



OPINION

Easy To Complain

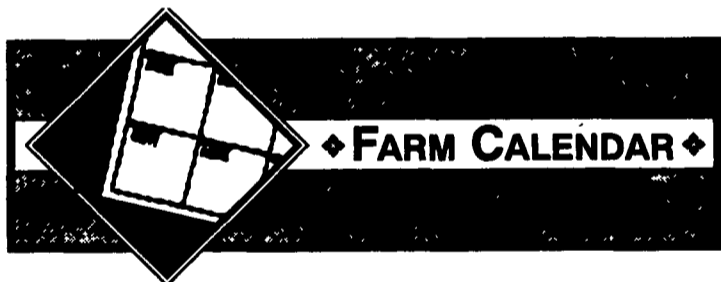
Have you ever noticed how easy it is to complain? And, how hard it is to be objective, upbeat and constructive. Cattle producers, it would seem, can find a lot to complain about today. High grain prices, low fed and feeder cattle prices, negative margins, Canadian imports of fed cattle, Mexican imports of feeder cattle, consolidation in the packing sector, dry weather, wet weather, cold weather, hot weather, fertilizer cost, fuel cost, how much things have changed, why things have not changed, change in general, Democrats, Republicans, BSE, Oprah, low interest rates, high interest rates, tight credit, no credit, the purebred industry, the crossbred industry, the show ring, unethical practices, the past, the present, the future, breed associations, cattle producer associations, associations in general, the cost of dues, bull prices, cull cow prices, cattle buyers, cattle sellers, cattle dealers, the checkoff, beef demand, pork and poultry competition, cholesterol, saturated fat, trimmable fat, intramuscular fat, fat in general, vegetarians, animal rightists, the public sector, the private sector, the government sector, universities and finally, the price of tea in China.

I would be the first to argue the merits of a little "venting" now and then. Unfortunately, with some folks, this is where it ends. They just like being contrary! I must admit that it gets a little old to listen to and you come to anticipate the words each time these individuals begin to pontificate. Never a word of encouragement, a positive take on a situation or any attempt to offer solutions. It is just too easy to complain.

As we move through these difficult times in the cattle industry or through any uncomfortable change, it would seem prudent to focus on the things we can influence at the expense of things out of our control. For instance, as cow/calf producers we could focus on profitability not cost. We can look for ways to add value to our products and gain a competitive edge. We can build strategic alliances and partnerships, not burn bridges. We can articulate our needs for the tools to be competitive and profitable and search them out. We can work cooperatively with universities and allied industries to ensure timely and efficient access to pertinent research, education and information. Or, we can just complain.

Things are sure to get better. They always have. (I think it has something to do with a "cycle!") We can wait and complain or we can act and react. This is the real challenge.

Scott Barao, Extension Livestock Specialist, University of Maryland



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, July 27

Lebanon Area Fair, thru Aug. 2.
Pa. Holstein Southwest Championship Show, Fayette Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 9:30 a.m.
Frederick/Montgomery Ayrshire Field Day, Frederick Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.
Western Md. Guernsey Field Day, Frederick Fairgrounds, 10 a.m.

Sunday, July 28

Potter County Fair, thru Aug. 3.
Mercer County Grange Fair, thru Aug. 3.
National Farm-City Conference, Wyndam Garden Hotel, Annapolis, Md., thru July 30.
Maryland State Grange annual picnic, Ruritan Club Pavilion, Leitersburg, MD, 12:15 p.m.

Monday, July 29

Morrison Cove Dairy Show, thru Aug. 2.
Goshen Country Fair, thru Aug. 3.
Clearfield County Fair, thru Aug. 3.
Northeast Dairy Show, Troy Fairgrounds.

Tuesday, July 30

Ohio Field Crops Day, OARDC's Northwestern Branch, Hoytville.
New Stanton Fair, thru Aug. 3.
Ag Horizons VII Conference, Wildwood Conference Center, Harrisburg Area Community College.

Franklin County Field Day, Lynn and Sue Eberly Farm, Fayetteville, 10:30 a.m.

Fayette County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 9 a.m.

U. of Del. Grain Crop Field Day, Research and Demonstration Area, noon-2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, July 31

York County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, York, 10 a.m.

Rodale Institute Experimental Farm Field Day, Kutztown, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Feeder Cattle Grading Workshop, New Holland Sales Stables, 7:30 p.m.

Pesticide institute at Radisson Hotel, Monroeville.

Thursday, August 1

Turf School, Fort Hunter Park, Harrisburg, 9 a.m.

Octorara Young Farmers Association trip to see Phillies baseball, bus departs ag ed parking lot, 5:45 p.m.

Pa. Holstein Northern Tier Championship Show, Wyoming Fairgrounds, Meshoppen, 9:30 a.m.

Morrison Cove Dairy Show, Memorial Park, Martinsburg, 9 a.m.

South Central Dairy Show, Shippenburg Fairgrounds.
Capitol Summer Turf and Orna-



Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Consider Alternative Feeds

Corn grain is in short supply and expensive. This situation is not likely to change over the next year.

Because of this, many farmers planted more corn this spring and are anxiously waiting this year's barley and wheat crop.

Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, reminds us that barley and wheat are high energy feeds that may replace some of the corn in the ration. Their energy is very soluble, digested very quickly, and causes a rapid increase in acid production in the rumen.

Because of this, barley and wheat should not be slug fed. In other words, they should be fed in small quantities and at frequent intervals so rumen acidosis is not created.

It is also important cows be fed enough soluble protein at the same time. This will allow the cows to more effectively utilize the energy released by the rapid degradation of soluble carbohydrates in the rumen.

