



OPINION

Freedom To Farm

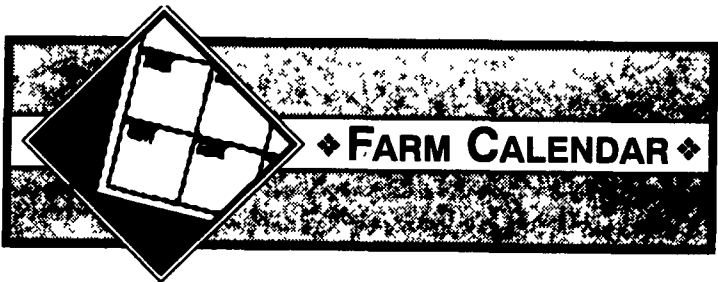
This week on Thursday we again gathered with family and friends to be thankful for our blessings in America. These blessings are many and could not be totally chronicled in one short editorial. But certainly freedom to express opinions and religious beliefs would be on the list. And so would the bountiful food supply we enjoyed on our national dinner table.

Along with a good place to rear the family, farmers have traditionally looked at their family farms as part of destiny's obligation to feed the peoples of the world. Many farmers will tell you it is their "God-given responsibility." And modern technology that came to us from the sciences and from a lot of agricultural research helps farmers fulfill their destiny.

Today we seem to be backtracking in our belief that human life is as important as our Christian/Judaic faith would dictate. Emphasis is being placed on environmentalism to the extreme so that this is more important than the call to provide food for hungry people.

But we are thankful for the farmers who have undertaken the task of feeding us. Not only have they provided us with enough to feed our nation, the resulting commerce provides jobs for 20 percent of the people as well. In addition, the export of agricultural products is one of the bright spots in the many balance of trade deficits with other countries.

Let's continue to give farmers the freedom to farm so we can remain the great nation we have become. Let's continue to support them with environmental regulations that allow them to make a living while they are fulfilling their destiny.



- Saturday, November 30
- Sunday, December 1
- Monday, December 2
N.Y. Farm Bureau Convention, Holiday Inn-Genesee Plaza, Rochester, N.Y., thru Dec. 5.
- Tuesday, December 3
Del. State Grange Annual Session, Capital Grange Hall, Dover, Del., thru Dec. 4.
- Wednesday, December 4
Maryland Small Farm Cooperative Kickoff, Jefferson, Md. Community Center, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, December 5
1996 Va.-N.C. Shepherds Symposium, VPI, Blacksburg, Va. New Bolton Center public lectures, poisonous plants, respiratory disease, Kennett Square, 7 p.m.
- Friday, December 6
Tulpehocken Young Farmer Family Night, Tulpehocken High School cafeteria, 7:15 p.m.
- Saturday, December 7
Ohio Shepherd's Symposium, Ramada University Hotel and Convention Center, Columbus, Ohio.
- Sunday, December 8
Forum On Goat Production, Maryland Patuxent 4-H Center, Upper Marlboro, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Monday, December 9
Winter Agronomy, Seed Booking and Pesticide Update Workshop, Fayette and Washington counties, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, December 10
Lehigh County Holstein annual meeting, Bake Oven Inn, Germansville, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 11
Solanco Young Farmers, All

- About Chain Saws, Solanco High-School.
- ADADC Dist. 21 meeting, Timberwolf Restaurant, Darien Center, N.Y., noon.
- Lancaster DHIA's banquet and annual meeting, Good 'N Plenty Restaurant, Smoketown, 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 11
MACE poultry biosecurity meeting, U. of Del.
- Animal Agriculture and the Environment, Rochester Marriott Thruway Hotel, Rochester, N.Y.
- New York Dairy Bus Tour, Mercer County Cooperative Extension, leaves 6:15 a.m.
- Lebanon Farm-City Banquet, Lebanon Valley Expo Center, 7 p.m.
- Thursday, December 12
Pa. Seedsmen's Association annual meeting, Eden Resort Inn and Conference Center, Lancaster, 9:30 a.m.
- Lancaster County: The Next Los Angeles? Part II, Town Meeting, Farm and Home Center, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
- Commercial Vegetable and Berry Growers Seminar, Days Inn, Butler, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Friday, December 13
- Saturday, December 14
- Sunday, December 15
- Monday, December 16
- Tuesday, December 17
Comfortable and Productive Tie Stall Barns, Leola Family Restaurant, Lancaster, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 18
DEP Ag Advisory Board meeting,



Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Clean Sprayer

According to Robert Anderson, extension agronomy agent, your crop sprayer should be cleaned and winterized the last time it is used for the season.

Alfalfa growers may want to wait until the winter annual weed control program is done. If those sprays will be delayed too much longer, protection of the sprayer parts from freezing is advisable.

A gallon or two of RV antifreeze will do an excellent job. To clean a sprayer, mix a sudsy detergent solution using 1/4 pound of powder or equivalent amount of liquid detergent for each 25 gallons of water. Run this solution through the sprayer, washing all internal parts. If a hormone-type herbicide such as 2,4-D, Banvel, etc. was used, add one quart of ammonia or 1/2 pound of activated charcoal for each 25 gallons of water.

