



OPINION

Non-point Pollution Finger Pointing

Farmers get blamed for over fertilization of their crops. It's called non-point pollution because the source can not be identified. That makes it easy to point the finger at farmers when in fact others are also responsible.

"It's a common misconception that agriculture is the only source of excess phosphorus," said Karen Gartley, soil test program coordinator for the University of Delaware Soils Laboratory. "Recent studies and current soil test results indicate that homeowners also contribute unknowingly to the problem. While individual homeowners don't have large plots of land, collectively their impact on the environment is significant

"We know phosphorus levels are building up in the soil," Gartley said. "The laboratory processes 2,000 to 3,000 agricultural soil samples and an equal number of homeowner samples per year. Our records indicate that the median phosphorus level of all samples tested has risen from borderline low-medium in 1957 to high in 1992.

"Farmers, as a whole, are more aware of the problem and are apt to follow recommendations carefully since overapplication represents a production cost. Test records show that most farmers have significantly reduced phosphorus fertilizer applications, generally by using only low levels of starter fertilizer at planting.

"By contrast, phosphorus levels in many homeowner soil samples we've tested are off the scale," she said. "I just got a reading of 3,543 pounds of phosphorus per acre from one homeowner's samples.

"Some homeowners seem to believe that if a little bit of fertilizer is good, more will be better. What they don't realize is that this approach leads to environmental pollution and a harmful buildup of salts in the soil."

Now it can be said that the urban homeowner should be part recipient of the non-point pollution finger pointing too.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, July 24

Lebanon Fair, Lebanon Fairgrounds, thru July 30.

Tioga County Strawberry Festival, Cecil and Paul Moyer, Roaring Branch, 7:30 p.m.

PCA Pa. Angus Field Day, ErReR Hill Farms, Friedens, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Mercer Co. Antique Power Association Show and Flea Market, Stoneboro Fairgrounds, Stoneboro, 9 a.m.-9 p.m.

Waterloo Boys Two-Cylinder Club third annual All John Deere Antique Show and Pull, Rough and Tumble Museum, Kinzers.

Sunday, July 25

Clarion Co. Fair, New Bethlehem, thru July 31.

Conneaut Valley Fair, Conneautville, thru July 31.

Monday, July 26

National Institute on Cooperative Education, Cincinnati, Ohio, thru July 29.

Jefferson Township Fair, Mercer, thru July 31.

Kimberton Fair, Kimberton, thru July 31.

Shippensburg Community Fair, Shippensburg, thru July 31.

Troy Fair, Troy, thru July 31.

Potter Co. Fair, Millport, thru July 31.

Jacktown Fair, Wind Ridge, thru July 31.

FFA Western District Dairy Show, Butler Co. Fairgrounds.

Tuesday, July 27

Pa. 4-H Achievement Days, University Park, thru July 29.

Troy Fair Youth Dairy Show, Troy Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, July 28

1994 Rib Cookoff, York Fairgrounds, York, thru July 31.

Pennsylvania Seedmen's Association summer meeting, Ag Building, Harrisburg, 9:30 a.m.

Maryland Ag Experiment Station Southern Md. Ag Field Day, Upper Marlboro.

Thursday, July 29

S.E. Pa. Dairy Pasture Walk, Forest Stricker Farm, Robesonia, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Fayette Co. Fair, Uniontown, thru August 7.

Potter Co. Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Millport, 9 a.m.

York Co. Dairy 4-H Roundup.

Friday, July 30

York Co. Holstein Show, York Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.

Lebanon Co. Holstein Show, Lebanon Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Saturday, July 31

S.W. Pa. Holstein Championship Show, Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 10 a.m.

Jersey District III picnic, Long Meadows Farm, noon.

Lancaster Co. Goat Field Day, Windy Hill Goat Dairy (Jacob Fisher's), Manheim, 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

Sunday, August 1

Mercer Co. Grange Fair, thru Aug. 7.

Union Co. West End Fair, Laurelton, thru Aug. 7.

Adams Co. Farmers' Association summer picnic, South Mountain Fairgrounds, 1 p.m.-6 p.m.

Monday, August 2

Morrison Cove Dairy Show, Martinsburg, thru Aug. 6.

Schuylkill Co. Fair, Schuylkill Haven, thru Aug. 7.



**NOW IS
THE TIME**
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Minimize Crown Rots In Alfalfa

There are a variety of crown rots that affect alfalfa plants.

Plants' roots which have been infected with these rots will appear rotted or corky, and their color will range from off-white to black depending on the fungi causing the infection. Crown rot is not a single disease, but a complex of diseases caused by a variety of fungi which give similar symptoms.

Crown rots will cause a loss in yield in several ways. First, if the crowns are severely infected, they will simply rot and die. Second, because the rots affect the root, they will interfere with the plants' ability to store carbohydrates for winter survival. Third, some of the fungi produces toxins which will weaken or kill the plant directly.

University of Kentucky Extension Plant Pathologist, Paul Vincelli, offers several management suggestions to reduce alfalfa stand loss because of crown rots. First, select alfalfa varieties which are resistant to crown rots found in the area. Second, minimize field activities which will injure crowns, such as mowing or grazing when soils are wet. Third, practice longer crop rotations which will reduce the amount of fungi available to infect a new seeding of alfalfa. Fourth, maintain good soil fertility levels and balance between essential plant nutrients. Fifth, harvest at proper maturity to allow plants to maintain adequate carbohydrate reserves. This will help them resist diseases.