To improve the digestibility of small grains, they should be finely ground or rolled. This can create another problem of reduced palatability. However, this problem may be minimized by feeding some coarser feeds or a TMR mix.

When making ration changes, you should consult your nutritionist for advice.

To Deworm Calves

According to Chester Hughes, extension livestock agent, spring born calves which are to be weaned in the fall will, in most cases, respond by being 20 to 40 pounds heavier at weaning if they are given a deworming treatment in July or August or 60 to 90 days prior to weaning.

In most instances, cows do not need to be dewormed, only the calves. Deworming calves will show the greatest response in herds

mental School, Fort Hunter Park, 8:45 a.m.

Friday, August 2

Wayne County Fair, thru Aug. 10.
Lebanon County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Lebanon, 10 a.m.
Berks County 4-H Fair, 4-H and Ag Centers, Leesport.

Southwest District Junior Dairy Show, Morrison Cove Memorial Park, Martinsburg.

Ag Field Day, Western Md. Research and Education Center, Keedysville, Md.

Wheat Threshing, Steam and Gas Engine Show, showgrounds Eastern Shore, Aug. 2-4.

Saturday, August 3

Clinton County Fair, thru Aug. 10.
Greene County Fair, thru Aug. 10.

Lancaster County Conservation Expo, in conjunction with the Shirktown Threshing Festival, Robert Shirk Farm.
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which have first calf heifers and other young cattle grazing with mature cows.

Young cows shed significant numbers of worm eggs while old cows shed very few since they have built up an immunity to internal parasites.

The choice of deworming materials is relatively immaterial. Use the product which suits you best.

To Stay Cool

Dr. Robert Thee, extension housing agent, reminds us there are ways beside using air conditioning to stay cool this summer in our houses. Moving air, no matter how hot, feels cooler.

One of our options in a hot house is to get air circulating with an electric fan. Although floor, table or ceiling fans will help move air, they will not cool the room unless they are bringing in cooler air from somewhere else.

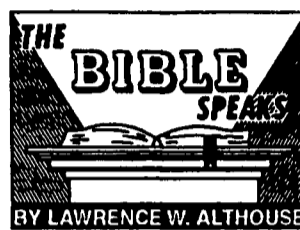
At night, place a window fan in an open window with the fan blowing interior air to the outdoors. On the opposite side of the house, open another window in the room you want to cool.

While forcing the hot indoor air outside, the window fan will actually pull cool night air into the far room. On occasion, an exhaust fan, like those in the kitchen or bathroom, can be used for cooling.

When used to remove humidity in the heat of the day, they will bring hot outside air in to the house. But at night, running the exhaust fan can remove some of the hot air.

Open windows on opposite sides of a room will provide good cross ventilation if you do not have a fan. Keeping draperies or blinds closed during the day will also help keep out the heat from the sun.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "See the invisible, feel the intangible and achieve the impossible."



NO PLACE TO HIDE
July 28, 1996

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Background Scripture:

I Peter 5:6-11

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 121:1-8

Do you remember when you first learned to play "hide and seek?" I remember that I assumed that if my face were hidden, then I was hidden — and I've since observed a lot of children who share the same misconception.

One time I hid behind some suits hanging in a closet. My head was well hidden, but my torso, legs and feet were not hidden at all. I was found out in no time. How strange to think we are hidden, when in reality we are not.

Actually, that's a lesson we need to carry into our adult lives. No matter how hard or cleverly we may try to hide from God, something always gives us away. The problem is not that we don't hide cleverly enough, but that hiding from God is not possible and never has been. I hope God has a sense of humor. How ridiculous we must look, thinking we are well hidden and yet so obvious.

NEVER OUT OF SIGHT

This is what the Psalmist found: "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me" (139:1). Despite our assumptions, God knows us fully and completely. Although we may carefully select the words we use in praying, he knows what is behind those words — and what isn't. Although we do not usually share with him our worst thought and feelings, he knows them just the same. "Thou discernest my thoughts from afar. Thou searchest out my path . . . and art acquainted with all my ways. Even before a work is on my tongue, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether" (139:2-4).

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit?" he asks, "Or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" If I ascend to heaven, thou art there! If I make my bed in Sheol, thou art there" (139:7,8). This last statement must have shocked some of his contemporaries, for the early Israelites believed that in Sheol,

the shadowy, dark place of the dead, there is separation from God. In Psalm 6:5, we read: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in Sheol who can give thee praise?" But the Psalmist of Psalm 139 is saying that even in Sheol, God is there!

NEVER OUT OF HAND

But, just as we are never hidden from God's sight, so we are never hidden from his power. "If I take the wings of morning and dwell in the utter most parts of the sea, even there thy hand shall lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me" (139:9,10). And that's the encouraging part of this discovery. It is frightening to think that we can never hide anything — including ourselves — from God, but it is also comforting to know that we can never be beyond his help. Nor can we ever be so lost in the darkness that he cannot see us. "If I say, 'Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be light,' even the darkness is not dark to thee, the night is bright as the day; for darkness is as light to thee" (139:11,12).

The Psalmist realizes how futile it is to try to hide from God. The Lord not only knows him now, but He knew him before he existed: "Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance; in thy book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them" (139:16). And he will always know him. "When I awake, I am still with thee" (139:18). Whether he meant "awake" from sleep or "awake" from his delusion of being hidden, the result is the same: "I am still with thee."

At last the Psalmist comes to that realization that awaits us all: since we cannot hide anything or ourselves from God, then let us be as open to him as we can: "Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!" (139:23,24). No longer is God the One from whom we cannot hide, but the One whom we invite into our lives at every level.

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Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Steinman Enterprise

Robert G. Campbell General Manager
Everett R. Newwanger Managing Editor

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