



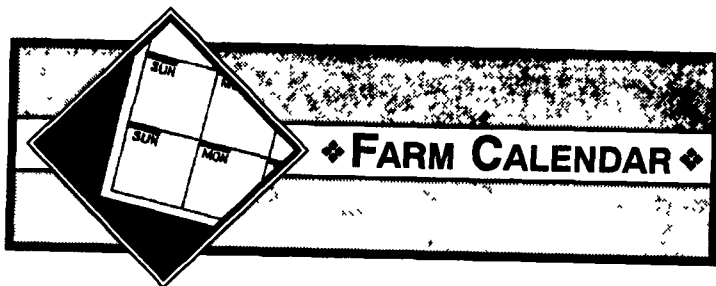
OPINION

Chemicals Allow Farming Practices That Reduce Soil Erosion

For centuries, soil erosion has been the most serious side effect of our food production. Recently, modern chemistry has found a way to cut soil erosion radically; farmers can now control weeds with herbicides rather than the old bare-earth farming systems. We thank our country's farmers and agribusinesses for this advance, which is already being used on 100 million acres of this country's highest-risk farmland. As a result, future generations of Americans can look forward to less soil erosion, more wildlife habitat and a more sustainable world.

Dennis T. Avery writing in *Global Food Quarterly*, suggests that the above paragraph could be part of a point-of-purchase display in supermarkets' produce areas. Along with lovely color photos, such a display would make the food store manager's whole line of products look better to their and our (farmers') customers. It also undergirds the whole spectrum of modern minimum-till farming systems in ways that are crucially important to farming's regulatory future.

When you have a story that is as good as American high-yield agriculture's, it makes sense to take the message to the public.



Saturday, March 4

- Philadelphia Flower Show, Philadelphia Civic Center, thru March 12.
- Fellowship of Christian Farmers Eighth Annual Outreach Luncheon, Wilhelm, Ltd., Westminster, Md., 12 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
- Maryland Holstein State Convention Sale, Westminster, Md.
- Butler County annual meeting, Bonanza Steakhouse, Lyndora.
- Wayne County Dairy Day, Honesdale High School, 9:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.
- Butler County Holstein annual meeting, Bonanza Steakhouse, Lyndora, Noon.

Sunday, March 5

- Maple Sugaring Festival, Hashawha Environmental Center, Westminster, Md., noon-5 p.m.

Monday, March 6

- Beef Production in West Virginia, Ebersburg Extension Office, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- Soybean Management meeting, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
- Genetic Choices For Sustainable Dairying, Intercourse Frie Station, Intercourse, 12:45 p.m.-2:45 p.m.

- Sixth Annual Southern Maryland Agricultural Breakfast, Jaycee's Community Center, Waldorf, Md., 8 a.m.-10:30 a.m.
- Nutrient Management Workshop, Computer, University Park.
- Pasture Management Program, BCEAC, Baltimore County CES, Ciockeyville, also March 13 and 20.

- Dairy MAP, Indiana/Armonstrong County, Sandy Kay's Restaurant, Shelocta, also March 13.
- Dairy MAP, Westmoreland Co., Donohoe Center, Greensburg, also March 13.

Tuesday, March 7

- Lancaster County Dairy Day Part II, Farm and Home Center.

- Ornamental Pesticide Management meeting, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
- "Leaving the Dairy Business?," Montgomery County 4-H Center, Creamery.

- Tri-County -Soybean meeting, Shippensburg, 8:30 a.m.
- Schuylkill County Crop Clinic, Morgan Auditorium, Penn State Schuylkill Campus, Schuylkill Haven, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

- "The Rural Entrepreneur," Shiloh Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
- Western Pennsylvania Turf Conference, Pittsburgh Expo Mart, Radisson Hotel, 8 a.m.

- Bedford County Holstein annual meeting, 7 p.m.

- Pesticide license testing training program, Upper Dauphin High School, Elizabethville, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

- Dairy MAP, Beaver/Butler/Lawrence Co., Brown's Country Kitchen, Portersville, also March 14.

- Dairy MAP, Fayette/Greene, Fair Office, Fairgrounds, Uniontown, also March 14.

Wednesday, March 8

- Pennsylvania Potato Growers' Institute Meeting, Willow Valley Resort and Conference Center, Willow Street. Also March 9.

- Regional Greenhouse meeting, Richland Mall, Johnstown.

- Dairy Map MFS Workshop, Lancaster County Farm and Home Center. Also March 15.

- Westmoreland MFS Workshop, Westmoreland Extension Office. Also March 15.

- Fumigation Meeting, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 7 p.m.-8 p.m.
- Dairy Day, Huntingdon and Blair Counties, Alexandria Fire Hall, 9:30 a.m.

- Nutrient Management Workshop, Computer, University Park.



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Evaluate Small Grains

Most of the small grains went into this past winter in fairly good shape, according to Robert Anderson, extension agronomy agent.

However, some fields show damage because of winter growing conditions and herbicide carryover.

Before fields put on too much new growth, it may be worth spending a little time evaluating them. Fields with a low number of plants will have reduced yields at harvest time. If the stand looks thin, spend time counting the number of plants at several representative sites in the field. This may require getting down on your hands and knees so individual plants, not stems or tillers, are counted.

Using a 10-foot tape or string, count the number of plants at 7 to 8 locations in the field. After the counts have been made, calculate the average number of plants at each location and dividing by the total number of feet that the plants were counted in.

