



OPINION

New Era Of Farm Policy

While the details of the 1995 Farm Bill won't be known well into fall, it's likely that the legislation will represent a dramatic change from past policy, says an Ohio State University agricultural economist. More than in any other year, the bill will be driven by budget concerns.

"There will be less tolerance of smoke-and-mirror techniques that appear to cut spending, but actually have little impact," Carl Zulauf says. "The implication is that farm spending will be cut, and the cuts will be real and significant."

Farmers should expect an increase in planting flexibility and a decrease or elimination of income supports, Zulauf says.

A sense of optimism over increased exports to Asia has made it easier to argue that income supports can be eliminated or reduced, especially if they are phased out over many years and the larger cuts are held off until the later years.

Farmers could find setaside programs minimized or eliminated as well. Agribusinesses have persuasively argued that taking U.S. land out of production reduces employment here and helps global competitors.

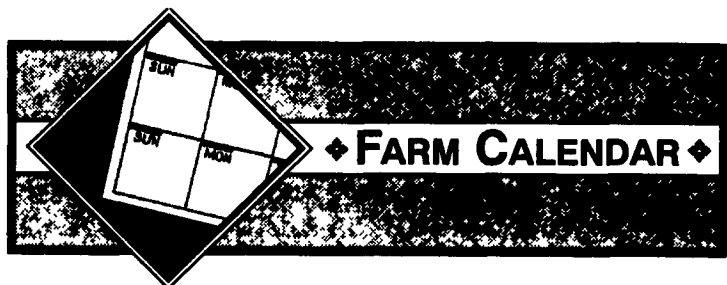
However, farmers could see some sort of farm income safety net included in the legislation. While the form is unclear, leading candidates include subsidized crop insurance, a marketing loan with loan rates tied to a moving average of past prices or a revenue insurance program that combines price and yield risk.

Environmental concerns will continue to weigh heavily in farm bill debate.

While some in the farm community believe that the 1994 Republican landslide means environmental restrictions on agriculture will be reduced, there is no talk of eliminating conservation compliance, conservation reserve, wetland provisions, and sodbuster provisions. The wetlands provisions will probably be weakened, but the basic environmental thrust that emerged in the 1985 farm bill will largely remain intact.

However, change is in the wind. The new farm bill could have a bigger impact on farming than any farm bill in recent memory.

Farmers and agribusinesses should carefully evaluate what the forthcoming policy decisions will mean to them. Short of an economic depression in the U.S. or a major shift in the Chinese government back to self-sufficiency, nothing else is likely to have a greater impact on which farmers and agribusinesses will be in business during the early 21st Century than how they handle the changes enacted in the 1995 farm bill.



Saturday, September 2

Juniata County Fair, Port Royal, thru Sept. 9.

Mon Valley District 4-H Dairy Show, West Alexander Fairgrounds.

Northwest District 4-H Dairy Show, Crawford County Fairgrounds.

Southwest District 4-H Dairy Show, Fulton County Fairgrounds.

Sunday, September 3

Maryland Holstein Futurity, Timonium, Md.

Cambria County Fair, Ebensburg, thru Sept. 9.

Spartansburg Community Fair, Spartansburg, thru Sept. 9.

Monday, September 4

Lancaster Farming office closed.

Ox Hill Community Fair, Home, thru Sept. 9.

West Alexander Fair, West Alexander, thru Sept. 9.

Waterford Community Fair, Waterford, thru Sept. 9.

Tuesday, September 5

Claysburg Farm Show, Claysburg, thru Sept. 9.

Jamestown Community Fair, Jamestown, thru Sept. 9.

Grazing meeting, Bill Callahan Farm, Forest Hill, Union County, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, September 6

Reading Fair Awards Banquet, Fleetwood Grange Hall.

Bellwood-Antis Farm Show, Bellwood, thru Sept. 9.

Luzerne County Fair, Dallas, thru Sept. 10.

New Potato Cultivars For Southeast Pennsylvania, Tim Geiger Farm, Neffs, Lehigh County, 6:30 p.m.

Pa. Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program, Agronomy, Inc., Mercersburg, 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Pa. Plastic Pesticide Container Recycling Program, Chester Horst, Greencastle, 12:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

Thursday, September 7

Pike County Fair, Matamoras, thru Sept. 10.

York Inter-State Fair, York, thru Sept. 16.

Computer Record Keeping Workshop, Uniontown, also Sept. 14.

Ohio Swine Day, DARD's Western Branch, South Charleston, Clark County.

Farm Records Made Easy, Fayette



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Make Quality Corn Silage

The fall harvest season is upon us.

It is a little early, but the heat of the last month has matured corn faster than usual.

The first consideration in making quality corn silage is to insure maximum yield is reached. Corn plants continue to grow and add dry matter content until they reach maturity. Harvesting at maturity will insure the maximum yield possible.

In addition, plant maturity is important in determining what will happen while the crop is in storage. When silage is made from plants which are immature and too green, much of the feeding value may be lost in the seepage which runs out of the silo.

When silage is harvested too dry, storage problems may arise. Harvesting corn silage that is too dry is the number one problem encountered in the production of quality silage.

