



OPINION

Keep Farm Families Safe

Some good news and some bad news can be reported about farm safety. The good news is that accidental deaths of farm residents have decreased the past ten years. But the bad news is that in the most recent national report of 1993, the number of people killed in farm related accidents increased to 2,400 from 2,200 in 1992.

In Pennsylvania, 48 farmers lost their lives in 1993, in 1992 47. In all, 624 farm fatalities have occurred in Pennsylvania since 1980. The numbers are remarkably consistent over the years.

This week the nation turns attention to the safety of an industry that harbors some of the bleakest statistics relating to injury and death on the job. National Farm Safety Week runs from September 18 to 24. But Maryland's Governor William Schaefer proclaimed farm safety week to be September 11 to 17.

"People engaged in agricultural production face high risks of occupational injury," Gov. Schaefer said. "But with a little care, many injuries and deaths caused by farm related accidents can be prevented."

Charles Wille, president of the New York Farm Bureau said farmers need to work at making agriculture safer because their families and the state's 18 million consumers are depending on them. "During National Farm Safety Week as well as throughout the entire year, Farm Bureau is urging the state's farm families and their farmworkers to farm defensively," Wille said. "In particular farmers should make sure their equipment is serviced and that all safety guards are in place. In addition farmers should take regular breaks to avoid getting over-tired, and they should avoid unnecessary risks."

The National Safety Council reports that agriculture is the nation's most hazardous industry, with a work death rate 22 percent higher than the second most hazardous industry, mining and quarrying.

Dennis Murphy, professor of ag engineering at Penn State says this means farming is not keeping pace with other hazardous occupations in improving its safety record. "The impact of personal injury and suffering is impossible to measure," Murphy said. "But the costs of agriculture-related fatalities across the country run into the billions of dollars."

"Quite often, a little common sense can prevent serious mishaps," said Lewis Riley, Maryland ag secretary. "For example, most farm equipment accidents can be prevented by taking time to review safety precautions in the operator's manual. In addition, it is important to keep all children and the elderly away from hazardous machines."

Farm families should examine all areas of their operation for places of potential danger. By taking corrective action, most accidents can be avoided. We want to keep all our farm families safe.

Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Attend Northeast Poultry Show
The Northeast Poultry Show will be held September 28-29 at the Lancaster Host Resort, Route 30 east of Lancaster.

Educational programs are scheduled for both mornings. Topics include biosecurity, flies, quality management, environmental proposals, and Salmonella enteritidis.

There is a registration fee for the morning programs. Both afternoons from noon to 5 p.m. the exhibit hall will be open. More than 100 exhibitors will be showing the latest in poultry equipment and services.

Admission to the exhibit hall is free. In addition, on Wednesday at 2 p.m., Dr. David Henzler, USDA, will discuss effective rodent control. One pesticide credit in category 4, 11, or 15 will be given for people attending this session.

On Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m., Dr. Jim Arends, North Carolina State, will be discussing darling beetle control. One pesticide credit in category 4, 11, or 16 will be given for people attending this session.

Plan now to attend the largest poultry trade show in the Northeast. More information is available by contacting the Pennsylvania Poultry Federation, 500 Progress Avenue, Harrisburg, (717) 652-7530.

To Beware Of Silo Gas
Silo filling is in full swing and with it comes the hidden danger of silo gas. Silo gas is formed by the natural fermentation of chopped forages in the silo.

Nitrogen dioxide is the major gas formed in a conventional silo. This gas is characterized by a strong bleach-like odor and low lying yellow, red, or dark brown fumes. It reaches a peak about three days after filling and quickly begins to decrease shortly thereafter especially if the silo is ventilated.

After three weeks it is unlikely that any more gas will be formed. However, some may still be present if it was trapped and unable to escape the silo.

Nitrogen dioxide is dangerous because it causes severe irritation to the nose and throat and could cause inflammation of the lungs. It is especially dangerous because low-level exposure is often accompanied by only slight irritation or pain.

Although death may occur immediately, a farmer could

Thursday, September 22
Workshop Series On Computers and Record Keeping, Lancaster County Farm and Home Center, 1 p.m., also Oct. 20 and 27. (Turn to Page A39)

breath the gas without any immediate serious symptoms and then die in his sleep hours later from fluid collecting in his lungs. Many victims have relapses one to two weeks after the initial exposure with symptoms similar to pneumonia. If you are exposed to the gas, it is critical that you seek medical attention.

To Enter Silos Safely
Ideally everyone should avoid the silo during the critical period when gases are forming. Since this is not always possible, follow these safety rules:

1. Level off the silo immediately after filling. Silo gases build to dangerous levels in 12 to 24 hours after filling.

2. Keep the blower running at all times when working in the silo.

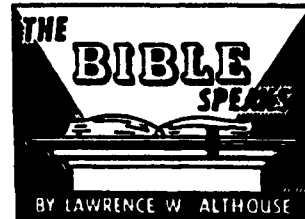
Run the blower 20 minutes before entering the silo. Make sure the blower is blowing air into the area you are working and not just across the top and down the chute.

3. Keep the silo room well ventilated for three weeks. Since silo gases are heavier than air, they may come down the chute and settle in the silo room.

4. Wear a self-contained breathing apparatus when entering the silo during the danger period. This is the only breathing device that is certain to protect you from all silo gases.

