



OPINION

Number One Need

We have just experienced another Thanksgiving day feast. But farmland that produces much of our traditional holiday fare has become vulnerable to being gobbled up.

According to American Farmland Trust, of the 27 top producing counties of such Thanksgiving staples as turkeys, cranberries, sweet potatoes, squash, green peas and carrots, snap beans, pecans and pumpkins, 20 lie in urban-edge counties having nationally significant agricultural production under pressure from rapid population growth and urban sprawl. AFT, a national farmland conservation group based in Washington, said farmland in those areas is highly vulnerable to permanent conversion to nonagricultural use and conflicts with urbanization such as complaints over farming-related odors, dust and noise.

"At this time of year, we should all consider the threat facing the farmland that produces the bounty for our Thanksgiving dinner tables," said AFT President Ralph E. Grossi. "All too often, our best and most productive farmland, much of it on the urban edge, is being lost to sprawl that is wasteful, expensive and unnecessary.

"We must change our basic approach to farmland on the edge of our urbanized areas. This Thanksgiving season, let's be grateful for the most abundant food supply history has ever known. But let's also resolve to protect the farmland that makes it possible so future generations can be just as blessed as we are today."

While it's true we need to preserve farmland, we also need an economic and political climate that allows us to farm the land we preserve. This may be the number one need for today.

Farm Calendar



- Saturday, November 27**
- Sunday, November 28**
- Monday, November 29**
- Tuesday, November 30**
USDA's 70th Ag Outlook Conference, USDA Headquarters, Washington, D.C., thru Dec. 1.
- Wednesday, December 1**
York County Ag Preserve Board informational meeting, York County Vo-Tech School, York, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, December 2**
U.S. Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee Field Hearing On Rural Health Issues: The Pennsylvania Perspective, Cumberland County Extension, Carlisle, 10 a.m.
- Friday, December 3**
National 4-H Congress, Chicago, Ill., thru Dec. 10.
- Estate Planning Seminar, Carroll Co. Extension Office, Westminster, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Saturday, December 4**
National 4-H Congress, thru Dec. 8.
- Estate Planning Seminar, Holiday Inn, Hagerstown, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Maryland Pleasure Horse Seminar, South Carroll High School, Winfield, Md., 8:30 a.m.
- Sunday, December 5**
- Monday, December 6**
Agronomy Ag-Service School, Bradford County Extension, Towanda, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

- Biological Control of Farm Insects, Ag Room, Cumberland Valley High School, New Kingstown, 8 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 7**
Solanco Young Farmers meeting, Farm Liability.
Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Extension meeting (MACE), University of Delaware, Newark, Del.
Lancaster DHIA annual meeting, Good and Plenty Restaurant, 11:30 a.m.
Southwest Pennsylvania Hay Auction, Westmoreland Fairgrounds.
Agronomy Ag-Service School, Berks County Agri-Center, Leesport, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
Franklin County Cooperative Extension Dairy Reproductive Management Workshop, Rhodes Grove Camp Conference Center, Chambersburg, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m., thru Dec. 8.
Stray Voltage Satellite Conference, Cambria Extension Office, Ebsburg, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 8**
ADADC District 21 meeting, Bryncliff Motel and Conference Center, Varysburg, N.Y., noon.
Pennsylvania Veterinary Nutrition Forum, Days Inn, Lancaster.
Agronomy Ag-Service School, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
On-Farm Biogas Production Conference, Yoder's Restaurant

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Farm Forum

We, as farmers are proud of our quality tobacco crop this year and appreciate the interest shown. We hope for much better prices than last year. As with most other

commodities, better marketing is our goal, be it direct, indirect or international. Southeast Farmers



NOW IS THE TIME
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Lock Out Avian Influenza
Avian influenza (A.I.) is around again.

The H5N2 virus (the same one we had in 1983) was isolated from a pheasant flock on the eastern shore in Maryland. This reminds us the avian influenza virus is always around looking for a place to gain a foothold.

To prevent this, we need to practice excellent biosecurity. This is especially true during the winter months when the virus may survive a long time in manure at cold and moist conditions.

All poultry producers should practice the following:

- Do not allow unauthorized visitors in your poultry house.
 - If you allow people into your poultry house, keep a log with the following information: date, time, telephone number, where they last visited, and where they are going next.
 - If people must enter your poultry house, insist they wear disposable clothing that they may leave on your farm.
 - All tools or equipment they carry into the house must be cleaned and disinfected before going in and after leaving.
 - People should park as far away from poultry houses as possible.
 - Do not visit other poultry farms, backyard flocks, or live bird markets.
 - Avoid contact with wild waterfowl.
 - Always shower and change clothes before leaving the farm and before going into your poultry houses after you have been off your farm.
- Remember, humans are not affected by avian influenza as a result of direct contact with or consumption of poultry and egg products.

