



OPINION

Need Best Funding Possible

For the past two state budget cycles, the agricultural community has been greatly concerned by the elimination of state funding for Penn's vet school. This is as it should be. Livestock is an essential part of our agriculture and the animal health issues of the last few years should prove without question that top quality veterinary education is essential to our state's animal agriculture. Yet we must also be concerned about the more gradual reduction of state support that goes to Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. Its research and cooperative extension activities are our investment in agriculture's future and the means to deliver new information to the farmer. This system has served agriculture well in Pennsylvania and it is gradually being weakened by reduced state support.

The College of Agricultural Sciences is part of Penn State University. However, the University receives only 18% of its total budget from state sources. In contrast, the College of Agricultural Sciences receives 69% of its total budget from appropriated sources. Only 8.1% of the College budget comes from university sources such as tuition and education and general funds appropriated to Penn State. Agriculture at Penn State is much more dependent on state support than any other part of the University. In 1992, permanent state funding was cut over \$1.88 million for ag research and extension. In addition, over the past two years, the state has required the one-time return of funds either appropriated or promised to the College amounting to another \$1.4 million.

The impacts of these funding cuts on research programs have been extensive. Badly needed research has been curtailed or delayed. It is difficult to understand how the Commonwealth can legislate improvements in nutrient management while reducing those programs designed to research the very methods and knowledge we will need to do the job. In addition, many important faculty positions have gone vacant for lack of funds. Some county extension offices are operating with clearly inadequate staff while many continue with reduced staff.

Everyone is aware that these are tough times for farmers and public policy makers alike. The agricultural community, including the College of Agricultural Sciences, has been willing to make the changes necessary to reasonably reduce public expenditures. But when enrollments at the College of Agricultural Sciences rise over 28% since 1988 and agriculture remains the state's number one industry, it is time to stop reducing our commitment to research and extension if we want viable farms and competitive agricultural industries. We are all aware that public funds are tight and no one wants higher taxes. Yet the state spent 5.1% more for all of its programs last year. Surely room can be found this year to halt the reduction in funding for Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. We urge the General Assembly to appropriate and the Governor to approve the best possible funding for ag research and extension.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 29

Lebanon County Dairy Princess Pageant, Lebanon Vo-Tech School, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 30

Monday, May 31

Memorial Day

Tuesday, June 1

Wednesday, June 2

Thursday, June 3

Capitol Region Christmas Tree Workshop and Tour, Elizabeth Farms, Brickerville, 9:30 a.m. Southeast Pennsylvania Twilight Fruit Growers meeting, Keim Orchards, Boyertown, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, June 4

Philadelphia County Fair, Fairmount Park, thru June 13.

Saturday, June 5

Sunday, June 6

Monday, June 7

Lancaster County Beekeepers' meeting, Bob and Annette Hughes, 8 p.m.

Tuesday, June 8

Perry County Dairy Princess Pageant, Penn Township Municipal Park, Duncannon, 7:30 p.m.

Lamb Carcass Evaluation, On Foot, Delaware Valley College Livestock Farm, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 9

Catawissa Valley Fair, Catawissa, thru June 12.

Thursday, June 10

Ag Issues Forum, Leola Family Restaurant, 7:30 a.m.-9 a.m. Lamb Carcass Evaluation, On Rail, Gehman's Meats, Morwood, 7 p.m.

Friday, June 11

Delmarva Chicken Festival, Cambridge, Md., thru June 12. National Guernsey Convention.

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NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
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Agricultural Agent

To Appreciate Fast Food

McDonald's Big Mac was created 25 years ago this month. This hamburger gets most of the credit for making the fast food sandwich the icon it has become.

The Big Mac (two all beef patties, special sauce, lettuce, cheese, onion and pickles on a sesame seed bun) was created and named by Jim Delligatti, a McDonald's franchisee in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Since its creation, McDonald's reports more than 14 billion have been served in 66 countries. For cattle producers, the sales of Big Macs alone has accounted for more than 7 billion pounds of "all beef" in retail sales since 1968.

This marketing story may be repeated for eggs, chickens, and ham. As farmers, we must remember the consumer determines the price and success of our commodities.

Supply and demand still determines price. As demand increases, price and supply will also increase. Profits are more easily made in a growing demand situation. To place your commodity in a growing demand situation, you need to support the development of new consumer products. The Big Mac was an example of this.

As one agricultural leader said, "You are either growing or dying as a business — there is no standing still." So, to keep your farm growing, you need to support funding for new products and advertising.

To Take Part Ownership Of Flocks

Contracts have been an important part of agriculture for many years. As capital investment requirements increased, coupled with the high risk of agricultural prices, the prudent farmer turned to contracts to protect his investment.

This increase in investment was the result of mechanization and the resulting increase in productivity. Now, egg producers have the opportunity to become independent producers again.

