



# OPINION

## The Farmer As A Public Relations Specialist

Most farmers don't think of themselves as public relations specialists. And yet one of the greatest needs in our society is to have the good news of agriculture communicated to the general public.

Farm-City Week, November 22-28, is a good time to think about how you can improve relations with your city and urban neighbors. Not only are we dependent upon the people in our communities to buy our products, they provide a variety of important services. Of course, we provide an abundant food supply that takes just 11.4 percent of an average family's income. In addition, 20 percent of all jobs are dependent on agriculture's base in the economy.

The National Farm-City Week originated in 1955. Since then, farm-city programs have expanded to more than 15,000 communities nationwide. Many farm-city councils work throughout the year to strengthen understanding and communication between consumers and producers with activities such as job exchanges, banquets, farm and business tours, poster and photography contests, youth and family exchanges, career days, or commodity festivals.

But the most important event in farm-urban relations comes from individual farmers. Get to know your neighbors. It is easier to talk to people you know if a problem occurs. Wave as you drive by.

Call and alert neighbors not to hang out laundry on days you spread manure. Your own bath towels don't smell very good if they have dried on the line downwind from your own manure spreading operation. Think of what it would be like if this happened and you were not accustomed to the farm smells.

Ask neighbors if they have picnics coming up or other special events that would be disrupted if you spread manure or spray. Treat people the way you want to be treated.

Today, one farmer produces enough food and fiber for 129 people. In Pennsylvania, along with the food processors, farming annually creates \$3.74 billion in cash receipts and \$40 billion in related economic activity. But these fantastic statistics don't mean a hill of beans if your neighbor hates your farming operation.

So do a little public relations work during Farm-City Week. You may find this work enjoyable.



Now Is The Time  
By John Schwartz

Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

### To Celebrate Farm-City Week

November 22-28 is National Farm-City Week.

This is the week we recognize the importance of both farms and cities. Without farms, cities would have no food. Without cities or towns, farmers would have no markets or producers of equipment and supplies needed in agricultural production.

The link between our farmers and urban dwellers is vital to economic opportunity and economic progress throughout the state. Urban and rural residents need to work together to ensure a better quality of life for future generations.

As suburbs continue to grow and replace farmland, there is sometimes a lack of effective communication between rural and urban neighbors.

This would be a good week to stop and visit your neighbors. Stop and talk to them. Take them a gift of your farm production and thank them for being a good neighbor.

A small act of kindness goes a long way in building a good relationship.

### To Know Some Statistics

Pennsylvania has the largest rural population of any state in the nation, along with some of the most productive farms and industries.

She has 51,000 farm families and 2,300 food processing companies. This places her among the top five states nationally in the production of eggs, milk, cheese, ice cream, butter, mushrooms, potato chips, grapes, tart cherries, trout, apples, pears, and Christmas trees.

With \$3.73 billion in annual cash receipts, Pennsylvania's agriculture generates an additional \$40 billion in related economic activity each year. It also creates jobs for 20 percent of our residents.

Agricultural exports are valued at \$431 million annually. With 12

million people, Pennsylvania ranks fifth nationally in population.

The highway system is the fourth largest in the nation. There are 43,000 miles of state highways, 115,000 miles of secondary highways, and 1,567 miles of interstate highways. Our rail system includes more than 60 railroads and 6,000 miles of railways.

With more than 800 airports and six international airports, Pennsylvania ranks fourth in the number of airports nationwide and landing facilities per square mile.

This infrastructure makes it possible for Pennsylvania farmers to market their products to a large segment of the United States, Canada's, and world's population.

### To Protect Venison Quality

Pennsylvania deer season begins soon.

According to Robert Anderson,

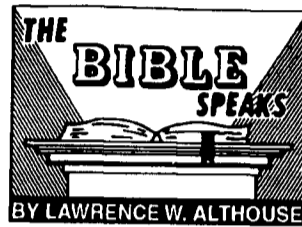
Lancaster County extension agent, the deer hunter needs to remember that venison quality depends on how it is handled.

Preserving carcass quality begins with the right tools and an understanding of what to do after the deer is bagged.

The best quality venison is obtained with proper field dressing. Excessive blood, the digestive tract, and other internal organs should be removed immediately. The body cavity should then be washed with clean water as soon as possible. Any organs being kept should also be washed thoroughly.

Cool the carcass as quickly as possible. Avoid transporting the carcass on the hood of a vehicle where it will warm up. During warm weather, keeping the carcass cool is critical in avoiding meat spoilage.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give."



THE SOUND OF DRY BONES  
November 24, 1996

### Background Scripture:

Ezekiel 37

### Devotional Reading:

Hosea 14:1-9

Have you ever known true despair — even if just momentarily? Have you ever concluded that there was no solution to your problem, no way out of your desperate situation?

If you haven't, I salute you. And maybe even envy you — unless it means that your time is still to come! Few of us escape completely the experience of despair and hopelessness. I am much more an optimist than a pessimist, but there have been times in the dark night of the soul when I have wondered if morning light would even return. In those moments I could say with the exiled people of Judah, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope lost; we are clean cut off" (37:11).

The visionary Valley of the Dry Bones which the Spirit of the Lord shows Ezekiel was quite possibly an actual valley wherein the people of Judah fought the Babylonians and lost, not only the battle, but the kingdom as well. Either literally or figuratively it was a valley strewn with the sun-dried bones of the losers. Actually or symbolically, it was the graveyard of Judah's hopes. A valley of wounded soldiers might still give some hope, but a valley of dry bones holds no promise.

