



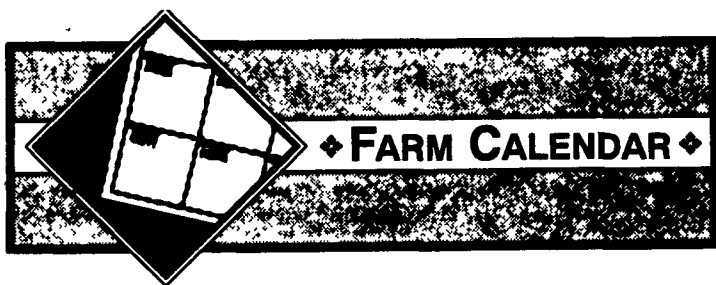
OPINION

The Organic Danger

Relying on seemingly "benign" organic and other lower-yielding agricultural practices has been the sustainability solution offered by many, especially by environmental organizations. There is, however, considerable reason to question the sustainability of these systems on any large scale. If fears of pesticide and fertilizer impact push us toward lower-yielding alternatives, they will create a far greater threat from the plow to the ecosystems and wild creatures. Despite their advocates' claims of comparable yields, organic agriculture's yields per acre are sharply lower than mainstream yields when we include all the extra acres needed to sustain it: additional pasture acres for animal manure, cropland acres for "green manure," and cropland in nonyielding fallow periods.

Because these systems need more land to produce a given amount of food, adopting them globally would require farmers to convert large tracts of forests and other "suitable" wild lands to agriculture. Estimates of the land area necessary to meet demand in 2050 using strictly organic principles range as high as 25 to 35 million square miles worldwide, rather than the current 5.8 million square miles now in crop production.

Considering the possible changes to local, regional, and global climates and the inevitable decrease in biodiversity, the sustainability of these approaches is seriously in doubt. Even their rationality is highly questionable. — Dennis and Alex Avery in the May 1996 Hudson Briefing Paper.



Saturday, May 11
22nd Annual Western Pa. Sheep And Club Lamb Sale, Mercer County 4-H Park, Mercer, 6 p.m.

Sunday, May 12
Happy Mother's Day!

Monday, May 13
Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Tuesday, May 14

Wednesday, May 15

Thursday, May 16
Pa. Fair at Philadelphia Park, thru May 27.

Friday, May 17
Blue Ridge Open Sheep Dog Trial, Sunnybrook Farm, White Post, Va., thru May 19.
Responsible Use of Animals Conference, DoubleTree Hotel, Middletown, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 18
Berks County dairy princess pageant, Ag Center, Leesport, 6:15 p.m.

Sunday, May 19

Monday, May 20
Lehigh Valley Horse Council meeting, Snyder'sville, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 21

Wednesday, May 22

Thursday, May 23
Lebanon County Weed Identification meeting, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Lancaster County Farm Service Agency Farm Bill meeting, Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, May 24
1996 Atlantic National Roll of Victory (ROV) Angus Show, Maryland State Fairgrounds,

Timonium, thru May 26.

Saturday, May 25
Handicapped Riders Event of the Devon Horse Show Riding and Driving Classes, Thorncroft Equestrian Center, Malvern.

Sunday, May 26
Championship Class and Awards Ceremony, Handicapped Riders Event of the Devon Horse Show, Devon Horse Show Grounds, Devon.

Monday, May 27
Memorial Day
Lancaster Farming office closed.

Tuesday, May 28

Wednesday, May 29

Thursday, May 30
Cream Ridge Twilight Fruit Growers meeting and strawberry breeding showcase, Rutgers Fruit Research and Extension Center, Cream Ridge, N.J.
Philadelphia County Fair, thru June 9.

Friday, May 31

Saturday, June 1

Sunday, June 2

Monday, June 3
15th Annual Md. 4-H Calf Tournament, Piney Branch Golf and Country Club, Hamstead.

Tuesday, June 4

Wednesday, June 5

Thursday, June 6

Friday, June 7

Saturday, June 8

Sunday, June 9
Horse Trials, Beginner Through Open Novice, Thorncroft Equestrian Center, Malvern.

Monday, June 10
Poultry Management and Health



Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Register Water Use

Here's an update from last week's article on registering water use with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The May 11, 1996 deadline is for non-farm use of water. Farmers using more than 10,000 gallons of water per day in the Susquehanna River Basin must register their use by March 31, 1997 with the Susquehanna River Basin Commission (SRBC).

DEP is responsible for registering non-farm use while the SRBC is registering farm use. There is no charge for registering your use with the SRBC.

The Susquehanna River Basin Compact gives the commission responsibility for managing the water resources of the basin. The primary purpose for managing the water resources is to assure that the needs of all basin water users are met.

Through the registration program, SRBC will be able to document current daily water needs of users, which should put users in a stronger legal position should conflicts occur. Forms may be obtained from the SRBC, 1721 North Front Street, Harrisburg PA 17102, (717) 238-0423.

To Plan Safety Breaks

With spring work finally getting under way, it is easy to forget how much time has passed when you are working alone in the fields. Results from long hours in the tractor seat may include a painful sunburn, ringing ears, or aching back.