To Study Living Wills
On April 16, 1992, living wills, also known as advance directives for health care, were legalized in Pennsylvania.

If you become terminally ill and unable to communicate with doctors and family members, a living will allows you to designate your desire to not have life artificially prolonged. An advance directive provides specific direction to your physicians and medical care providers concerning your personal wishes for "life-sustaining treatment" if you become incapable of providing that direction personally.

No one wants think about dying, but everyone should sit down and discuss their feelings about living wills, organ donation, and final wishes. Talk with your family, clergy, and lawyer for their advise and counsel.

To Recertify Pork Quality Assurance

Chet Hughes, extension livestock agent, reminds pork producers it may be time to recertify your level III position within the National Pork Producers Council's (NPPC) Pork Quality Assurance Program (PQA).

If you are one of many producers who reached level III more than a year ago, you need to recertify. The process may be simple, if you have established or maintain a relationship with the verifier.

Most verifiers are veterinarians, extension personnel, or agricultural instructors. If the verifier is familiar with the detailed operations of your hog business, a short

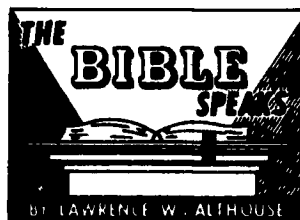
discussion of any changes made since certification may be all you need.

Specific areas to review include drug usage, product availability, herd health practices, and the type of medication records you are keeping.

Residue testing is not mandatory for PQA recertification. This is left to your discretion and that of the verifier. Following the review, your verifier should complete the verification postcard enclosed in the NPPC's mailing last April. If you cannot find yours, contact NPPC for another.

As a level III certified producer, you will continue to receive updates on changes in federal regulations, NPPC symposiums, and regional seminars as well as the Update newsletter. If you have any questions or need additional information, contact NPPC at (800) 456-7675.

Feather Prof's Footnote:
"There is never the wrong time to do the right thing."



RANDOM CHANCE OR GOD'S BLESSING?
November 28, 1993

Background Scripture:
Genesis 48
Devotional Reading:
Psalms 103:14

This past week I was at a meeting of a board of directors which began with each of us giving a brief biographical statement and an indication of when and how we had become associated with the organization.

Even as I recapped some of my milestones along the way and people who influenced me in some way or another. I marveled at the connectedness of my life. Because I met X, I came to know Y, and because I knew Y, I got to work with Z, and working with Z has made all the difference in my life.

Random events and people, but in the long run they seemed not so random at all. The connectedness, I decided, was God. Although I exercised my free will virtually every step of the way, still there was a sense of something more than random choices and accident, the sense of a broad plan that guided me both consciously and unconsciously, yet without denying me my freedom. Even when I seriously messed up that divine plan, God has been able to make something good out of the pieces. Some would call it coincidence, but I cannot help seeing it as providence, the will of God.

HUMAN ACTS
In the story of Jacob blessing Manasseh and Ephraim, Joseph's sons, in Genesis 48, we can see this same sense of connectedness. There were human acts and there was a divine will. The divine will shaped the direction, but the human acts filled in the details along the way. Writing in *The Interpreter's Bible* (Vol. I), Walter Russell Bowie says, "As is repeatedly evidenced in Genesis, they saw the destiny of Israel shaped not by human intentions, but by the long sure purpose of God." According to the custom of the time, Ishmael, Abraham's firstborn, should have been his father's heir, but instead it was Isaac God chose to perpetuate the covenant. So, also, Esau should

have been the father of the Israelites, but it was Jacob whom God was able to use for that purpose.

In Genesis 48 we see still another evidence of God's hand in the story of Israel. Normally, Joseph's two sons should have had no inheritance from their grandfather, Jacob — except what they would eventually inherit through their father. Joseph's portion of Jacob's estate as one of twelve sons, should have been one-twelfth of the inheritance. But, when Joseph brings his two sons to see their grandfather, Jacob proposes something that must have seemed radical: they will receive equal share of Canaan with their uncles and, although Manasseh was Joseph's oldest son and heir, Ephraim would be the greater of the two. The patriarch may have had their time-honored traditions, but in the long run it was the will of God that would prevail.

A PRIOR BLESSING
The story in Genesis 48 is often called "The blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh," but there is a blessing that antedates the blessing that Jacob gives. That is the blessing that Jacob already has experienced. He blesses Ephraim and Manasseh because he himself has been blessed. How? The writer says, "And, he blessed Joseph, and said, The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has led me all my life long to this day, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads" (48:15).

Most of us have been blessed like that. We can discern the blessings that God has bestowed upon those who have walked before us. We can perceive God's blessing in the way he has led us through this life. And, like Jacob, we have been blessed as our lives have been redeemed from the evil around us and even the evil within us.

That's what life is all about: recognizing the blessings we have received and letting God bless others through us.

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