



OPINION

A National Sales Tax

Farmers certainly are hit hard whenever real estate taxes get out of control. Some Lancaster County farmers got together last week in a barn meeting with state and local officials to air their concerns. These farmers say they are facing local real estate taxes of 16 to 30 percent of their net income—even including earned income off the farm in part-time jobs.

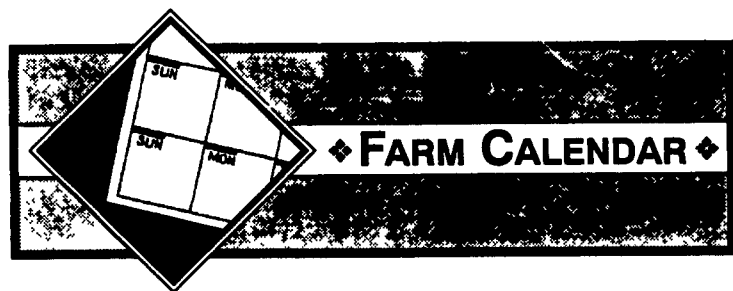
Despite the tax break for farmers, known as Clean and Green, the fees are too high to allow them to continue farming if these local taxes continue to escalate at the same rate the farmers have experienced in the last 10 years. Other methods of taxation are proposed, notably an income tax, so that those who don't own property but use the schools and police protection also help pay the bill.

But tax reform does not reduce taxes. It simply shifts taxes. And not all the shifts would benefit farmers. If you save money on real estate taxes, it may become income that would then also become taxable, maybe even putting some individual farms in a higher tax bracket.

From our point of view, the first priority in tax reform is to reform the needs of government. If we don't reduce government spending, we can't reduce taxes. Of course, this means reducing the handouts from government. It means cutting the size of government and reducing the multiple levels of government we now have. And yes, it would mean reducing farm programs although this would affect mid-West farmers more than in our area.

We think a national sales tax may have some merit. If you consume the service or product, you help pay the taxes. Farmers are large consumers, both in their farm operations and for their families. So they would still be paying their share of taxes. But so would everyone else.

And that's just what the farmers want. They accept the responsibility to pay their taxes. They just don't want to pay for more than their fair share, especially when they think they didn't create the need for this expanded government in the first place.



Saturday, August 5
Pa. Polled Hereford Association Field Day, Salunga Acres, Salunga.

Performance Ram Test Sale, Ag Arena, Penn State.

Pa. Sheep Producers Field Day, at State College Performance Ram Sale, Ag Arena, State College, 10 a.m.

Tree Health Seminar, Towanda's SCI Park, 9 a.m., continues Aug. 26 at Lewisburg's Soldier Memorial Park, 9 a.m.

Sunday, August 6
Bedford County Fair, Bedford, thru Aug. 12.

Schuylkill County Fair, Schuylkill Haven, thru Aug. 12.

Monday, August 7
Clinton County Fair, Mackeysville, thru Aug. 12.

Cochranon Community Fair, Cochranon, thru Aug. 12.

Greene County Fair, Waynesburg, thru Aug. 12.

Butler Farm Show, Butler, thru Aug. 12.

Warren County Fair, Pittsfield, thru Aug. 12.

Dawson Grange Fair, Dawson, thru Aug. 12.

Seidler Township Fair, West Newton, thru Aug. 12.

Tioga County Fair, Whitneysville, thru Aug. 12.

Bradford County 4-H Roundup, 4-H Bldg.

Tuesday, August 8
Pa. Plastic Pesticide Container

Recycling Program, Ag Commodities, Gettysburg, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Ag Horizons Conference, The Inn at Reading.

DuBois Area Ag and Youth Fair, Sykesville, thru Aug. 12.

Elk County Fair, Kersey, thru Aug. 12.

Harrold Fair, Greensburg, thru Aug. 13.

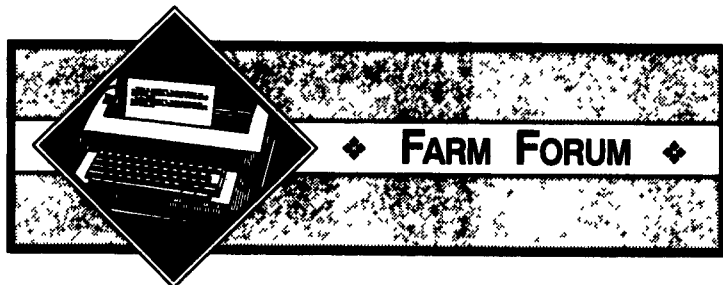
Empire Farm Days, Seneca Falls, NY, thru Aug. 10.

Bradford County 4-H Roundup, 4-H Building.

Pa. Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling, Adams County, 9-11:30 p.m., Ag Commodities, Gettysburg.

Herbicide Comparison Demon-

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Editor:

I see where some of the farmers in Lancaster County are filing a class action suit to try to get a more equitable assessment on their farms. I have tried several times, through the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association, to have all farms producing food or fiber be



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Evaluate Clean and Green

September 1 is just a few weeks away. If you are planning to enroll a Lancaster County farm in Clean and Green, you need to have your application on file before September 1 for consideration for 1996 taxes.

Many farmers are waiting the results of their appeals before filling. This could be a mistake. Clean and Green only applies to land and not buildings. Clean and Green sets a price on farm land and woods based on its ability to produce a crop. These values are less than any market value that will be assigned. Thus, Clean and Green will reduce the amount of taxes you pay.

There is a concern a lot of farmers do not realize the size of their tax bill for 1996. For the average farm in Lancaster County, the local taxes (county, township and school district) will double. Clean and Green will reduce this impact.