### THE GRAVE OF HOPES

E.L. Allen, writing an exposition on this chapter, asks: "Who among us has not stood at some time or other by the grave of his hopes?" The grave of our hopes may be a home destroyed by natural disaster or a brokenness of human relationships. I may be a career which has come to an abrupt, apparent end or a physical condition that promises only disability and perhaps even death. Or it may be a deep feeling that the very stuff of human vitality has dried up within us and we can no longer meet life's demands.

Sometimes we despair because we wrongly interpret our situation. We may jump to the mistaken conclusion that "All is lost!" when it is not. We may misinterpret the severity of our danger or

the resilience of our resources. But there are times when our despair is justified because we have nothing left with which to struggle but the skeletons of our failures and vicissitudes.

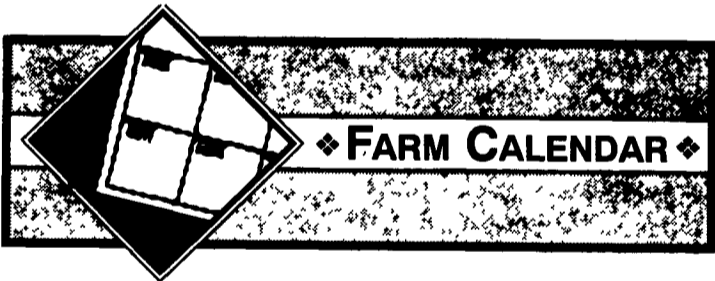
This was the situation that faced the people of Judah. Any realist, even the most optimistic of the lot, would have to agree that there was nothing for which they could hope. Judah and her jewel in the crown, Jerusalem, was a stone-cold memory, nothing more — at least from a very human point of view. This is what Ezekiel saw in the valley, nothing but dry bones! And the writer tells us "and lo, they were very dry" (37:3).

### CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

I would like to know what Ezekiel thought and felt when God asked this ominous question: "Son of man, can these bones live?" He knew that there was no way humanly possible for these bones to live again. Yet, he also knew the Lord and must have wondered whether God was going to do something spectacular. His answer is guarded and open-ended, "O Lord God, thou knowest."

His answer of possibility is just enough an opening of the door through which God can accomplish his mighty act. It appears that this is something in which he needs Ezekiel's compliance. "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, O dry bones, hear the word of the Lord" (37:5). The prophet is no mere spectator to the miracle of rebirth, but the agent through which it takes place. So long as there is a prophet willing to speak for God and dry bones ready to listen, there is nothing for God which is impossible. "So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise . . ." — the sound of the dry bones taking on sinew and flesh and finally breath, a whole people rising up from the grave.

When we obey God's command, the spirit breathes into us a miraculous new life and breath and those dry bones can live again. That and that only is the ground of our hope.



### Saturday, November 23

Dauphin County Holstein Club Annual Meeting, Western Sizzlin Steakhouse, Harrisburg, noon.

Susquehanna County Farm-City Feast, Mountain View High School, 7 p.m.

### Sunday, November 24

### Monday, November 25

Lehigh Valley Horse Council meeting, Community Room, Whitehall Mall, 7:30 p.m.

Milk Marketing Meeting, Double Tree Hotel, Pittsburgh, 2 p.m. and Nov. 26, noon.

Frederick County Walk-A-Bout, Grossnickle Farm, Inc., Walkersville, 10 a.m.-noon.

### Tuesday, November 26

Lancaster Chamber Ag Industry Banquet, Holiday Inn, Lancaster Host Resort, 5:30 p.m.

Statewide Dairy Organizational Meeting, New Midway Fire Hall, Woodsboro Pike, Md., 10 a.m.

Susquehanna River Basin Commission meeting, Radisson Penn Harris, Camp Hill, 9 a.m.

Del. State Grange delegates meeting, Capital Grange Hall, Dover, Del., 7:30 p.m.

### Wednesday, November 27

### Thursday, November 28

Thanksgiving Day

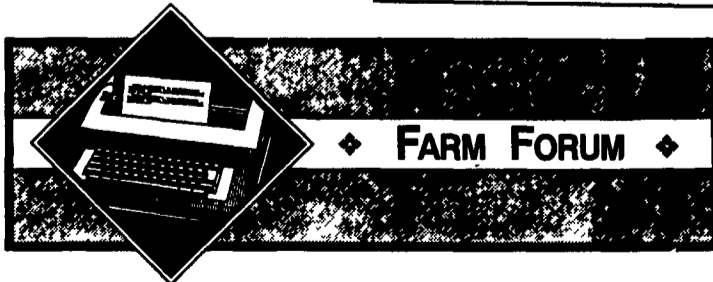
### Friday, November 29

### Saturday, November 30

### Sunday, December 1

### Monday, December 2

N.Y. Farm Bureau Convention,  
(Turn to Page A31)



### Editor:

Re: Opinion column Nov. 9, 1996.

Yes, \$10 to \$20 for a 100 lb. veal calf is not very much. But what is there? As I see it, just a pile of slime! Many umbilical cords are still wet-looking as the calf goes through the auction ring. Is it any wonder the consumer is turned off? I sure am! Re: your last sentence.

When I was growing up on a

small farm some 55 years ago, our calves were milk fed (not milk-replacer) for six weeks and would weight out in the range of 190 to 225 pounds.

Can't you just imagine the nice veal steaks from such an animal versus the present day ground up slime mixed with whatever filler, so called veal cutlet?

Can it be said today that a calf is just a necessary evil in order to pro-

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