



OPINION

Dr. Alter Seems Good Choice

Some ways for two people to hold arms together to maintain a solid connection are better than others.

The best ways allow the link to be strong when it's stressed. It's much more than a handshake grip.

Penn State University seems to have found one of the best ways of maintaining its arm-link with the rest of the Pennsylvania community in naming Dr. Theodore R. Alter to serve as interim dean of its College of Agricultural Sciences.

While the university is to continue its national search for a permanent dean, we are confident that Dr. Alter will be doing more than maintaining control of college spending until a new administrator comes along to get programs moving.

Alter succeeds James Starling as interim dean, who actually extended retirement plans to help the college until a permanent dean could be selected.

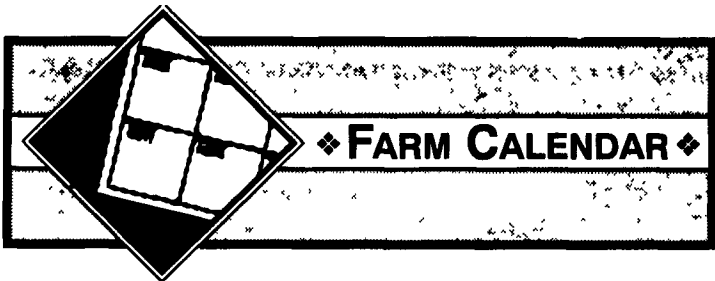
Starling's tenure since January has been much appreciated. Effective July 1, he is moving on, however, and with the agenda of change promised by University Dean James Spanier—especially with the outlook of expanding the reach of extension into other colleges within the university and with changes in programming promised for many of its satellite campuses—Alter seems well qualified and prepared to lead.

He has a solid background in serving and administering a spectrum of Penn State Extension programs and his academic specialization in economics and rural sociology would seem to give him the outlook and scope of understanding that the college and the community needs.

Colleges are more than places to prepare for a specific job in an established industry—they are places where the ideas that drive tomorrow's established industries are born, and the places where minds are opened and hope is nurtured.

Alter's expected term of one year, or until a new dean is identified through the national search, is perhaps one of the most critical.

While the state's lawmakers are currently dealing with issues that will affect Penn State's future and how it changes—including a budget—Alter seems a solid choice to allow the college and the university to maintain its interlocking grasp of mutual support with the Pennsylvania community through this anticipated walk together into the future.



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, June 22

National Holstein Convention, Fort Worth, Texas, thru June 25.

Perry County dairy princess pageant, Perry County Cooperative Extension, 8 p.m.

SUN Area dairy princess pageant, Susquehanna Valley Mall, Selinsgrove, 7 p.m.

Hickory Ridge Antique Farm Show, Horace Potter residence, Milford, Del., thru June 23.

Clearfield County dairy princess pageant, Civic Center, Curwensville.

Sunday, June 23

Portable milking system demonstration, Dan Delp dairy farm, Whiteford, Md., 1 p.m.

Monday, June 24

4-H Ambassador Conference, Penn State, thru June 26.

Holstein Association USA Annual Convention, Radisson Plaza Hotel Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas, thru June 25.

1996 Guernsey National Convention Sale, Baltimore, Md.

Southern Alleghenies 4-H Camp, Camp Blue Diamond, Petersburg, thru June 27.

Intensive Grazing on Pa. Dairy Farm Tour, Tom Williams Farm, Middletown, 10 a.m.-noon.

Tuesday, June 25

Schnecksville Community Fair,

Schnecksville, thru June 29. Mercer County dairy princess pageant, Leslie L. Firth Ed. Center, Mercer, 7 p.m.

Lancaster County FFA Hog Show, Manheim Farm Show grounds, show 10 a.m., sale 6 p.m.

Wednesday, June 26

DEP Ag Advisors board meeting, Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, 10 a.m.

Frederick County, Md. Pasture Walk, John and Julie Mayer, Taneytown, Md., 10 a.m.-noon.

Intensive Grazing Field Day, J. Harold Fritz Farm, Bridgeport, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

1996 PCC/PSU Summer Institute, Shippensburg University, awards luncheon, 12:30 p.m.

EPA meeting on federal standards to protect farm workers, Biglerville High School, 7 p.m.

Thursday, June 27

Pasture Walk, Daniel Stoltzfus Farm, Bird In Hand, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Soil Health and Renewability Seminar, Bloomsburg University, Bloomsburg, 9:15 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Jefferson County Holstein twilight meeting, South Oak Farm, Reynoldsville, 8 p.m.

IPM meeting, Kevin Potter Farm, Wyalusing, 9 a.m.-noon.

Weed Science Field Day, Wye Research and Education Cen-

Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Beware Of Poisonous Plants

According to Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, a number of toxic plants grow naturally in our pastures, woodlands, and wastelands.

Others we plant as ornamentals. Fortunately, animals have the good sense to avoid many of these plants.

As we approach the hot, dry days of summer, pasture growth slows down and feed becomes more scarce. This may force animals to consume some of these toxic plants in an effort to satisfy their hunger.

The following practices may help reduce the risk of poisoning:

- Never allow pastured animals to become hungry. If necessary, offer them some hay or silage to supplement the feed they receive from pastures.

- Fence animals away from wild cherry trees. Pick up broken wild cherry limbs immediately. Wilted wild cherry leaves are very toxic to animals.

- Do not throw clippings from shrubs and flowers into the pasture. Many of these clippings, especially yews, are very toxic.

