



OPINION

Bovine Bashing

It seems that not a week goes by that I don't read or hear about another blow dealt to society by those wily and notorious creatures called cows. The cows even fooled Orwell — the pigs were just a diversion.

Scott Barao, extension livestock specialist University of Maryland says according to some, these mischievous malcontents, while appearing on the surface to contribute significantly to the lifestyle we all enjoy, actually have a less than noble agenda. Even though they help keep the pharmacists, researchers, clothing manufacturers, furniture makers, construction workers, plus the butcher the baker and the candlestick maker employed, they still cannot be trusted. They turn roughage (fiber), undigestible by you and me, into a nutrient dense food source that fits easily into a variety of diets and eating plans. Cows were the original recyclers.

Some well-fed public nags would have us believe that there is a group of renegade cows down in South America hacking away at the rainforests with chainsaws in one hoof and stuffing grain that could feed the hungry, into their mouths with the other hoof. Complex economic and food distribution problems exist in many poorer countries. The simple fact that the U.S. has had a surplus of grain for most of the last 3 decades and yet those surpluses have failed to alleviate world hunger should provide some evidence of the complexity of the world hunger problem — at least according to a cow friend of mine.

There are many serious issues facing us today. Human overpopulation, air and water pollution, waste disposal, resource abuse, homelessness, crime, violence and disease to name just a few. These issues are complex and interrelated. Attempting to simplify any one of these issues down to the point of blaming cows only adds to the misinformation and misconceptions that already abound.

Decisions about these issues must be based on the best scientific information available. Hype, hysteria and scare tactics insult the intelligence of and do a disservice to the American public.

Farm Forum

Editor,

Last Monday, May 17, CBS Evening News included a report on meat inspection as part of their "Eye on America" series. The blatantly biased report could certainly raise questions among consumers.

Beef industry groups support the USDA regulation that establishes zero tolerance for all recognizable fecal matter or ingesta on carcasses. The key word, however, is recognizable.

Recognizable means that an inspector can detect foreign matter as part of the normal visual inspection of the carcass. It does not mean getting out a magnifying glass and going over every inch of every carcass in search of microscopic specks of matter.

In terms of food production, that is no more practical than getting out a magnifying glass and going over every head of lettuce to make sure it doesn't contain any microscopic specks of soil which may harbor bacteria.

There are numerous safeguards all along the production chain designed to ensure that the beef sold in your supermarket or served in your favorite restaurant is safe. Through the beef checkoff program, the Pennsylvania Beef Council is active in educating consumers, retailers, distributors, and foodservice representatives on the proper handling and cooking of beef.

We've also taken our message directly to producers. In cooperation with Penn State and the Cattle-men's Association, the Pennsylvania Beef Council has joined other states in sponsoring a beef quality assurance program.

The bottom line is that beef is a fresh product that contains no additives or preservatives, and, like other fresh foods, is safe when prepared and cooked properly.

It is unfortunate that issues involving labor unions, the government and tabloid television are combining to hurt consumer confidence in the safety of beef.

Beef producers are committed to producing a safe and wholesome product. Cattlemen and consumers are the victims of this labor/government squabble.

I urge producers to write or call CBS, or your local CBS affiliate, to object to the treatment of our product on this type of tabloid television. The address for the CBS Evening News is: CBS Evening News with Dan Rather, 524 West 57th St. — Studio 47, New York, N.Y. 10019. The telephone number is (212) 975-3691, or (212) 975-4321.

Sincerely,

David J. Ivan
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Beef Council

Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 22

Learning Lamb Carcass Evaluation, Godfrey Bros. Meats, Loganville, 7 p.m.

Eastern Regional Emu Chapter of the American Emu Association Annual Conference, Eden Resort and Conference Center, Lancaster.

Sunday, May 23

Monday, May 24
Lycoming County barn meeting, Lester Proust Farm, Muncy.

Tuesday, May 25
Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, landscape gardening.

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NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Have Ag Leaders Step Forward

Society is changing. Power bases in government are changing. Many public policy makers and teachers have no experience or knowledge about agriculture.

The number of farmers continue to decline. This means agricultural organizations must change. This means developing a unified voice for agriculture to address environmental, food safety, agricultural literacy, and "animal rights" issues.

We need forward-thinking agricultural leaders to step up and take charge of their organizations and redirect their efforts. Agriculture needs people who are willing to work into agencies and develop working relationships with officials. Members must realize working with nontraditional agencies are more important than member services.

We need to support efforts to educate the public about the important role agriculture plays in a healthy environment, about modern food production, and the importance of maintaining a strong agricultural economy. Agriculture needs to prepare to defend itself as an industry from being a regulatory target.

Now is the time for agricultural leaders to come forward and organize to meet the challenges of the 1990s.

