



OPINION

Producers And Processors Should Communicate

The need for an effective, fast and easily used line of communications between the agricultural producer and processor was proven beyond a doubt with respect to the beef industry, by the participation and response demonstrated during a recent forum held at Yoder's Family Restaurant in Intercourse.

The name of the forum was "Feedlot Management Forum," and was truly unlike any held in recent times. This meeting was an inside look into the motivations of the beef-animal buying industry.

It was processors being blunt and straightforward. It was producers also being straightforward with their concerns.

The result was such information as this: In the past five years, Moyer Packing Corp. has built its export business to the point that exporting represents 20 percent of Mopac's sales. Most of that 20 percent is a specialty market to Japan. The Japanese buyers want black-blood-lined animals in the 1400-pound range.

However, that doesn't change the fact that the bulk of Moyer's business demands 1250-pound steers. That's what they want.

The meaning of this information, straight from the packer is essential to the producer-entrepreneur who must make decisions about business and weigh the risks.

The individual can use that kind of information by producing animals the markets seeks.

By knowing the market demand, following reported industry trends, and making production decisions based on good sense, there's a better chance that a producer will significantly reduce the risk of losing money because of receiving a discounted price on an animal that isn't quite right for demand.

Openness of communications between producers and processors ought to be more common in every agricultural industry.

Farm Calendar

Saturday, July 30

Southwest Championship Show, Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 9:30 a.m.

Lebanon Area Fair, Lebanon Fairgrounds, thru Aug. 6.

Sunday, July 31

Union County West End Fair, Laurelton, thru Aug. 6.

Monday, August 1

Morrison Cove Dairy Show, Martinsburg, thru Aug. 5.

Goshen County Fair, West Chester, thru Aug. 6.

Clearfield County Fair, Clearfield, thru Aug. 6.

Mercer County Grange Fair, Mercer, thru Aug. 7.

Carroll County 4-H and FFA Fair, Carroll County, Md., thru Aug. 6.

Tuesday, August 2

State 4-H Achievement Days, Penn State, thru Aug. 4.

Jacktown Fair, Wind Ridge, thru Aug. 6.

New Stanton Farm and Home Show, New Stanton, thru Aug. 6.

Southwest FFA Dairy Show, Morrison Cove Memorial Park, Martinsburg.

Fayette County Holstein Show, Uniontown Fairgrounds, 9 a.m.

Nutrient Management Field Day, Burkholder Dairy, Fayetteville, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Adams County Fruit Growers Association meeting, Fruit Research Lab, Biglerville, 7 p.m.

Cecil County, Md. Fair Ag Showcase, Fair Hill Natural Resources Area.

Wednesday, August 3

Franklin County Holstein Field Day, Robert Eckstine Farm, Mercersburg, 10:30 a.m.

Livestock Pasture Session, DeHart Farm, Milton, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Thursday, August 4

Ag Technology Day, Intensive Grazing Pasture Management, Westmoreland Fairgrounds, 1 p.m.-4 p.m. and 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

York County Holstein picnic.

South Central FFA Dairy Show, Shippensburg Fairgrounds.

Potter County Holstein Show,

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Farm Forum

Editor:

The alarm clock is ringing in Pennsylvania but alas our legislators continue to sleep! What will it take to wake our public servants to the fact that local property and nuisance taxes are bankrupting those on low and fixed incomes while strangling a sluggish economy? Perhaps, we could awaken them with the right plan!

So, what would be included in the right plan? It seems to me that the right plan would include taxation based on an individual's ability to pay to ensure that our elderly keep their homes. The right plan would develop the largest possible tax base in order to keep tax rates at the lowest possible level. The right plan would keep the tax rate flat to encourage all to earn and invest to the maximum.

The right plan would reward, not penalize citizens for maintaining and improving their property. The right plan would generate massive tax savings that would stimulate the economy and create thousands of new jobs in Pennsylvania. The right plan would take the politics out of determining the tax rate and require a voter refer-



**Now Is
The Time**
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

For Ag Progress Days
Penn State's Ag Progress Days will be held August 16-18 at the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rock Springs (near State College).

This year's event will showcase more than 300 exhibitors and includes research and conservation educational programs.

Special displays on food safety will be featured in the College's Exhibits Building. Demonstrations there will show how bacteria grow on meat, how safe food handling can help avoid food borne illness, how irradiation kills bacteria and how integrated pest management helps reduce pesticide residues on food.

Planned demonstrations include 35 horsepower tractor roll over and safety, composting, high residue cultivation for row crops, hay mowing, baling and large bale handling, and intensive grazing for sheep.

Admission and parking are free. The hours are from 9 a.m. — 5 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday, and 9 a.m. — 8 p.m., on Wednesday.

For more information, contact your local Penn State Cooperative Extension office or look for articles and ads in the *Lancaster Farming*.

To Select The Right Ram

Jeff Bollinger, Lancaster County extension livestock summer assistant, states many points need to be considered when choosing a

endum to raise the rate.

The right plan would stabilize school and government finances by linking local budget growth to growth in the taxpayer's ability to pay and by requiring a savings fund to forward fund large projects. The right plan would compel the State to fund projects it mandates to local government. The right plan would do all these things and more.