Now is the time to be careful. This year we have had far too many farm accidents. Let's make this harvest season accident-free!

Feather Prof's Footnote: "The only time success comes before work is in the dictionary."



WHEN GOD SAYS "SHOUT!"
September 18, 1994

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Background Scripture:
Joshua 6
Devotional Reading:
Psalms 149

If, during the Desert Storm war against Iraq, President Bush had sent a directive to General Schwarzkopf saying, "God has told me to instruct our forces to circle Baghdad and march around it once a day for six days and seven times on the seventh. . .," I doubt that the general would have obeyed his Commander-in-Chief. And if that order had been made public knowledge, the President of the United States would have been laughed out of office.

Why? Because, although many people in this country believe the Biblical account of the Battle of Jericho in Joshua 6, they do not expect God to work in that same way in our world today. Not even the most literal-minded interpreters of the Bible would castigate our President for failing to follow such a "revelation."

One way of rationalizing the difference between Biblical times and our own times is called "dispensationalism" — the theory that Biblical times were of a different dispensation or order than now. In Biblical times, so this theory goes, God worked directly in the world. In our dispensation, he does not. This is a rather clever rationalization, but there is no Biblical or creedal basis for it.

QUESTIONS, QUESTIONS

So, the story of the Battle of Jericho leaves a lot of intriguing questions: did the battle really happen this way or is this simply an imaginative retelling of the story? Did these things really happen in Biblical times but are no longer possible in our own? Why doesn't God work in our world that way today? And how can a person today know when God has told him or her to do something?

I don't have the answers to these questions, but I think there are implications that are just as applicable today as they were when Joshua was first written. God has given us the power of reason and he expects us to use it. In John's gospel Thomas is not berated when he doubtfully questions Je-

sus. Often in his teaching to his disciples, Jesus challenged them to think things through instead of slavishly obeying the letter of the law. So we are not asked to disengage our brains when we enter our churches.

Still, there are times in life when reason and clear thinking can only take us so far. Sometimes when we have thought our best thoughts they do not solve our problems. One of my recurring delusions in life has been the assumption that if one asks "why" or "how" long enough an answer will be given. God has answered a lot of my "whys" and "hows," but there have been some to which no answer has been given — at least on this side of life.

ONLY SO FAR

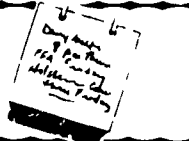
It is then, when we have taken our God-given intellect as far as we can, that we must take the next step. "Trust and Obey," as the old hymn puts it. There are times when despite what reason tells us, we must listen to and trust the voice that tells us to do something which reason doesn't seem to support: trust someone who has been untrustworthy, forgive someone who has severely hurt us, keep on trying even though so far our efforts have failed, attempt what seems impossible or at least very unlikely.

Reason told Abraham that it was idiocy to leave his secure home in Haran and journey to a strange land of which he knew nothing. Clear thinking probably did not encourage Moses to take over the leadership of the Israelites. It was irrational to expect Isaiah to come to the people with a message he knew would make people angry. But each responded to these challenges, not because their minds told them it was a good idea, but because they had an unshakable conviction that that was what God wanted.

There have been times in my life when God has said to me, "Trust me" and then told me to do something that didn't seem very smart. I cannot recall that I have ever trusted and obeyed and been left holding the bag.

So, there are times when, if God tells us to "Shout!" we'd better do just that.

Farm Calendar



- Saturday, September 17**
Organic Country Fair, Pennington, N.J., thru Sept. 18.
PASA Field Day, Organic Raspberry Culture, Jean Nick, Kintnersville.
Family Fun Festival, JoBo Holstein Farm, John and Bonnie Hess, Gettysburg, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
Ninth Annual Dorset Field Day, The Perry Farm, Whitehouse Station, N.J., 1 p.m -4 p.m.
17th Annual Days of the Past, Washington Crossing State Park, Titusville, N.J.
- Sunday, September 18**
Honey Harvest Festival, Hashawha Environmental Center, Westminster, noon-5 p.m.
Over-The-Hill Horse Show, English and Western (adults only), Hunter Hill Stables, Coventryville, 9 a.m.
Fertilizer Institute's 1994 World Fertilizer Conference, The Westin St. Francis, San Francisco, Calif., thru Sept. 20.
Gratz Fair, Gratz, thru Sept. 24.
- Monday, September 19**
Reading Fair, Reading, thru Sept. 24.
- Beaver Community Fair, Beaver Springs, thru Sept. 24.
Milk Marketing Inc. Fall District Meeting, District 3, Local 2, Berlin Fire Hall, Berlin, 7:30 p.m.
Schuylkill Conservation District meeting/picnic, Schuylkill County Fairgrounds, Summit Station, noon.
- Tuesday, September 20**
Ephrata Fair, Ephrata, thru Sept. 24.
Harmony Grange Fair, Harmony, thru Sept. 24.
Beef Pasture Walk, William Pearsall and David Hendricks, Macungie, 6:30 p.m.
N.Y.-Pa. Pasture Tours, Painter Dairy and Beef Farm, Elkland, 10 a.m.-noon.
PASA Farm Field Day, Abram and Sherry Ziegler Farm, Limestoneville, 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 21**
Delmarva Broiler Housing and Flock Supervisors Conference, Delmarva Convention Center, Delmar, Md.
Bloomsburg Fair, Bloomsburg, thru Oct. 1.

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