To Manage Pastures For Profits

If you want to make a profit from your pastures, you must think of yourself as a pasture farmer. This requires putting the same amount of effort into establishing and managing pastures as you would into any other crop.

How many farmers would grow corn, soybeans, or alfalfa with the same low level of soil fertility and low level of management that they use on their pastures?

To begin your pasture management program, you must first institute a serious weed and fertility program. Once weeds are under control and optimal fertility levels

are reached, a good grazing program is needed. Good grazing management will help maintain fertility while decreasing or even preventing further weed problems.

If you fail to manage your pastures well, they will soon revert back to the same weedy and unproductive pastures. Good rotational grazing systems will tend to keep most weeds out of pastures while increasing productivity.

Remember, pastures need to be managed like any other crop.

To Fight Johnes Disease

Johnes is a disease that attacks the digestive tracts of cattle. Older, infected cattle shed the infectious bacteria in their feces.

Calves and younger cattle are most susceptible to infection. They become infected by consuming fecal material from older cattle.

To prevent calves and heifers from ingesting fecal material from older cattle, you need to:

- Provide cows with clean maternity areas.
- Separate the newborn calf from her dam as soon as possible after birth.
- Do not allow the calf to nurse her dam. Instead, wash and sanitize the dam's teats and bottle feed her colostrum to her calf.

• House calves and heifers well away from maternity areas and sick bays. Also, house them away from pens, lots, and alleys used by older cattle and drainage from these areas.

• Do not contaminate the feed or feeding area of calves and heifers with fecal material coming from foot wear, manger sweepings, or dirty utensils and equipment.

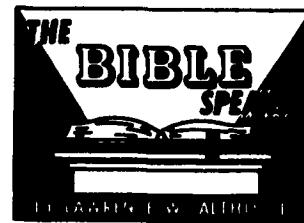
• Keep visitors, advisors, service people, and farm workers from tracking manure from your herd or from other herds into the feeding areas on your farm.

• Graze heifers separate from older cattle. In a rotational grazing system, do not use heifers to clean up paddocks grazed by older cows.

All of these suggestions are aimed at preventing young stock from ingesting fecal material from older cattle. More severely infected cattle that are heavy shedders may transfer their infection to their unborn calf across the placental membranes. Thus, it may be beneficial to cull calves that are born of infected dams.

Consult your veterinarian for more specific information about testing, culling, vaccination options, and the state's Johnes-free certification program.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "The only limits are those of vision."



"Seeing Is Not Enough!"
May 23, 1993

Background Scripture:

John 14.

Devotional Reading:

John.

We usually assume that if we can just see something, we can believe in it and that is all there is to it. Of course we trust our loved ones, but it helps sometimes if we can see our trust substantiated. We believe in living by worthy moral principles, but once in a while we like to see that the world and us are better off by holding to those moral standards.

One of our most ancient concerns has been that we cannot see God. Of course, we know that if we could see him plainly, whatever it is that we would be seeing could not be the Infinite, the Holy, the Almighty. Still, we would rather like to see him! And that was why Jesus came to the world — so that in him, so far as we are able to perceive, we could see the Father. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life," said Jesus, "no one comes to the Father, but by me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also; henceforth you know him and have seen him."

SHOW US!

How ironic, then, that Philip follows those revealing words with his plea, "Lord, show us the Father, and we shall be satisfied." Is it that Philip didn't understand what Jesus had been saying, or was it that he wasn't satisfied with what he saw of the Father in Jesus? Are there not some times when we stand in Philip's shoes, having received a revelation, but asking for still more? There is a suggestion of incredulity in Jesus' reply: "Have I been with you so long, and yet you do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father?'" How can

we?

Never in all the history of the world has this been more true: "Like father, like son." The clearest, most complete picture the world will ever have of God is to be found in his Son, Jesus. That doesn't mean that in Jesus is revealed all that there is of God, but all that you and I need to know and can comprehend. It is the gracious, loving nature of God that is fully revealed to us in Jesus Christ. What more could God tell us about the living of our own lives? When we see Jesus Christ, we are seeing all that we need to see of God.

KEEPING THE WORDS

But, if seeing is believing, seeing and believing are not end of the process. Jesus challenges us, saying, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments" (14:15). And again: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father..." (14:21). And once more: "If a man loves me, he will keep my word..." (14:23). Keeping his words, his commandments is what he expects to follow from our seeing and believing.

When Jesus asks us to keep his words, he does not mean to keep them safely hidden like a treasure that cannot be exposed to the light. We are not to keep these treasures in books, stained glass windows, paintings or even safety deposit boxes. Keeping the commandments of Jesus means doing them.

Having belief in God is never enough if we do not act upon it. Acting upon what we believe, that is faith. And it is also love: "He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him"

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