patiently. We all want to be instant saints and natural mystics.

PREPARING FOR FIREWORKS

In 1990 I attended the 150th anniversary of the University of Pennsylvania (if I may insert with some pride, the nation's oldest university!). One of the highlights was a concert of Handel's Fireworks Suite and a fireworks display on the steps of the Philadelphia Museum overlooking the city of Philadelphia. The fireworks were the most spectacular we have ever seen and it was one of those enchanted evenings. Later, however, we heard about all the preparation that went into our "enchanted evening" and, if you have ever seen anyone set up a fireworks display, you know it is painstaking, intricate work. So, no matter how spiritual enchantment occurs in our lives,

you can be assured that it is almost always preceded by some kind of mundane preparation, conscious or unconscious. The Holy Spirit very often only comes when we have first prepared ourselves with a baptism of water. I am speaking figuratively, of course. I do not mean actual water must precede the Holy Spirit, but what water symbolizes, penitent preparation and receptivity. According to the Baptist, this was his mission, to prepare people for the coming of Christ and the baptism of the Holy Spirit. "I myself did not know him," said John, "but for this I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel...he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (John 1:31, 33b). (Also, I am using Holy Spirit "Baptism" in its broader historical and orthodox Christian connotation, rather than in the more current and narrow "charismatic" sense).

PREPARE THE WAY

You and I cannot give someone the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but we can help them to prepare to receive the Christ into their hearts and lives and the Holy Spirit follows. Just as John was sent to prepare people for Jesus, so we are sent by God to do the very same thing, even though our methods may considerably differ. John came preaching in the wilderness; most of us will need instead to witness, in the marketplace. Whatever we do and however we do it, our purpose is the same as his: "that he might be revealed..." John's confession is as timely today for us as it was in his own day: "And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God" (1:34). That's all we are called to do and that's all we can do. If we "prepare the way," it is up to God how to use our efforts for his purpose. He sends the Holy Spirit into people's lives and hearts. But, first, the water...!

Farm Calendar

- Saturday, May 1**
State College Lion Country Pony Club Ride-A-Thon, Grange Fairgrounds.
- Sunday, May 2**
- Monday, May 3**
Home Horticulture Seminar, Espaliers: The Mystery Explained, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, May 4**
Bucks/Montgomery Sheep Shearing School, Hidden Meadow Farm, Souderton, 5 p.m.-8:30 p.m., thru May 5.
- Wednesday, May 5**
- Thursday, May 6**
Voluntary SE Reduction Program, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 1:30 p.m.
Poultry Assoc. Home Economics Teacher meeting, Olde Hickory Inn, Lancaster, 5:30 p.m.

- Friday, May 7**
- Saturday, May 8**
Hereford Breed Sale, Dairy Pavilion, New York State Fairgrounds.
- Western Pa. Sheep and Club Lamb Sale, Mercer Co. 4-H Park, Mercer, 6 p.m.**
- Beef Field Day, Clair and Susan Zimmerman Farm, 9:45 a.m.**
- Sunday, May 9**
Happy Mother's Day!
- Monday, May 10**
- Tuesday, May 11**
- Wednesday, May 12**
Atlantic Dairy Co-op 36th Eastern Member Relations Conference, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, thru May 14.
- Thursday, May 13**
Home Horticulture Seminar. Fig.

- Asian Persimmons, Dwarf Citrus, Kiwi and Other Unusual Edibles, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.**
- Ag Issues Forum, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m.**
- Friday, May 14**
- Saturday, May 15**
Mid-Atlantic Arabian Horse Show, Horse Park of N.J., thru May 16.
- Sunday, May 16**
- Monday, May 17**
- Tuesday, May 18**
Managing Succession and Continuation In the Family Business, Alderfer Auction Center, Hatfield, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
National Dairy Promotion and Research Board annual meeting, Park Hyatt, Washington, D.C., thru May 20.

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