



OPINION

Don't Poison Your Cows

This may be preaching to the choir. But even farmers sometimes poison their neighbor's cows. At least all farmers should be on the lookout for someone who may unwittingly trim their yew bushes and throw the branches over the fence into the pasture field.

According to Walt Wurster, Chester County extension agent, this happens each year and the results are a dead cow, goat, sheep, or horse. Farm animals like to browse on cuttings from ornamental plants, not realizing that they are extremely poisonous.

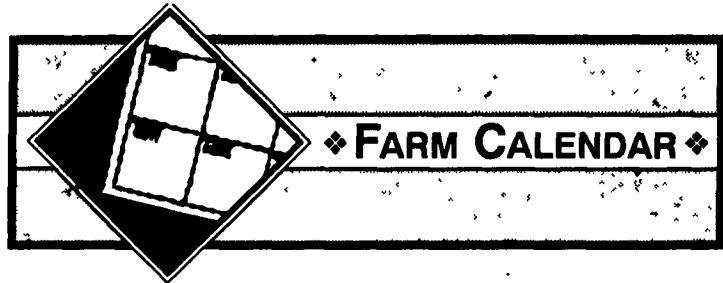
Generally speaking, there are very few native ornamental plants which are not poisonous to some extent. The safest recommendation is to keep all cuttings from ornamentals away from livestock.

All species of yews are very poisonous. The toxic principal, taxine, is extremely powerful and it produces a slow, weak pulse and violent convulsions. They are also especially dangerous for goats and sheep.

The beautiful house plant Oleander that is often set out along the garden fence for the summer is very deadly. Only 0.005 percent of the animal's body weight is enough to kill the animal.

And the broadleaf evergreens such as the laurels, rhododendrons, pieris, and most others in this group will poison domestic animals.

The warning is appropriate for this time of year. Don't poison your neighbor's (or your own) cows or other farm animals.



Saturday, June 29
PYFA Summer Conference and picnic, Leesport Farmers Market.

Clarion-Venango dairy princess pageant, Snyder Valley Farms, Parker, 3 p.m.

Crawford County dairy princess pageant, 1st United Methodist Church, Cambridge Springs, 8 p.m.

Washington County dairy princess pageant, County Fairgrounds, Washington, 6:30 p.m.

Octoraro Creek Nature Walk, meets at Ken Shoemaker's House, Kirkwood, 9 a.m., returns 11:30 a.m.

Sunday, June 30
Md. Organic Food and Farming Association annual summer social, Ecofarms, Lanham, Md., 2 p.m.-6 p.m.

Monday, July 1
Forage Day, Sterrett Farm, Venango County, 1 p.m.

Tuesday, July 2
Ohio Hay and Pasture Day, OARDC's Southern Branch, Ripley.

Wolfe's Corners Fair, thru July 6. Dairy Farm Tour To Clarion County, Fayette/Westmoreland counties.

Herbicide Demonstration Twilight meeting, Alum Rock Rd., New Park, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, July 3

Thursday, July 4
Independence Day
Lancaster Farming office closed.

Friday, July 5

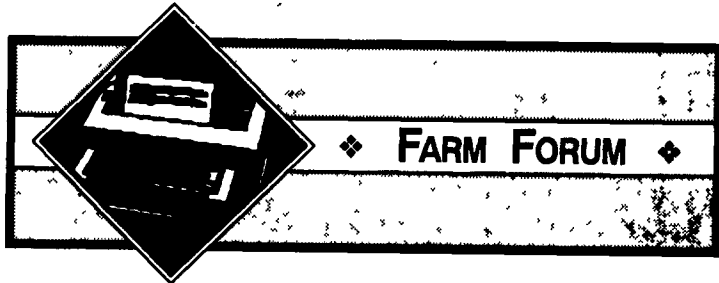
Saturday, July 6

Annual Pa. Ayrshire Association picnic, Locust Lane Farm, Rome, noon.

Sullivan County Rodeo, Sullivan County Fairgrounds, Forksville, 8 p.m.

Sunday, July 7
Ephrata Area Young Farmers picnic, Ephrata Community Park, 12:30 p.m.-3 p.m.

Monday, July 8
Pa. Junior Holstein Judging Schools, Beaver/Lawrence counties host, thru July 9.
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Editor:

In recent weeks much has been said about the Northeast Interstate Dairy Compact. The compact promises to bring higher Class 1 prices to dairy farmers in the six New England states and surrounding states that sell into the Compact area.

With all the fanfare and hype surrounding the Compact it is easy to forget the highly effective programs already in place in Pennsylvania that do far more than just increase the producer price. In Pennsylvania dairy farmers enjoy the benefit of an effective premium program, purchases secured through bonding, audited payments on a monthly basis, and a resale price mechanism which promotes a stable and efficient market.

The Milk Marketing Board mandates a premium on all Class 1 milk, produced, processed and sold in Pennsylvania. At present the premium is at \$0.50 per one hundred pounds of Class 1 milk sold. The premium is adjusted periodically to reflect market conditions, cost of production and



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Practice PTO Safety

Power Take Off (PTO) shafts, perhaps the best known farm hazard, continue to maim and kill people.

Advances in shields and housing have reduced the danger on new equipment. However, thousands of old, modified, and unguarded shafts are used every day on the farm.

When working around PTO shafts, remember these safety rules:

- Keep all shields in place.
- Avoid wearing loose, baggy clothing, drawstrings, and long hair.
- Do not go near engaged PTO shafts.
- Turn off the tractor before working on equipment powered by PTO shafts.