Dry corn silage is difficult to pack, increasing the amount of air in the silo and slowing the fermentation process. The air also increases the possibility of molds developing in the silage.

To Make Silage At Right Moisture Content

What is the proper moisture content of corn silage and when does the corn plant reach that stage of development?

The proper moisture content for corn silage depends on the type of structure it will be stored in. Bunker or pit silos store corn silage best when the moisture level is between 65 and 70 percent.

For conventional upright silos, the moisture content should be between 63 and 68 percent and for oxygen-limited silos the moisture content should be between 50 and 60 percent.

The corn kernel itself is usually a good indicator of whole plant moisture. When the kernel reaches full dent, the whole plant moisture is around 74 percent; at half milk stage, the whole plant moisture is near 68 percent; at quarter milk stage, moisture content is near 64 percent; and when no milk exists, moisture content is near 61 percent.

The corn kernel dries from the crown downward, not from the cob outward. To check for the milk line, break a few cobs in half and examine the side opposite the germ.

County Fairgrounds, Dunbar, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., also Sept. 14.

Friday, September 8

39th Annual Thurmont and

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However, the best way to check moisture content is to chop several stalks from the field and check moisture using a scale and drying apparatus. Hot, dry weather will often cause the plant to be drier than is normal when using kernel moisture content.

To Be Aware Of Silo Gas

With silo filling comes the hidden danger of silo gas.

Silo gas is formed by the natural fermentation of chopped forages in the silo. In a conventional upright silo, nitrogen dioxide is the major gas formed. 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 two weeks it is unlikely that any more gas will be found but some could 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. Although death may occur immediately, a farmer could breathe the gas without any immediate serious symptoms and then die in his sleep hours later from fluid collecting in his lungs.

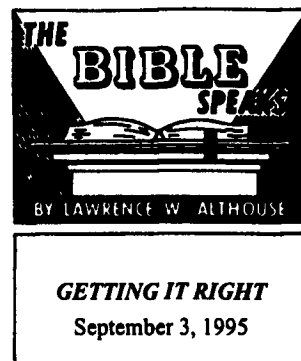
Many victims have relapses one to two weeks after the initial exposure, with symptoms similar to pneumonia.

If you are exposed to the gas, it is critical that you seek medical attention!

Ideally, everyone should avoid the silo during the critical period when gases are forming. Since this is not always possible, it is best to use a self-contained breathing apparatus when entering during the danger period. This is the only breathing device that is certain to protect you from all silo gases. Dust masks and chemical cartridge respirators do not provide sufficient protection.

Also, make sure silo is well ventilated before entering, especially around the base of the silo.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Excellence can be yours if you do not major in minor things."



Background Scripture:

Acts 1

Devotional Reading:

Acts 1:21-26

Just because the disciples walked daily with Jesus, experienced His betrayal, trial, death, resurrection, and the ascension of Christ doesn't mean that they were now fully enlightened. Unfortunately, they still didn't really understand what it meant to follow Jesus.

We see this in the ascension when they question Jesus, "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" (1:6). Surely they should have understood by now that he had not come to re-establish the temporal kingdom of Israel. Nevertheless, the risen Christ is gentle with his reply: "It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has fixed..." (1:7).

We can be sympathetic, for we, like them, often want God to spell out in advance for us "the times and the seasons" of his will. But God does not give us the long-range view, just the short-range view: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses..." (1:8). Do the job God gives you and leave to him the future course.

IN THE WRONG PLACE

When Jesus ascended, once again they demonstrated that they did not really understand. "And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven'" (1:11). Do you recall the resurrection day experience in Luke 24:5? "While they were perplexed by this, behold, two men stood by them in dazzling apparel: ... 'Why do you seek the living among the dead?' " (Luke 24:5).

So, once again, the disciples were looking for the risen Christ in the

wrong place. Just like us.

Jesus plainly told them what their role was to be: "...you shall be my witnesses..." (1:8). Some of the disciples didn't understand what Christ wanted of them. Note, Christ did not say he wanted them to be his defenders, but his witnesses. There is a big difference between these two roles and a lot of us today still don't seem to be getting it right. We think of ourselves as Christ's defenders — as if Christ cannot defend himself or that we could do that for him. It is arrogant for us to think that Christ needs us to do that. We don't have to go to battle for him, grapple with his opponents, and stifle those who do not accept him. Christ is quite able to defend himself.

DEEDS, NOT DEFENSES

What he wants from us is witness — to simply share with others what Christ has done for us. If we are not eloquent or gifted with words, we can witness best through our acts of compassion and deeds of love. The best way to defend Christ is not to defeat his enemies, but to demonstrate his love through our own lives. I suspect that many of us end up defending Christ instead of witnessing; is that because defending is perhaps more fun. Human beings love conflict. But witnessing is what we're called to do.

The disciples also had trouble understanding power. They wanted temporal power — "Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" — But the power Christ offered them was spiritual power, the power of the Holy Spirit. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you..." Unfortunately, what many of us prefer is temporal power, the power to compel others to do what we think is right. But what he offers us is the power to be his witnesses, the power to inspire others to follow Christ.

There is still a big difference. Isn't it time we got it right?

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