



OPINION

Dramatic Change

Late last week the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved recombinant bovine somatotropin (BST) to be used on dairy cows to increase milk production. (See story Page A1).

After nine years of testing and on-farm trials with a lot of discussion from farmers, milk handlers, and consumer advocacy groups, now you can use it. And FDA officials considered it so safe they declined to require identification labels for milk and meat from treated cows even though consumer groups urged them to do so.

What really makes this newsworthy is the fact that this is the first agricultural biogenetic product to go on the commercial market. After the 90 day waiting period, Monsanto will begin to take orders for their trademarked "Posilac" product.

Just how many orders they will get remains to be seen. Many farmers have said they will not use it on principle. To inject a cow for medical reasons is one thing. To give the needle to a cow to increase production may not be acceptable to many farmers.

In addition, many milk handlers have said they will not accept milk from herds with treated cows because of their fear of consumer reaction even though there is no present test to prove cows have been treated. For all practical purposes, milk and meat from treated cows is identical to production from untreated cows.

In the end, we think the on-farm use of BST will be based on economics. The cow that is milking 90 to 150 pounds of milk per day is already milking her heart out. To try to get additional milk out of her would be counter-productive. But the cow that in mid-lactation drops production below acceptable levels will probably be treated with BST to economic advantage on many farms.

The real story in the advent of the commercial availability of BST is the opening of a trail of new biogenetic products that will change the way we farm. Even now we have corn test plots with genetically engineered plants that kill corn bore when the little pests eat the leaves. Dairy cow embryos have been cloned so that we soon should be able to grow a whole herd of heifers from a 50,000m dam that are genetically identical.

It takes our breath away to think about the rapid change in agriculture we look for over the next 10 years. In fact the change may be so dramatic that today's problems will be replaced with needs we haven't even thought about yet.

Through it all, we believe the dedication of the farmers and agri-business to produce safe food in an environmentally conscious world will continue to make Americans the best fed people in the world.



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Provide Foot Baths For Dairy Cattle

Foot problems may be debilitating to cattle.

When their feet hurt, cows stay off their feet. They are reluctant to walk to feed bunks and pastures and their feed intake declines. Also, milk production and conception rates decline while the incidence of ketosis and twisted stomachs may increase.

Foot problems may be caused by physical injuries, nutritional deficiencies, diseases, and infectious organisms. To help prevent foot infections, farmers are encouraged to have cattle walk through foot baths periodically. This should start in the fall of the year before foot problems become severe.

Foot bath solutions of copper sulfate, zinc sulfate, or tetracycline have been fairly successful. Consult your veterinarian for specific recommendations. The success rate may be improved by switching back and forth from one solution to another.

Also, keep the foot bath clean. It should be changed every 100 to 200 cows or when it becomes dirty. Walking cows through water, spraying cows' hooves in the parlor, and having the cows walk through the bath as they exit from the stable or parlor helps clean cows' feet before they walk through the bath. This helps to extend the useful life of the foot bath solution.

To Evaluate Tunnel Ventilation

Many farmers are reading and hearing a lot about tunnel ventilation. It is a very effective way of keeping animals cool during heat spells.

However, there are several questions you need to ask yourself before investing in a tunnel ventilation system:

- Are you building new or are you able to do sufficient remodeling?

- Are you able to implement an all-in, all-out production unit or use it in a breeding or gestation building? If not, then tunnel ventilation probably is not right for you.

- Ask your veterinarian what the maximum age spread may be in a single building without compromising herd health.

- Are you willing to improve your management skills to make sure the building is being properly ventilated? Tunnel ventilation requires more manual control and equipment must work all the time. You must be prepared for electrical or equipment failures.

- Do your pens lend themselves to tunnel ventilation? Open gating type pens maximize tunnel ventilation's effect. Solid partitions in your building may lock you into another ventilation system.

- Will you be able to effectively combine fans and other equipment

ing to fit the engineering requirements into a relatively long and narrow building? A low and flat ceiling is required. Also, facilities that are square or too wide are generally not cost effective to tunnel ventilate.

of tunnel ventilation with your winter time ventilation system?

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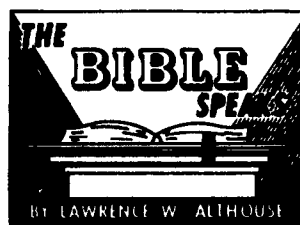
To Feed For Rumen Development

One of the goals of feeding calves is to encourage rumen development.

Grain, not forage, is the most important feed for proper rumen development of young calves and for meeting their nutrient needs. As calves grow older and are consuming a few pounds of grain per day, they may be induced to small amounts of good quality, palatable forage.

Young grass or grass/legume hays are generally preferred. Dry hay is preferred over silage because it is difficult to keep silage fresh when it is fed in small quantities. Dry hay is also preferred over pasture because young rapidly growing heifers may not consume enough dry matter when feeding on succulent feeds. Yearlings, on the other hand, may rely more heavily on pasture and corn silage.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."