If you have any questions, contact the Lancaster County Cooperative Extension office at (717) 394-6851.

Remember, September 1, 1995 is the deadline for applications for next year's taxes. The application must be in the Lancaster County Assessment Office, Courthouse, Lancaster, Pa. by that date.

To Look For Crop Deficiencies

Robert Anderson, extension agronomy agent, reports seeing signs of nutrient deficiencies in fields he has been scouting the past several weeks. Potassium deficiency seems to be the most common. In corn, potassium deficiency will exhibit a yellowing of the lower leaves with a brown leaf margin which appears dead. The yellow area of the leaf will often appear to be yellow and green stripe.

Research has shown that potassium deficiency may be exaggerated under dry or compacted soil conditions. Some research also shows that the problem will occur more frequently in reduced tillage

assessed on their value as farms, not their future development value.

Any home can be the future site of a shopping mall, gas station or new highway; yet they are always assessed as a home. Why are farms being singled out and as-

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systems. There is no corrective treatment for the crop which is growing. Soil tests will help to identify low nutrient levels.

The best strategy is to accurately identify the problem and apply adequate fertilizer for the next crop. Now would be a good time to walk your fields and evaluate them for problems i.e. stand, insects, diseases, nutrient deficiencies, etc.

To Understand Heat Stress

The past several weeks of hot weather reminds us to be aware of heat stress in animals.

Every animal has a comfort zone. For milk producing cows, the comfort zone is 41 to 77 degrees F. At higher temperatures, cows start experiencing heat stress and the problems magnifies significantly with increasing humidity.

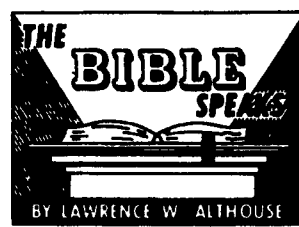
Several things contribute to increase body temperatures. These include heat generated by the cow's normal metabolic functions and additional activities such as walking and the digestion of fibrous feeds such as forages. Exposure to high environmental temp-

eratures and to radiant heat emitted from the sun and other hot surfaces also increase body temperatures. Dark colored cows absorb about twice as much heat as light colored cows. Heat stress occurs when a cow is unable to dissipate excess body heat fast enough to prevent elevated body temperatures.

The primary way cows dissipate body heat is by evaporation. Examples are sweating, panting and sprinkling water on cows in the presence of a breeze. That is why blood flow to the skin is increased and why cows seek shade. Convection, or the movement of air, helps to break up warm air that envelops a cow's body.

Conduction is another method where heat is transferred to colder objects by direct conduct. That is why cows like to stand in water and lie in wet areas. During this hot weather, keep cows in cool places out of direct sun light, provide ample fresh cool water and keep air moving over your cows.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Excellence can be yours if you listen to your inner voice, not the voice of skeptics."



TUNED-IN AND SENT-OUT
August 6, 1995

Tuned-In and Sent-Out

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Background Scripture:

Isaiah 6:1

Devotional Reading:

Isaiah 55:6-11

If God were looking for an Isaiah to be his prophet today—and he probably is—for what kind of person would he be looking? How would he write a classified advertisement for this person?

WANTED—Someone to be a prophet in 1995. No experience necessary. Moral perfection not necessary. Only prerequisites...

Look at what happened when he called the first Isaiah to be his prophet. In Isaiah 6 nothing is said of Isaiah's qualifications. We don't know whether he was well educated, a charismatic personality, a good speaker, or influential in the circles of power. We don't know whether he was a particularly righteous man or even very spiritual.

Only three things are revealed about his qualifications. First, he was a man who was sensitive to the presence of God. "I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple" (6:1).

Tuned-In

My paternal grandmother could walk across a lawn and, without seeming to be looking for anything in particular, would suddenly stop, bend over and pick up a four-leaf clover. I could cross and recross that same lawn and never find one. I concluded that my grandmother was consciously or unconsciously tuned-in to four-leaf clovers. In much the same way, there are people who are tuned-in to the presence of God. They find him here and there, while the rest of us rush by unseeing and unhearing. I'm not sure these people are necessarily specially-gifted, but rather I believe they focus their attention on what is important. I believe all of us could be tuned-in to God, if we wanted to be. Isaiah was a man tuned-in to God.

Secondly, Isaiah was a repentant man. In the presence of the Holy God of Israel he felt keenly his sinful state; "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (6:5). What God needed was not a righteous man, but a repentant one, for the message of his prophet was to be one of repentance.

Repentance doesn't require any particular gift, only a willingness to recognize that we have missed the mark, that in the presence of God we recognize, as did Isaiah, our unworthiness and desire forgiveness. All of us can and need to hear God say to us, "...your guilt is taken away and your sin forgiven" (6:7). In other words, all of us can meet that qualification, if we will. **Send Me!**

Isaiah's third qualification was his willingness to go where and do what God wanted someone to do. When he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" Isaiah, now freed of his guilt, spoke up: "Here I am! Send me" (6:8). This was a response of faith, for, although Isaiah did not feel qualified, he put his trust in God to supply him with whatever he needed in order to be his prophet. When we take up a task to which God calls us, our acceptance of that task is a mark of our trust in him. We trust that he will equip and empower us as needed.

Correspondingly, when we turn him down or fail even to respond to his call, it means that we do not trust him. We know we are inadequate and we answer on the basis of our inadequacy, not on the basis of God and His grace. It is as if we are saying, Lord, I don't trust you enough to take on this task.

Look at Isaiah, then, and ask whether you are not just as qualified to be God's servant as he was AND...just as obligated to respond to his call.

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