The minimum number of plants per foot of row needed to produce an acceptable yield at various row spacings are 6-inch row — 7 plants; 7-inch row — 8 plants; and 10-inch row — 12 plants per foot.

In addition to having an acceptable average number of plants, fields should not have great deal of variations in number from one location in the field to another.

To Select Spring Oat Or Barley

Any time a plant variety is selected, the decision to which variety is chosen should be based on a series of selection criteria.

Spring oat and spring barley seed should be selected on several criteria, which include yield potential, bushel weight, disease resistance, plant height, lodging potential, and maturity date.

Based on Penn State yield trials, varieties ranged from 110 to 132 bushels per acre for spring oats. Bushel weight ranged from 30 to 40.8 pounds per bushel.

Data from these and other trials help you to select the best variety for you. Whenever possible, use the average yield over a three-year period. When looking at multiple traits, you may develop an index for each trait by assigning a percentage value to each trait. Have the percentages equal 100 percent.

Thursday, March 9

- Lancaster County Holstein Club Farm tour, starts at Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8 a.m.
- Somerset County Holstein annual meeting, Rockwood Fire Hall, Rockwood, 7 p.m.

(Turn to Page A31)

The most important trait would have the highest percentage.

For copies of various crop yield trials, contact your local cooperative extension office.

To Select

Replacement Heifers

At weaning time, for most Pennsylvania herds, an important management decision will be made — which heifers will be retained in the herd for breeding.

Genetic progress is made in the herd by replacing older cows with heifers. The downside is that if there is a genetic problem, it will also be retained.

A first consideration for many breeders, particularly small breeders, is whether it may be cheaper to buy heifers rather than to raise them yourself. This will be particularly true if weaned or bred heifers may be purchased that are superior to those you are raising.

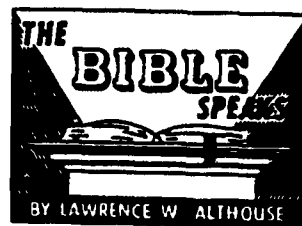
Most herds will routinely replace 20 percent or more of the

cow herd every year. With half of the calves normally being heifers and realistically expecting only 80 to 85 percent calf crop, this means 35 to 50 percent of the heifer calves born every year will be retained.

Selection of heifers that are better than the cows currently in the herd is necessary to making genetic improvement. This implies there must be some measure of expected productivity to select the right ones.

Looking at in-herd weaning weight ratios is a good start to identify the heifers that have the high milking dams, were born early in the calving season, and may have the best genetics for growth. Heifers sired by bulls with high EPDs for milk, maternal weaning weight, and low birth weight will also be desirable.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Clear vision and the willingness to reach the highest goals mark a true leader."



THE SMART AND THE POWERFUL
March 5, 1995

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Background Scripture

I Corinthians 1:18-2:16

Devotional Reading

I Corinthians 1:18-25

Last September we visited Budapest, Hungary. The last time we had been there Hungary was firmly in the grip of the Soviet power. We were fascinated to see the changes that had taken place with the fall of the Communists. We asked our guide whether he had had to study Russian. He smiled whimsically and said, "They taught us Russian, but we never learned it."

Despite the sheer physical and emotional power of the Soviet presence, there were things that force alone could not accomplish. The same is true of human knowledge. Our granddaughter, aged three, has demonstrated that she already knows far more than we did at her age. But will her generation's superior knowledge guarantee greater happiness, fulfillment, or success? Not necessarily.

There are two forces that drive society: the struggle for power and the quest for knowledge. Read the morning headlines and ask yourself how these two elements figure in news and seldom will you need to look further.

POWER AND KNOWLEDGE

Even in this day of relative peacefulness, the pursuit and use of sheer force enervates conflicts, struggles, wars, litigation, racial strife, and personal animosities. Our television seeks to persuade us that force is what settles most questions and disputes. At the other end of the spectrum is the quest for the ability to control the divergent forces of life by the power of the mind, a widespread assumption that ultimately any problem can be solved with the genius of human knowledge.

Both the drive to power and quest for knowledge can corrupt us. The ego that possesses the means of power or the understanding of knowledge, or both, tends to become arrogant. The powerful

tend to look down upon the weak and the knowledgeable disdain the uninformed. In the long run, power and knowledge may bring despair, for we usually find that no matter how powerful and knowledgeable we are, there are abysmal limits beyond which they cannot carry us. You can raise an army and conquer a people, but you cannot subjugate them forever. You can push human technology to astounding levels, but with every victory there seem to be pitfalls and problems that defy your knowledge.

A STUMBLING BLOCK

The world, then, has not changed all that much since Paul wrote: "For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, both to those who are called . . . Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1:22-24). Paul said that the Jews looked for a salvation from the power of Rome, seeking a Messiah who would conquer with physical might. The Greeks, he said, looked for the solution to life's problems with the pursuit of knowledge.

You can see the contemporary parallels, can't you. On the one hand, the claim that political and economic power can solve our problems and fulfill our dreams. On the other, those who believe that the human mind has no limits. So, Paul's words are just as applicable today: "For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1:15). The answer that God gave with Jesus on the cross may seem weak and stupid in light of what the world holds as powerful and wise, but the cross is the only power and wisdom that can save us, individually and collectively.

With redeeming, reconciling love both power and knowledge can avail us much. Without it, power and knowledge fail and corrupt us. That is why Paul came to the Corinthians deciding "to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

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—by—

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