



OPINION

Agriculture Important Every Week Of The Year

Agriculture is Pennsylvania's number one industry. And this week, March 19-25, is National Agriculture Week, a good time to remember where our good food comes from.

"Growing Better Everyday in Partnership with Nature" is the theme for this year's celebration. It highlights the important contributions our farmers make in protecting the environment and conserving natural resources. Since air, soil, and water are the mainstay of their existence, our farmers practice stewardship of these resources to sustain their livelihood into the future.

The hard work and dedication of Pennsylvania's 51,000 farm families continue to keep agriculture the number one industry of the Commonwealth. With \$3.67 billion in cash receipts, our Keystone farmers and agribusinesses are the leading agriculture producers in the northeastern United States and some of the most productive in the country.

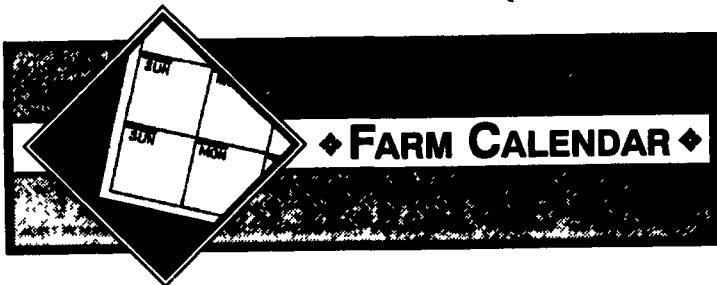
Agriculture generates an additional \$40 billion annually in related economic activity and creates jobs for one out of every five Pennsylvanians. This includes support services such as food processing, marketing, transportation, as well as manufacturing all the products and equipment used on the farm.

Milk production is the leading segment of our agricultural industry, with annual sales of \$1.43 billion. Pennsylvania's milk production is 10.2 billions pounds.

The total value of all cattle, hogs, and sheep on Pennsylvania farms is \$1.53 billion. Actual cash receipts from the sale of meat animals during the past year was \$561 million, making livestock the second leading segment of Pennsylvania agriculture.

The combined value of Pennsylvania's poultry production from broilers, eggs and turkeys, plus the value of chicken sales was \$500.6 million last year. That's a nine percent increase over the previous year. Laying flocks produced a record 5.64 billion eggs, and turkey producers raise 8.6 million poults.

We join Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge in making a state proclamation to coincide with the national event. But we go farther. Because of the impact of agriculture on Pennsylvania's economy, we proclaim every week of the year Pennsylvania Agriculture Week.



Saturday, March 18

Nut Grafting Workshop, Dauphin County Conservation District, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

Penn State Garden Symposium, Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

York County Pork Producers annual meeting and banquet, Stewartstown Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Maryland Department of Ag Annual Open House, Annapolis, Md., 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, March 19

Monday, March 20

Northeast Dairy Conference, Sherraton University Hotel, Syracuse, also March 21.

Regional Tree Association meeting, Cumberland County extension office, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Soil and Water Conservation Society nutrient management technical meetings, Dauphin County Ag Center, Dauphin, 9 a.m.-3:45 p.m.

Southcentral Pennsylvania Tree Association meeting, Cumberland County Extension office, Carlisle, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 21

SCP Cattlemen's Association annual banquet, East Berlin Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Mid East UDIA meeting, Ramada

Inn, Somerset, 9:30 a.m.
Maryland Small Fruit Workshop, Oregon Ridge Nature Center, Baltimore County.

Nutrient Management Workshop, N.W. region, manure, Mercer Extension office, Mercer.

Southwest Pa. Hay Sale, Westmoreland Fairgrounds, 11 a.m.

Wednesday, March 22

Delmarva Hatchery and Breeder Flock Management Short Course, Delmarva Convention Center, Delmar, Md.

Greene County Sheep and Wool Growers annual meeting, Greene County Fairgrounds, 7:30 p.m.

Mid East UDIA meeting, Holiday Inn, Meadville, 9:30 a.m.

Maryland Small Fruit Workshop, Oregon Ridge Nature Center, Baltimore County.

Atlantic Breeders Cooperative annual meeting, Eden Resort Inn and Conference Center, Lancaster, 10 a.m.-2:15 p.m.

Thursday, March 23

Montgomery County DHIA/Holstein Club annual meeting, Towamencin Fire Hall, Kulpsville, 6:45 p.m.

Maryland Nutrition Conference For Feed Manufacturers, Stouffer Harborplace Hotel, Baltimore, Md., thru March 24.



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Celebrate Agricultural Week
Gov. Tom Ridge has declared March 19-25 as Pennsylvania Agriculture Week. This week is a salute to the men and women who provide our neighbors around the world with an abundance of food and fiber products.

"Growing Better Everyday in Partnership with Nature" is the theme for this year's celebration. It highlights the important contributions our farmers make in protecting the environment and conserving natural resources.

Air, soil, and water are the mainstay of agriculture's existence, and our farmers practice stewardship of these resources to sustain their livelihood into the future.

According to the Agriculture Council of America, each year, one American farmer provides food and fiber for 129 people — 97 in the United States and 32 abroad. American agriculture employs 21 million people or 18.5 percent of the labor force. A family of four eats about 5,000 pounds of food each year. And Americans spend 11.4 percent of their personal income on food, compared with Japan — 21 percent; Italy — 26 percent; Greece — 42 percent; and China — 53 percent.