Through investor flocks, the farmer may buy a percentage of his flock. By owning 10 or more percent of the flock, he is now back to the size flock his father or grandfather owned as independents. This now reduces flock ownership to the size where the family could assume the price risk.

Flock ownership will give you monthly production and financial information. It will give you a chance to share in the profits or losses for the flock. Your contract payment for the remaining birds would be used to cover your fixed costs.

If you decide to take part ownership of your flock, remember this must be an every-year participation program. The profits in egg production vary from year to year. The quickest way to lose money

is to try and figure out the good years. Before investing in layers, be sure to talk with your banker and other financial advisors to make sure you have enough equity to assume this additional risk.

Footnote: Other agricultural enterprises contracting with farmers may want to consider developing part ownership programs as a way to increase the interest of farmers and reward them for better performance.

To Keep Hogs Cool This Summer

When the thermometer hits 90 F., hogs reach the "upper critical temperature," according to the National Pork Producers Council's Swine Care Handbook.

Water-based cooling systems are the best way to keep hogs comfortable when temperatures rise. Drippers, misters, sprayers, and evaporative pads are some of the

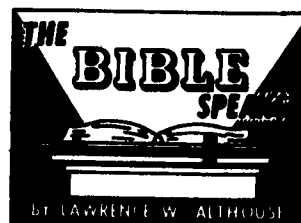
water-based cooling systems available.

If you use drippers, make sure the water outlets are not clogged. The same applies to mister nozzles and sprinklers. The relatively low cost of dripper nozzles makes replacement a reasonable option when they become clogged.

Check automatic controls on these units as well. If you do not have drippers, now is the time to install them. They should pay for themselves in one summer.

When temperatures exceed 85 F., sows take in 40 percent less feed and reduce milk production about 40 percent. This will translate to a drop in litter weights and potentially increase preweaning mortality. Also, finishing pigs will gain less weight per day.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "No quality is so essential to success as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature."



"LET'S BE REALISTIC!"
May 30, 1993

Background Scripture:

Phillipians 2:1-18.

Devotional Reading:

John 14:1-14.

I have recently finished reading John T. Alexander's biography of Catherine The Great (Oxford University Press, 1989) and was struck by the role that the sense of duty played in her era. It was so important then and is almost non-existent now. I suppose the skein of duty has been unraveling for many years, but we have certainly experienced its demise in our own time. While certainly no historian, it seems to me that it was the 60's that did in duty, humility and self-sacrifice.

I understand why this happened — at least I think I do: it was a reaction to the sense of duty carried to absurd dimensions, those who acted like wild beasts during World War II and, when challenged, responded that they were "only" doing their duty. And, in the 1950's during the Cold War and even the hot war in Korea, many rebelled against mindless obedience to duty. But it was Viet Nam in the 60's that brought the coup de grace. This was also the era of the "me-first" revolution and we were told to do whatever feels good to us, an admonition that still is much with us.

WINDS OF CHANGE

Perhaps our society was overdue to break out of some of its stifling conformity and I believe that to some degree these winds of change were necessary. But anything can be carried beyond the point where it continues to be good and constructive. We have gone too far and it is time for us to embrace once more the concepts of duty and serving others, although not necessarily in the fatalistic way as before.

The key, I believe, is whether the sense of duty and self-sacrifice is imposed upon us from outside or embraced by us within as "our own thing." Paul points us to Christ as our model: "Have this mind among yourselves, which you have in Christ Jesus, who,

though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant..." (2:5-7). This passage makes it clear that obedience to the cross was not something that was thrust upon Jesus by either God or man. Servanthood was something he chose willingly. That is not to say that he wanted to be a martyr, but that he did not want to back away from his mission. He had a choice — the cross was not inevitable or inescapable — and his choice was the role of a servant. Because he chose God's will, the cross became for him, not something alien, but an expression of his own desire.

HOW WE SEE IT

Once more, it is a matter of how we perceive things, in this case: servanthood. As the world sees it, the role of the servant is the role of one who is not in charge of his or her own life. To be autonomous means to be able to do what we choose to do. And there is the rub, Jesus chose to serve and so servanthood was not demeaning to him. He felt no loss of self in offering himself. In fact, we may infer that he felt truly fulfilled. Servanthood is only demeaning if imposed upon us. But if we choose it, we lose nothing and we are none the less for it. In fact, we are more.

Paul shows us how much more, rather than less, Christ was for his choice: "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow...and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..." (2:9-11). So, Paul is not calling us to Christian servanthood to impose upon us something that we do not want, but to offer us a fulfillment that putting "me-first" can never give us. It is o.k., even necessary, to do "your own thing" when, in doing it, you are also first of all doing his thing. When they are one and the same, we experience the highest possible gain. We do not have to choose between serving others and fulfilling ourselves, for they are one and the same.

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