After cleaning the sprayer, it needs to be protected from freezing. Run RV type antifreeze solution in the sprayer. Automotive types of antifreeze will do the job but may cause environmental problems if spilled or when the sprayer is used next spring.

Remember to protect the environment by properly disposing of sprayer wash water.

To Prevent BVD Infections

Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, reports one disease of concern to dairy farmers is bovine virus diarrhea (BVD).

Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, 10 a.m. LanChester Pork Producers Pork Forum, Weaver's Market, Adamstown, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Thursday, December 19
Farming For the Long Run, 3-part meeting on improving crop profitability, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, also Jan. 9 and Jan. 16.

Friday, December 20

Saturday, December 21

Sunday, December 22



Editor,
Yes, milk is essential — but minimum retail milk prices are not (Nov. 2, 1996 editorial "People Must Decide If Milk Is Essential"). Pennsylvania exports about 40 percent of its milk (concern about enough milk does not apply here). A free market for retail milk prices exists in 47 other states (including all the top milk producing states except Pennsylvania).

(Turn to Page A37)

BVD is a complex disease that is contagious and produces a variety of symptoms. These include death, abortions, and reproductive problems.

Infected cows may appear normal but have depressed immune systems. They may not recover well from other diseases, respond well to treatments, and may be poor performers. Some of these infected, normal-appearing cattle are shedders of infectious organisms. They are a threat to the health of other cows in the herd.

Maintaining a closed herd and practicing good biosecurity to minimize exposure risks are very important. If you do purchase cattle, protect the resident herd and incoming cattle from each other.

To Vaccinate For BVD

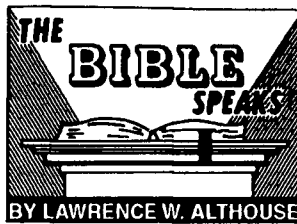
One of the best ways to protect the herd from BVD is with a well-designed and properly implemented vaccination program. You may use a modified live or killed

virus vaccine. Consult your veterinarian for advice.

It is important to follow the recommendations precisely. Be sure to administer the two shots when recommended. If you do not do this, you are simply wasting money on vaccines that are doing you no good. Worse yet, you live with the false security that the herd is protected, when in fact it is not. Thus, the herd is a sitting duck for infection.

If you buy cattle, use a well-planned vaccination program before commingling the cattle. Do not trust the vaccines the purchased cattle reportedly received unless you know for sure how they were administered. They could have been administered improperly. If you are not sure, consult your veterinarian about the merits of vaccinating them again.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Reflect upon your present blessings, of which everyone has plenty; not on your past misfortunes of which all people have some."



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL
December 1, 1996

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Background Scripture:
Luke 1:5-25, 57-80
Devotional Reading:
Luke 1:18-24

Angels are "in" right now, as far as the publishing market is concerned. A few years ago when the first angels books began to appear in the stores, I would never have dreamed there would be so many different titles and this much public interest. Nor would I have thought that the current popular CBS television series, "Touched By An Angel," would be so popular. Lots of people seem very open to these heavenly "Messengers" from God.

The story of the birth of Jesus begins when Zechariah is touched by an angel while he is serving his turn as priest in the temple. We do not know much about Zechariah, except that his priesthood is in the division of Abijah and he is married to Elizabeth, a woman from the priestly family of Aaron. So, they both came from priestly families and they both were righteous, living exemplary lives.

But righteousness was not enough. Something was greatly missing from their lives: "But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years" (1:7). In biblical times, barrenness was regarded as a divine reproach and sterility was always blamed on the woman! Zechariah and Elizabeth apparently had become used to living with the pain of reproach. (What is it that you have had to become used to in your life?)

HE WAS TROUBLED

Maybe that is why Zechariah, instead of rejoicing, "Was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him" (1:12). Despite years of praying, Zechariah seems unprepared to believe that his prayer will be answered, but the angel's message is very clear: (1) don't be afraid; (2) your prayer has been heard (in fact, Zechariah's name means "the Lord has remembered"); and (3) Elizabeth

will bear a son.

But Zechariah is hesitant: "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years" (1:18). Don't be too hard on Zechariah for his disbelief. I'm glad he was honest enough to express his sincere doubts. How positively would you respond if this was happening to you?

We can't help wondering why had God waited so long to respond to their prayers? The answer, I believe, is that now their prayer and God's purpose finally intersected. They wanted a child and God needed someone to "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (1:14-17).

CLOSE TO GOD

The angel identifies himself: "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news." Gabriel is close to God and he shows us that those who are closest to God know that the message of God is always "good news." Those who make the gospel "bad news" must not be very close to God.

But Zechariah, though he was highly born, a priest and had lived a righteous life, was not convinced and Gabriel tells him: "And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things come to pass, because you did not believe my words . . ." (1:20). Can you imagine a worse penalty for a clergyman than being told he could not speak!

But the story ends well. On the eighth day after the child's birth, the people come for his circumcision and assume that he shall be named after his father, Zechariah. But Elizabeth says, "Not so; he shall be called John" ("God is gracious"). Ignoring her, they inquire of Zechariah and on a tablet he writes: "His name is John." Immediately, he regains his power of speech!

Zechariah's doubting spirit has been replaced by the Holy Spirit.

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