To Vote In Tobacco Referendum
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that tobacco growers in various parts of the country will be given an opportunity to vote for tobacco

Sheep Management Series, York Extension office, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
N.E. Pa. Landscape Management School, Holiday Inn, Bartonsville, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Tractor Safety Training, Lehigh County Ag Center, 7:30 p.m.
Nutrient Management Workshop, soil fertility, N.E. region, Knight's Inn, Danville.

Lancaster County Conservation District annual dinner, Yoder's Steakhouse, 7 p.m.

Northumberland County Spring Awards Banquet, Sunbury Social Club, Sunbury, 6:30 p.m.

Pesticide update meeting, Greene County Extension office, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Friday, March 24

Pa. Spring Holstein Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg, 9:30 a.m.

Cornell Swine School and Trade Show, Cornell U. Livestock Pavilion, thru March 25.

ADC Dist. 5 annual meeting, Bird In Hand Restaurant, Bird In Hand, 7 p.m.

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support programs to be in effect for the next three years.

If more than two-thirds of the growers who vote in Pennsylvania favor the program for the state, then USDA will set quotas for the state and growers will be able to obtain price support loans for the next three years. If quotas are disapproved, production will not be limited and price support loans will not be available to Pennsylvania tobacco growers.

Pennsylvania has never voted in favor of quotas for the Pennsylvania Type 41 tobacco. The Maryland Type tobacco grown in Pennsylvania and Maryland was last grown under quotas in 1965. Pennsylvania farmers who grew tobacco in 1994 are eligible to vote in the referendum. They can vote at the Consolidated Farm Service Agency office (formally the ASCS office) between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. on March 27-30.

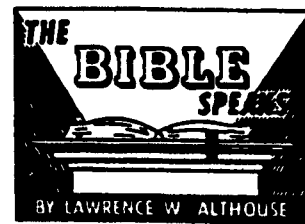
To Study Rural Leadership
Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences will host a series of seven seminars aimed at preparing municipal officials for leadership roles within their communities. The seminar, entitled "Rural

Municipal Officials Leadership Academy," will use interactive television to link classrooms at nine sites across the state. The academy will focus on weekly themes such as community decision making, community cooperation and economic development, expanding a community's financial base, how to use volunteers and organizations within a community, and how to communicate effectively.

Participants will also discuss such issues as working with the media, running effective meetings, land use, and public safety. By using telecommunications technology, attending officials can listen to instructors at other classroom sites and ask them questions.

The course will be held on seven Saturdays from April 1-June 3. Each session lasts from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Lunch and instructional materials are included in the \$135 registration fee. The registration deadline is March 20. For more information and registration, contact Ann Southard at (814) 863-4679.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Attitudes are contagious. Is yours worth catching?"



ARE YOU STANDING OR FALLING
March 19, 1995

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Background Scripture:
1 Corinthians 10:1-17
Devotional Reading:
Ephesians 6:10-18

Now that I am no longer preaching—at least on a regular basis—I have occasion to reflect on the sheer audacity of preaching. Not that I regret or would take back most of what I have preached over the years, but that I would proclaim the gospel with more humility than I did, particularly as a young man fresh out of seminary. (I stayed "fresh" for quite a while.)

Assurance is a good thing for preachers and others, but it can so easily turn into smug self-deception. Paul seems to understand the pitfalls of self-assurance and he warns the Corinthians: "Therefore let any one who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall" (10:12). I'm afraid there were times when I thought I was standing on the word of God when, in fact, I was falling flat on my face...or some other anatomical feature.

The problem is not assurance, but in what we are assured. Paul cited the example of the Israelites in the wilderness of Sinai. They all participated in this marvelous experience and because of that they became overconfident. "Look what we've experienced!" they thought to themselves, and that was soon transformed into look who or what we are! Because they had the experience they thought they had a no-fault guarantee. But Paul says, "Nevertheless with most of them God was not pleased" (10:5).

Why? Paul gives us four reasons: (1) idolatry; (2) immorality; (3) they put the Lord to the test; and (4) they grumbled, grumbled, grumbled—all the kinds of stupid things that people do when they

think they have it made. They were tempted and most of them thinking they were honor roll students, got failing grades.

Making Whoopee!
Paul sums up their attitude as, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to dance" (10:7). The problem is not in the eating, drinking and dancing, but their smug attitude. They thought they were standing on God's promises and in reality they were falling to temptation! Proudly assured they were God's chosen few, they felt free to be "making whoopee."

Today in psychology there is a considerable debate between victimologist—who believe that people who fail are largely victims of forces which they cannot control (admittedly an oversimplification of their position)—and those who believe that very often we have control over the choices we make. Both on the basis of my theology of free will and my experience as a counselor, I choose the latter position. Without over-generalizing from my experience, I can truthfully say that I have never succumbed to a temptation over which I had no control. When I failed, I made a choice. Professor Martin E.P. Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania says, "Victim explanations are readily adopted because they provide one psychological boon: They generally shift blame from the self to some larger, more impersonal cause" (The devil made me do it!).

Short of physiological addition, there is no temptation over which we do not have the power to say no. So Paul says, "God is faithful, and He will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (10:13).

You can stand; you don't have to fall.

Lancaster Farming
Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
—by—
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinman Enterprise
Robert G. Campbell General Manager
Everett R. Newwanger Managing Editor
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