To Evaluate Soybean Stands

Many times soybean farmers are faced with the decision to replant their soybean crop because of poor plant populations.

It is difficult to determine when it is economically feasible to replant soybeans or let the field stand as is.

The University of Delaware conducted a two-year study to look

other factors that may influence the price. Since September of 1981 when the premium program was first in effect Pennsylvania dairy farmers have received more than \$161,000.

The Board requires that payment for Pennsylvania farm milk be guaranteed through a bond. This is why the Board requires a bond for up to 75% of 40 days' purchases of farm milk by processors. Without the protection offered by bonding, hundreds of Pennsylvania dairy farmers would be exposed to undue financial risk. Imagine working hard for months, purchasing raw materials and labor to produce a quality product only to find that the purchaser has resold your product, gone bankrupt, and is unable to pay any of its creditors. In today's competitive business environment, this scenario is far from fantasy.

Each dairy plant receiving Pennsylvania farm milk is monitored closely each month. Payment to producers and the general financial vitality of the dairies is documented to insure that each

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at this issue. Soybeans were planted at the rate of 140,000 plants per acre and then thinned to represent a 25, 50 and 75 percent reduction in the number of plants. These thinned plots were then compared to the yield of fields which were replanted.

Even when the plant population was reduced by 75 percent, the original field outyielded the replanted field for single crop beans.

Double crop beans with large gaps in the row showed an advantage to replanting. Based on this research, it looks like poor stands of soybeans should be left alone rather than replanted.

To File For Fuel Tax Refund

Pennsylvania farmers have until Sept. 30 to apply for refunds on taxes paid on liquid fuels used for agriculture.

Many farmers, however, do not take advantage of this refund. The

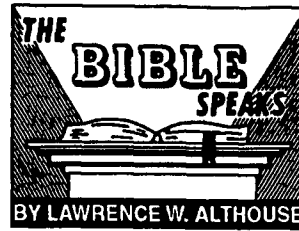
average refund is nearly \$200. The refunds are authorized by a state law that exempts farmers from the 12 cent a gallon state excise tax on fuel used for agriculture.

Each claim must include copies of paid receipts or a statement from the fuel dealer indicating the number of gallons bought, the purchase dates, and verification that the tax was paid.

Farmers who applied for refunds during the past two years were mailed claim forms on June 14. Forms are also available from The Board of Finance and Revenue, Room 500C, Finance Building, Harrisburg PA 17120 or by calling (717) 787-6534.

Refunds will be issued for taxes paid on fuels purchased between July 1, 1995 and June 30, 1996. Fill today so you do not miss the Sept. 30, 1996 deadline.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your mind off your goals."



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE
THE AWFUL NEARNESS
June 30, 1996

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Background Scripture:

James 4: 1-10, 13-17

Devotional Reading:

1 Corinthians 3: 10-15

According to William B. Silverman, the Hasidic rabbi taught: "Everyone must have two pockets, so he can reach into one or the other according to his need. In his right pocket are the words, 'For my sake the world was created,' and the other, 'I am earth and ashes.'"

This ancient saying captures the creative tension in which we must hold our pride and our humility. We must never forget our divine creation or our human failing. Humility tempers our pride and pride elevates our humility.

It is a mistake, I believe, to equate humility with worthlessness. I like the way William L. Sullivan puts it in *Epigrams and Criticisms in Miniature*: "Genuine humility does not arise from our pitiable kinship with the dust that is unworthy of us but from the realization of our awful nearness to a magnificence of which we are unworthy." One cannot be nothing and humble. Humility is possible only when we realize how wonderfully we are created and how fearfully we fail to live up to it.

OUR HUMBLEST HOUR

James M. Barrie, said: "The life of every man is a diary in which he means to write one story and writes another; and his humblest hour is when he compares the volume as it is with what it was meant to be." No life, no matter how successful in worldly terms is ever totally satisfying when we compare it with the life God has willed for us. But, we see that only through humility. As Henry Thoreau puts it, "Humility like darkness reveals the heavenly light." Many people never see that heavenly light because they are too dazzled by their own limited luminosities.

Some people I've known are truly humble; many more have been humbled by life's storms; but I don't know anyone who has sought to be humble. In the popular perception, there's something

seemingly unattractive about humility. It's so...humbling! We all seek recognition in one form or another, but I can't recall ever seeking humility.

Perhaps the problem is that we don't really understand the nature of humility. As I indicated above, some people equate humility with being worthless. It is not. To assume that God has created you worthless is an affront to your Creator. As one of my parishioners informed me many years ago, "God don't make no junk!"

HUMILITY'S ADVANTAGES

James tells us of advantages in humility that may not occur to us. "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (4:6). Arrogant pride is an invitation to God to humble us. God doesn't put down the humble, only the proud. And Grace is love that we don't deserve so it is something the proud person cannot experience. Only the humble person can know and enjoy the grace of God.

"Humble yourselves before the Lord and he will exalt you" (4:10). Only those who approach God in true humility will be exalted by him. The true reward of life is not the recognition which the world gives us, but the exaltation that only God can give. Human pride is set upon a shaky foundation. Winston Churchill was once asked by a pushy lady if it didn't thrill him to realize that people flocked to hear him speak. His answer: "It is quite flattering...but whenever I feel this way I always remember that if instead of making a political speech I was being hanged, the crowd would be twice as big."

Boasting, says James, is arrogance and arrogance is a terrible affront to God. "All such boasting is evil," he writes (4:17). Humility, on the other hand, puts everything—ourselves included—in perspective, helping us to perceive and respond to that "awful nearness" of the "magnificence" of the image in which we were created.

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