Remember to take a break and to keep in touch to prevent accidents. Use a buddy system.

Farm work is often isolated. If

Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Tuesday, June 11
Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, current research projects, Hibshman Homestead Research Farm, 7:30 p.m.
Pequea-Mill Creek Project Field Day, begins at Gideon Fisher Farm, Intercourse, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.
FFA State Activities Week, University Park, thru June 13.

Wednesday, June 12

Thursday, June 13
AFGC Annual Conference, Delta Pacific Hotel, Vancouver, Canada.
Open Spaces Alternative Landscapes Workshop, Swarthmore College.

Friday, June 14
Delmarva Chicken Festival and Delmarva Chicken Cooking Contest, Salisbury, Md., thru June 16.

an accident occurs, it could be hours before you are discovered. When you are doing fieldwork, make sure some one else knows where you are working and when you will return. Set check-in times if you will be working in an area where you cannot be seen.

Keep in touch with a cellular phone or CB radio. Take a break. Most tractors are noisy and many seats do not provide proper back support.

To avoid hearing damage and back strain, wear hearing protection and every two hours get off the tractor, walk around, and stretch.

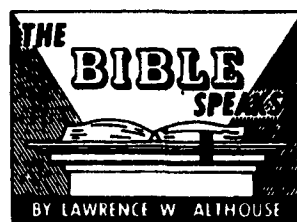
Drink plenty of water to prevent dehydration. Cover up and use sunscreen to protect against sunburn and skin cancer.

To Apply For Farm Safety Grant
The final guidelines for the

statewide farm safety grant program were approved. The application is now available from the Farm Safety and Occupational Health Grant Program, Department of Agriculture, 2301 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg PA 17110, (717) 787-4843. The deadline to apply for a grant this year is June 14.

The grant program will award up to \$2,500 to farm organizations, youth groups, volunteer fire companies, ambulance services, rescue squads, etc. that wish to develop and deliver farm safety and occupational health and emergency response programs. The guidelines for the program were published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on March 16, 1996.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote:
"With courage, every fear can be overcome, every goal can be attained."



ON 'GETTING EVEN'
May 12, 1996

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Background Scripture:
Matthew 5:1-38

Devotional Reading:
Luke 10:24-37

A Kansan said that when he was a young man growing up on the farm, he became very much offended by a neighbor living on an adjoining farm. To get even, he got some Johnson grass seed — a very obnoxious grass that is extremely difficult to get rid of — and it secretly sowed it on his neighbor's farm, which was much damaged by it. Later, however, the young man fell in love with his neighbor's daughter and they were married. When the neighbor died, it was found that he had willed the farm to his daughter. For thirty years the teller of the story said he'd been fighting that Johnson grass, reaping what he had sown.

There is probably no Christian teaching harder for us to grasp than the fact that, no matter how much we hurt others with our negative, destructive emotions and acts, we hurt ourselves as well, often much more. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that "The dice of God are always loaded. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. The thief steals from himself. The swindler swindles himself." And I would add, *The avenger brings retribution upon himself.* In striving to get even, we are always putting ourselves behind.

GOD'S JOB
One of the reasons it is so hard for us to embrace Jesus' admonition to "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (5:44), is that we are much more predisposed to what society tells us: "Don't get mad; get even." Perhaps it wouldn't be such bad advice if, in fact, one could ever "get even." But Jesus tells us again and again that putting things "even" is God's job, not ours. Our problem is that we always want to be doing God's job for him. Is it that we think he can't, won't do it? Or that he won't do it to our satisfaction or with our sense of timing?

It's strange how often I hear so-called "religious people" or "Christians" reciting, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" (5:38). The concept of controlled retaliation comes from Exodus 21, Leviticus 24 and Deuteronomy 19. But these same people ignore the words of Jesus that follow: "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your father who is in heaven" (5:45). If we need a teaching here, let us recall the words of Jesus: "for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." And, if we need a model, let us remember Jesus' own example as he hung on the cross: "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

THE WAY OF VENDETTA

Nevertheless, that example and teaching is not very popular today. Vindication is "in" and forgiving is not. Vindication comes from the Latin *vindex* and *vindicare* which evolved in our English language to *vindicate*, *avenge*, *revenge*, *vengeance*, and *vindictive*. In Italian it became the basis for *vendetta*, vengeance as a way of life. All of these are negative concepts and they tear down the moral fiber of the individual and society. Only forgiveness can heal. That makes forgiveness infinitely more powerful than vengeance.

I opened with a story and I will also close with one. The Norwegian writer Johan Bojer tells of a man whose child was killed by a neighbor's dog. Instead of giving in to revenge, the man found a better way to relieve the agony of his heart. When a famine came and his neighbor's fields lay bare, the troubled father went out one night and sowed the neighbor's field, explaining: "I went and sowed seed in my enemy's field that God might exist."

The Althouses will lead a group to the Holy Land, Oct. 9 to Nov. 3, 1996. Space limited. For information, write them at 4412 Shenandoah Ave., Dallas, TX 75205.

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