- Do not graze sudan grass or sorghum/sudan hybrids until they are about 18 inches tall or when they have been stressed by drought, hail, frost, etc. Under these conditions, prussic acid levels may be dangerously high.

To Space Fence Wires Properly

For effective animal control, wire spacing is more important than fence height, reports Chester Hughes, extension livestock agent.

More animals go through and under fences than over them. Proper wire spacing makes your fences more effective.

Regardless of how many wires your fence has, always position one wire at the shoulder height of the animal to be controlled. This is the "nose wire" that your animals see and touch when they approach the fence.

Other fence wires should be spaced according to the type of animal: 10 to 12 inches apart for cattle and horses and 6 to 8 inches apart for sheep and goats. The bottom wires should be closer together than the top wires.

Fences taller than 48 inches are not really necessary. In many countries, livestock fences are sel-

ter, Queenstown, 8:30 a.m.-noon.

Friday, June 28

Butler Fair, thru July 6.

Water Quality Stewardship Field Day, Crooked Acres Dairy, New Hope, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Round Bale Haylage Field Day, Sam Fry Farm, Pennsdale, 10

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dom over 42 inches tall. Electric fences may even be lower, 36 inches for cattle and horses and 30 inches for sheep and goats. Shorter fences also allow closer wire spacing.

To Look For Corn Borer Damage

Dr. Timothy Elkner, extension horticultural agent, reports that corn borer moths have appeared in local blacklight traps.

Now that moths have appeared, females are likely laying egg masses. During this first flight, they are more likely to lay eggs on taller corn plantings which are approaching tasseling stage than on younger stalks.

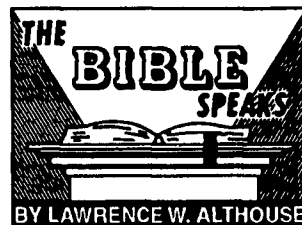
About a week after the first moths appear, you will begin to see the characteristic "shot hole" damage from larval feeding. This feeding damage may be used as a threshold in your decisions concerning sprays for corn borer.

The guidelines we use state that if 15 to 30 percent of the plants have shot hole damage, a spray for corn borer is justified. This spray probably does not specifically affect larvae occurring in the ears at harvest; rather, it prevents early damage to the rest of the plant.

The spray is most effective when directed downward into the whorl. This is where the larvae are most likely to be feeding.

Careful and consistent scouting of sweet corn fields will help determine exactly when control measures for borers are necessary. By comparing scouting information with trap catch data from your area, an accurate estimation of the corn borer population may be made. When the population is low, you may skip sprays and save both time and money.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "With enough determination, goals never before thought possible may be achieved."



SMART, BUT UNWISE
June 23, 1996

Background Scripture:
James 1:5-8, 3:1-5a, 13-18
Devotional Reading:
Job 28:12-18, 23-28

Many, many years ago, someone said to me of something I enthusiastically proposed, "Oh, I agree it's a smart course of action, but is it wise?"

Up until then, I'm not sure that I distinguished one from the other. I had assumed that "smart" and "wise" were pretty much the same thing. But, upon reflection, I realize that I had experienced a number of obviously smart people who were not, in the long run, very wise.

The word "smart" originated as a German word — *schmerz* — that meant "painful." This can be traced back to a common Indo-European word that became *smerdnos* — "terrible" — in Greek and *mordere* — "bit" — in Latin. The word entered the English language in the 11th century and meant "stinging, painful" although today it is used mostly to mean either "clever" or "neat."

UNLIMITED STUPIDITY

Often cleverness carries the connotation of arrogance. It is intelligence with pride that sometimes lives up to its origins and brings us pain. We can be too smart for our own good. The late German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer said, "The good Lord set definite limits on man's wisdom, but set no limits on his stupidity — and that's not fair!"

There is no stupidity like smartness, because it seduces us into thinking too highly of our own intelligence. To put it simply: there are lots of people who profess to have all the answers, but who are actually arrogantly stupid. Wisdom makes us humble, not proud.

That's why James counsels, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness" (3:1). It is an awesome responsibility to assume the role of teacher or preacher. Why? James says, "For we all make many mistakes . . ." (3:2). Note: he says "all." Not "some of us," "those other guys," but "all." So why is it that so many teachers and preachers

(OK — and writers) speak with the aura of those who are never wrong?

James warns us: "So the tongue is a little member and boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by a small fire!" (3:5). Personal conviction of certainty does not make something true. We may be like the judge who one day confessed, "This court is often in error, but never in doubt." Actually, he or she who would teach others must sometimes doubt in their own wisdom.

DOUBLE-MINDED

Christians then must seek to be wise, not smart. And James says: "if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God . . . and it will be given him" (1:5). I have a feeling that James' advice is largely unused. For how can you earnestly ask for what you already think you have? Actually, when we think we're already pretty smart, we end up praying that God will make others wise-translation: agree with us. The double-minded person may pray for wisdom, but fail to receive it because he already thinks he has it.

So, with all these people who claim to have "the truth," how do we know who to believe? James gives us an interesting rule of thumb? "Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good life let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom" (3:13). Not by our clever words, our arresting style, the volume or pitch of our voices, nor the proof-texts we can assemble to make our point, but by the "good life" of Christlike good works that we perform "in the meekness of wisdom."

When in doubt as to what is or is not wisdom, the words of James are instructive: "But the wisdom from above is first pure, than peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity. And the harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace" (3:17,18).

If it doesn't make peace, it isn't wisdom.

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