Do you wish the right plan had been developed? It has! The right plan is the Weickel Plan. You may contact me at 717-786-3291 or at P.O. Box 145, Peach Bottom, PA 17563 for a copy and information on how you can help get it implemented.

Boyd F. Robinson Jr.
Peach Bottom

Dear Editor:

I'm writing about diabetes' problems and what is causing it. Sugar is the main cause.

It appears that most recipes call for a lot of sugar. Yes by the cup. Doctors tell us not to put sugar in our coffee yet each piece of pie has 2 tablespoons in it. Likewise

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ram for your purebred or commercial sheep flock. Some points you should consider include:

1. Select a ram from a flock free of diseases.
2. Choose a ram which is a twin or triplet. This should increase your number of multiple births.
3. Select a quick growing, structurally correct ram.
4. If possible, examine the ram's dam and sire to assure you that the ram has the quality you are looking for.
5. Select a ram containing two properly developed testicles in the scrotum. and
6. When you have chosen your ram. Isolate him for 30 days away from the rest of the flock.

To Study

Financial Management

Dr. David Kohl, Virginia Tech, shared some very interesting financial management guidelines at the recent Penn State Animal Housing Expo.

Some of these included:

1. Family living cost should be

under 15 percent of revenue if you have no non-farm income.

2. He identified three levels of family living cost. Frugal: \$12,000 to 18,000 annually. Moderate: 18,000 to 30,000 annually. and Heavy 50,000 annually.

3. Need \$150,000 sales per partner on a traditional farm or \$40,000 to 70,000 sales per partner for contract production.

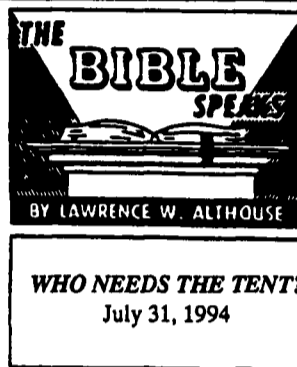
4. Need to keep interest expense under 20 percent of revenue.

5. Keep annual debt payments under 25 percent of revenue.

6. Build equity outside the farm. This would include bank CDs, mutual funds, stocks, etc. and

7. Make sure you have a good health and disability insurance program. Disability insurance is very important based on number of farm accidents in a year. These are some excellent guidelines to measure your operation against.

Feather Prof's Footnote:
"Reputations are made by searching for things that cannot be done and doing them."



WHO NEEDS THE TENT?
July 31, 1994

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Background Scripture:
Exodus 25:1-9, 29:38-46;
40:16-38
Devotional Reading:
Exodus 33: 12-36

Up until this point in the Book of Exodus, God is represented as dwelling in divine isolation on the top of Mount Sinai. But God offers them a covenant in which they will be His people and He will be their God. He also promises to bring them into the land of Canaan, which they will possess as their heritage. So, if He is to be their God and they are to go on into Canaan, then He must leave the solitary peaks of Sinai and go with them.

Presumably, God could have told them to go on to Canaan and "know that I go with you." That would be the kind of advice we might expect today. For the God revealed in Jesus Christ was and is not limited to a mountaintop, a temple or any other holy place, including a church. Who was it defined God as "a circle whose center is everywhere and circumference is nowhere"? But in Moses' day the people were not spiritually ready for that kind of God and so He had to present Himself to them in terms they could understand and believe. That, I believe, is why He said to Moses: "And make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst" (25:8).

SOMETHING VISIBLE

I do not believe that God needed a tent in order to go with the people of Israel, but that He knew they needed a tent to be aware of His presence. All the specific instructions — as to the financing of the tabernacle (25:1-9), as to the offerings (29:38-42), as to the construction and furnishing of it (40:16-33) — do not represent what it takes to please God, but what it took to reach the hearts and minds of the Israelites. I don't think God needed that tent, but they did. They needed something visible to maintain their belief in

God's promise: "and I will dwell among the people of Israel, and be their God" (29:45).

Another visible symbol of God's presence with them was "the cloud" that covered the tent of meeting. "Throughout all their journeys, whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the people of Israel would go onward; but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not go onward until the day that it was taken up" (40:36, 37). Now, I don't think God needed that cloud, but they did. Without it, I'm sure that they would have "broken loose" once again.

The writer of Exodus ends both chapter 40 and the book with these words: "For throughout all their journeys the cloud of the Lord was upon the tabernacle by day, and fire was in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel" (40:38). They needed something "in their sight" to assure them that God was with them. From our contemporary perspective, the tabernacle and the cloud seem rather primitive means of signifying God's presence. But many of us also lean sometimes upon symbols and visual representations — our churches, shrines, religious art, rituals and liturgy.

The purest and highest understanding of God is the one which we get without signs and symbols, but that doesn't mean we should or can get along completely without them. The problem is not with the tents or whatever represents God to us and makes Him real, but when we let those representations become the sole basis for our understanding. The people of Israel got very bogged down in the details of the tabernacle, just as sometimes we get equally hooked on the physical appointments of our places of worship.

Who needs the tent? Not God, but sometimes we do, so that we may remember that God is daily in our midst. Yet we must never mistake the tent in our backyard for the length and breadth of God's domain.

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