However, according to Vincelli, postponing harvest beyond early flowering will only reduce forage quality without improving disease control.

To Use Body Condition Scores

Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, reminds us body condition scores are a very useful tool in managing the dairy herd.

But it is only good if you use the information. It is a management tool that every good producer and consultant should be using.

Pennsylvania DHI and Raleigh DHI have options that allow producers to enter body condition scores. Once the scores are entered, you have the opportunity to summarize them in meaningful management reports.

When scoring cows, keep the

process simple and try to do it when cows are already constrained for other work such as freshening, reproductive checks, breeding, and pregnancy checking. Another good time is about three months prior to drying off.

To Prevent Accidents Involving Children

What would you say is America's greatest killer of children? If you guessed leukemia, you guessed wrong. If you guessed child abuse, you are wrong again.

Preventable injuries from accidents are the number one killer of children age 14 and under. More children die annually from accidents than from all childhood diseases combined.

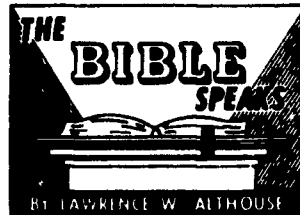
Each year more than 8,000 children die and at least 50,000 are per-

manently disabled by injuries. The most common types of injuries occur from traffic accidents, bicycle accidents, burns, poisoning, choking, or falls.

The following are some suggestions to make your home safer:

- Use child car seats and seat belts religiously
- Buy bike helmets and insist that children wear them
- Turn down hot water heater to 120 F or lower.
- Buy, install, and maintain smoke detectors
- Store poisonous cleaners, chemicals, matches, lighters, and small objects out of children's reach
- Set an example and practice safety conscious behavior.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "You become successful by helping others become successful."



A MAN NAMED
"USEFUL"
July 25, 1993

Background Scripture:
Philemon

Devotional Reading:
1 Peter 2:4-10

That may seem a strange name for a man, but that was really the name of the runaway slave who became a convert to Christ and an associate of the Apostle Paul. It was a Greek name, Onesimus, and it meant "useful."

And that was ironic because, as a runaway slave, he had become "useless" to his former master, Philemon, a prominent layman in the church at Colossae. Not only had Onesimus run away, but he had taken some of his master's possessions. We have to remember that a master had full authority to do anything he wanted with a returned runaway slave. They were frequently put to death.

Then, somehow the paths of Onesimus and Paul crossed. We do not know where or how, but we know the end result: Onesimus became a follower of Christ, thus becoming "useful" to Paul as a co-worker. Paul wanted to keep Onesimus with him and it was only with some probable reluctance that Paul and Onesimus decided that he should return to Philemon.

BOND TO COMMAND

That was risky business, for who knew what Philemon's attitude might be? Paul thought he knew, he had great admiration for Philemon. Paul is probably sincere in saying, "I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints" (v.4).

The key to what is going on in Paul's mind is his statement, "Accordingly, although I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake, I prefer to appeal to you..." (vs. 8,9). If Paul had any inkling that Philemon would not rise to the occasion, I'm certain he would have commanded him to do the right thing.

It is always more desirable when someone does the right thing of their own choice. This is what Paul is saying: "...but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own free will" (v. 14).

Whenever we can effect justice or compassion through persuasion, that is best. But, if we cannot, then there are times when we must resort to compulsion. It would have been wonderful if, back in the 1960's and '70's, we could have desegregated our schools and public facilities of everyone's free will. But, if we had waited for that, desegregation would still be a dream. "Free will" is best, but compulsion is often second-best if the issue in dispute is vital.

YOU OWE ME

I'm not sure that Philemon accepted Onesimus totally out of compassion, for Paul's letter, although diplomatic, is still pretty heavy-handed. First he tells Philemon how thankful he is for him. Then he reminds him that he could command him and then he says, "So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would me" (v. 17). Failure to forgive and receive Onesimus will be like an affront to Paul--"to say nothing of your owing me even your own self" (v. 20). Paul also tells him to prepare a guest room because he hopes to visit him soon. Yet, with all this pressure Paul is applying on Philemon, the most telling persuasion of all is his definition of the new relationship which he and all Christians now have with Onesimus: "...no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you..." (v. 16).

The very presence of this letter in the New Testament indicates that Philemon did the right thing and accepted Onesimus as his brother in Christ. I don't think the church would have preserved a letter that had failed.

Was that the end of it? We're not sure, but we know there was a man named Onesimus who became bishop of the church in Ephesus sometime after Paul wrote this letter. I like to think it was the ex-runaway slave named "useful."

(For information concerning the 33rd Spa Holiday in Badgastein, Austria with the Althouses, Aug. 27-Sept. 11, write: Friendship Tours, 4412 Shenandoah Ave., Dallas, TX 75205 (214) 521-2522)

Farm Forum

Editor:

I am really disappointed when I see our Farm Organizations urging their members to join Act 319 in order to have their farms assessed as a farm.

Every farm that produces food should be assessed as a farm, based on its present use and not as future development land. This is what the Farm Organizations (Turn to Page A25)

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