



OPINION

American Farmer Distributes Lord's Blessings

Each evening 250 million families sit down to dine on an evening meal. Many families give thanks to the Lord for blessing them with the food placed before them. These evening dinners accommodate each of the four food groups: meat, grain, dairy, fruits and vegetables. The Lord distributes this bounteous food to us through the American farmer.

The American farmer comprises 1.8 percent of our population and they are capable of producing healthful, abundant food. Through my personal involvement with agriculture I believe it is a privilege to promote this industry.

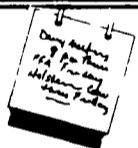
My justification for promoting agriculture generates from agriculture's multiple benefits. America is so dependent upon our nation's number one industry that without agriculture it is doubtful we would be the world's superpower today. Agriculture provides us the fortitude and power that make our country the primary food producing country in the world. The survival of the United States is based mainly on agriculture. The economic fuels that power our government and nutritional energy that feed the people are derived from this industry.

Our free enterprise farmers show a great respect for the environment. They are able to produce an abundance of food due to environmentally safe agricultural practices that enhance the soil's vitality. With new farming practices, technology, and preservation of nutrients, the American farmer continues a trend of producing more food, on less land.

The United States has never suffered national famine because of our immense capability to produce ample quantities of food. We see this when we consider that one farmer feeds 114 people. We may not appreciate the significant importance of agriculture, unless we experience its failure and the dastardly effect it would have on our people. America as we know it today, would not be possible if it wasn't for our success in agriculture.

The dairy industry in Pennsylvania is an example of agriculture's capability to produce healthful, abundant food. The dairy farmer, through the use of the dairy cow, takes non-edible forages and by-products and transforms them into edible nutritious dairy products. These include delicious products such as, ice cream, cheese, yogurt and milk. — This is a guest editorial by Amy VanBlarcom, Bradford County Dairy Princess

Farm Calendar



- Saturday, January 15**
Community Supported Composting, Kimberton Waldorf School, West Seven Stars Road, Kimberton, 8 p.m.
Franklin County Holstein Association annual meeting, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, 7 p.m.
- Sunday, January 16**
- Monday, January 17**
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Northeast Winter Dairy Management Seminar, Mountain View Inn, Greensburg, thru Jan. 18.
Income tax meeting, Comfort Inn, Hazleton, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, January 18**
New Jersey Annual Vegetable Meeting, Trump Taj Mahal, Atlantic City, N.J., thru Jan. 20.
Virginia Corn-Soybean Conference, Colonial Williamsburg, thru Jan. 20.
Pasture Management Conference, Lebanon Valley Fairgrounds, Lebanon, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Lime, Fertilizer, and Pesticide Conference, Days Inn, State College, thru Jan. 20.
Solanco Young Farmers meeting, financial management, High School, 7:30 p.m.
31st Annual New York State Farm Direct Marketing Conference, Sheraton Inn Syracuse, Liver-

- pool, N.Y., thru Jan. 20.
Beef Producers Meeting, Light-house Restaurant, Shippensburg, 7:30 p.m.
Dairy-MAP, Huntingdon County Hilltop Restaurant, Shade Gap, also Jan. 25.
Raleigh DHIA Records Workshop, Robert Fulton Fire Hall, Wakefield, 12:30 p.m.
Farm and Home Foundation annual meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center.
On-Foot, On-Rail Beef Evaluation Program, Leesport Farmer's Market, Leesport, live evaluation at 7:30 p.m. Carcass evaluation on Jan. 20 at Peter Bros. Meats, Lenhartsville, 7:30 p.m.
Lambing Time Management Series, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, continues Jan. 24 and 31.
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives' 65th annual meeting, New Orleans, La.
York County Agri Land Preservation Board, Pleasant Acres Complex, 7 p.m.
Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, Ephrata High School, 7:30 p.m.
Ag Information Series, Jefferson/Clearfield Counties, Penn State DuBois, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., also March 1 and 15.
- Wednesday, January 19**
Penn-Jersey Dairy Expo, Holiday



NOW IS THE TIME

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Cull For Increased Profits

Dairy farmers need to upgrade their herds continually to remain competitive.

Determining which cows to cull and when is no easy decision. One way to help simplify this decision is to list your criteria for culling. This could be in columnar form on a sheet of paper. The criteria could include cows open more than 150 days and not bred, cows with four or more breeding services, cows milking less than 30 pounds, cows with somatic cell counts more than 400,000 and severely infected more than three times, cows with feet and leg problems, etc. On the same sheet of paper, list all cows that meet any of your criteria. Cows that meet several criteria are strong candidates for culling.

To Study Peak Milk Production

DHIA rolling herd averages and cows' lactation records are nice to look at. They show what has happened in the past, but they do not reflect where the herd is heading.

This is important for managers to monitor. Peak milk production and persistency of production may be a good indicator of how much milk a cow will produce and how profitable she might be.