SOMETHING MORE
November 14, 1993

Background Scripture:
Genesis 29: 1-30
Devotional Reading:
Psalms 130

When we first meet Jacob, we are not favorably impressed by him. Esau, his brother, might have been rash and stupid, but nothing can excuse Jacob for the sneaky opportunism and sheer deception he practiced in order to get from Esau his birthright and his father's final blessing.

If Jacob's escape off into the wilderness of Paddanaram had been the end of the story, his name would not be worth preserving. But that was not the end of the story and, fortunately for everyone concerned, there was something more to Jacob than what was evident in his neighborhood.

There are lots of times when we write-off people like Jacob. Something about them rubs us the wrong way. Perhaps they have acted in a sneaky way and not straight-forwardly. Or let's suppose that they have been temperamental, jealous or selfish to us. We are likely to limit our contact with people like that as best we can, an understandable response.

DIFFERENT VIEWS
But we ought not to be too quick to think that we have adequately judged the essential character of another person. The other day someone indicated that they saw me as "a patient and gentle person." But I have to admit that there are almost certainly people — not necessarily a small group — who see me as anything but "patient" and "gentle". So which of these views is the right one? Probably both — and neither. In different situations and with different people I am likely to be a different person. And if that is true of me, it is true of others, too. So, Jacob was a scoundrel, but there was something more to him than that.

This "something more" becomes evident in a new situation — and, as often it is in life,

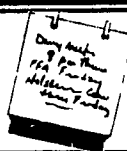
that it is away from home! Meeting some shepherds at a well, he wants to know why they are waiting idly there. The answer: the stone covering the well is purposely too large and heavy for just one or two persons to move. So they have to wait until all the shepherds together can move it. But when Rachel, his cousin, comes, "Jacob went up and rolled the stone from the well's mouth, and watered the flock of Laban his mother's brother" (29:10). Selfish, scheming Jacob performing a spontaneous, benevolent act! (How different Rachel's view of Jacob than the one held by his brother, Esau.)

A DIFFERENT JACOB
But the most notable difference is evident to us when he deals with his uncle Laban. Offering to work for him for seven years so that he might have Rachel's hand, Jacob meets a man who, like himself, is not above deceit in order to get what he wants. Promising Rachel, Laban gives him instead the older and unattractive Leah. In fact, as Jacob had tricked Isaac with his disguise, so Laban tricks Jacob, letting Jacob think that the veiled Leah is Rachel.

The Jacob we knew back in the home of Isaac would not have let anyone get away with pulling such a switch on him. Knowing him as we do — or think we do — we expect him to vow vengeance upon Laban and set his clever mind to retaliation. But, that is where we're in for a big surprise. Instead of revenge, Jacob accepts the situation and strikes a new bargain: to work seven more years for the hand of Rachel. For all of his scheming nature, Jacob was able to accept a disappointment and was flexible enough so that he could do something positive to make the best of the situation.

Jacob, as his name implies, began life as a devious supplanter. But there was something more to him than that — as there is to each of us.

Farm Calendar



Saturday, November 13

Organic Greenhouse Management Seminar, Ag Extension Conference Center, New Brunswick, N.J., 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Pa. State Beekeeper's Association annual meeting, Country Cupboard, Lewisburg.

Crawford County Holstein Association annual meeting, Saegertown United Methodist Church, Saegertown, 8 p.m.

Sunday, November 14

Adams County Farm-City Week Open House, Harold King Farm, York Springs, noon-4 p.m.

Penn-Jersey Farm and Power Equipment Dealers Association annual meeting, Mountain Laurel Resort Hotel, White Haven, thru Nov. 17.

Monday, November 15

Chester County DHIA annual meeting and banquet, West Fallowfield Christian School, 7 p.m.

Pa. Farm Bureau annual meeting, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, thru Nov. 17.

Pa. Association of Dairy Sanitarians and Dairy Laboratory Analysts annual meeting and conference, Penn State, State College, thru Nov. 17.

Agronomy Ag-Service School,

Holiday Inn, DuBois, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 16

Erie County Holstein Association annual meeting, Moose Club, Union City, 7:30 p.m.

Pa. Association of Extension Home Economists fall meeting, State College, thru Nov. 17.

Pa. Turgrass Council In Penn State Golf Turf Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, thru Nov. 18.

Bradford County Groundwater Conference, Sheshequin-Ulster Elementary School, Ulster, 7:30 p.m.

S.W. Pa. Hay Auction, Westmoreland Fairgrounds, 11 a.m.

Agronomy Ag-Service Schools, Days Inn, Meadville, 3 p.m.-9 p.m.

Bradford-Sullivan Forest Landowners' Association annual meeting, Wysox Fire Hall, Wysox, 7:30 p.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmer meeting on countywide property reassessment, Ephrata High School, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 17

ADADC District 20 meeting, Sunrise Hill Inn, Canandaigua, N.Y., 7:30 p.m.

Adams County Farm-City Week business open house, 10 a.m.-2

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