Peak milk production times 225-250 is an estimate of how

- Inn, Bethlehem, thru Jan. 20.
International Poultry Expo, Atlanta, Ga., thru Jan. 21.
Managing For Success Workshop, Clarion County Extension Office, repeats Jan. 26.
Dairy-MAP, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, also Jan. 27.
- Thursday, January 20**
Winter Nursery Seminar, Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Pa. State Association of County Fairs Annual Convention, Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, Hershey, thru Jan. 22.
Farm Income Tax meeting, Light-house Restaurant, Chambersburg.
Adams County Extension annual meeting, Heidlersburg Fire Hall.
Cumberland County Dairy Clinic, Penn Township Fire Hall, Huntsdale, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Raleigh DHIA Records Workshop, White Horse Fire Hall, White Horse, 12:30 p.m.
Atlantic Breeders Cooperative, Schaefferstown Fire Hall, 9:30 a.m.-noon.
- Friday, January 21**
Corn Production Satellite Seminar, Penn State DuBois Campus, also Feb. 15 and 22, at Lancaster Farm and Home Center and other extension offices.

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much milk a first calf heifer will produce in 305 days. For older cows, multiply peak milk production by 200-225.

About half of a cow's profit per lactation is made in the first 100 days in milk. Thus, persistency of production is also important. Heifers' milk production should not drop more than 5 percent per month, whereas older cows should not drop more than 8 percent per month.

To Reduce Nutrients In Manure

One area researchers have been studying to reduce nutrients in manure is animal diets. We know if we reduce protein and phosphorus levels in diets, we reduce nitrogen and phosphorus.

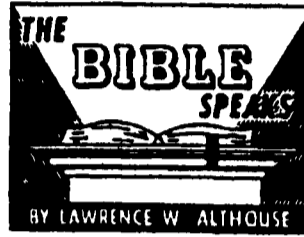
A recent French experiment confirmed this in swine. They found excessive phosphorus supplementation in swine diets has

little impact on pig performance and leads to increased concentration in the manure. They also found that high quality sources of protein and lysine-HCL not only lowered dietary protein but also reduced nitrogen output in the manure and ammonia emissions in confinement buildings.

Based on this research, a finishing operation that produces 5,000 hogs per year would reduce their phosphorus manure production by 4,000 pounds and their nitrogen production by 7,000 pounds.

We need more research to identify minimum levels of protein and phosphorus that may be feed to animals. By doing so, we increase feed efficiency while reducing nutrients in the manure. Remember, percent protein is calculated from the nitrogen content of the feed.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "When you cease to make a contribution, you begin to die."



YOUR REWARD:
NOW OR LATER?
January 16, 1994

Background Scripture:

Luke 6:17-36

Devotional Reading:

Matthew 5:3-12, 38-48; 7-12, 24-27; 8:1.4

Last spring I had to make a decision concerning my pension payments from the United Methodist Church: I could choose to receive an immediate lump sum cash payment or I could opt for a small monthly payment for the rest of my life.

I was tempted to take the lump sum cash because there were a number of projects concerning our home that we could have pursued. But, we readily realized that postponing the benefits to a later time would be much more prudent.

Actually, the choice we made concerning my pension is the same kind of choices most of us have to make in life: whether to take immediate gratification or postpone it to a later time when the need for gratification will be significantly greater.

NOW OR LATER?

And really, isn't that what the gospel teaches us about life? The true reward comes later — "Blessed are you that hunger now, for you shall be satisfied, blessed are you that weep now, for you shall laugh" (Luke 6:21). Weep and hunger now; laugh and be filled later. And it works the other way, too: "But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation. Woe to you that are full now, for you shall hunger. Woe to you that laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep" (6:24, 25).

Jesus is not saying there's anything wrong with being well-fed and of good cheer here and now, but that the satisfactions in the here and now are nothing compared to those we will experience in the kingdom of God. If you make material pleasures your aim in life, you may get them, but that is all you will get — "For you have received your consolation." Material satisfactions do not last; neither do material deprivations. What lasts are the spiritual blessings of the kingdom. So, if you

devote most of your life to obtaining the things that the world values, you will miss out on the only rewards that endure into eternity. **BLESSINGS & WOES**

William Barclay says that these beatitudes and woes are like "a series of bombshells". If that surprises you, it is probably because, like so many of us, you have become so familiar with them that you no longer think about how revolutionary they are. To put them in perspective, think of how they would sound, not in church on Sunday morning, but from the White House, the *Wall Street Journal* or an advertising firm on Madison Avenue. These beatitudes and woes are not the words nor the principles by which our society steers. In fact, they are so alien to the foundations of it that they are either rejected outright or relegated to the churches where no one really pays attention to them. For, if we really paid attention to them I'm not sure the Christian churches could safely and comfortably be accommodated to our society. Christians "get along" in America today, because we "go along" with a society whose norms and values are seriously in conflict with those of Jesus of Nazareth.

The question of "now or later?" also underlines Jesus' teaching on love. The world's concept of love is almost totally different from what we find in the gospels. Worldly love tends to be the sentiment that we are willing to give in return for the sentiment we get in return. If you think of only the here and now, it will be virtually impossible to love the person who strikes you on the cheek, takes away your cloak, or steals your possessions. If you want an immediate return on your investment of love, forget it! — "For even sinners love those who love them" (6:32b).

But, if you can focus on the long run instead of the short run, that is true love: "...lend expecting nothing in return" (shortrun) "and your reward will be great," (long run) "and you will be sons of the Most High" (eternity).

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