



# OPINION

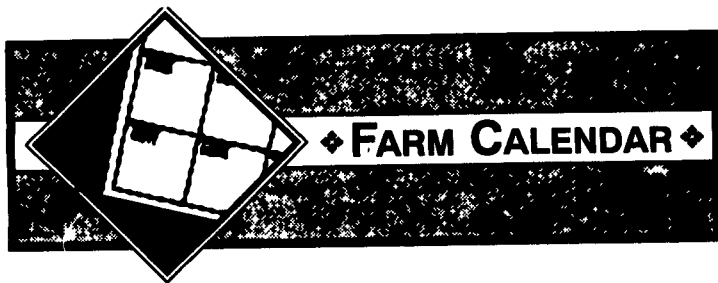
## Recommit Production To A Growing Food Supply

The World Food Summit convened in Rome in mid-November to review a three-year research effort called 2020 Vision for Food, Agriculture, and the Environment. Sponsored by the Washington, D.C.-based Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), the report is quoted in a news release as saying that there has been tremendous gains in agriculture over the past 30 years. Crop yields have risen and food prices have fallen. But the world has become complacent, and investments in agriculture and food security are inadequate.

The result of this "backing-off" on production agriculture's push for maximum yields from the choice breadbaskets of the world due to political, social, and religious prejudices have stagnated the high farm potential to feed the poor countries. This is a tragic situation, particularly when we have the scientific tools to improve the lives of the hungry and poor.

IFPRI research shows that if the right measures are pursued, we can avert severe food crises in the most vulnerable regions and keep crop yields apace of the population growth worldwide. But we need the political and social will to take the necessary actions to prevent hunger.

At this time of year when the value of human life is re-emphasized during the Thanksgiving and Christmas season, let's recommit production agriculture and the corresponding food distribution channels to a new effort to bring "good will to all men" in the form of a growing food supply that includes both the have and the have-not nations of the world.



**Saturday, December 7**  
Forum On Goat Production, Maryland Patuxent 4-H Center, Upper Marlboro, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

**Sunday, December 8**

**Monday, December 9**  
Winter Agronomy, Seed Booking and Pesticide Update Workshop, Fayette and Washington counties, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Lehigh County Holstein annual meeting, Bake Oven Inn, Germansville, 7:30 p.m.

Pa. Producers Research and Development Commission, Hoffman Building, Quarryville, 7:30 p.m.

Crop Planning and Pesticide Credit Workshop, Fayette County Fairgrounds, Grange Building, Uniontown, 9 a.m.-3:15 p.m. Also Greene County Fairgrounds, Building 14, Waynesburg, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, December 10**  
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.

Crop Planning and Pesticide Credit Workshop, Washington County Fairgrounds, Youth Building, Washington, PA, 9 a.m.-3:15 p.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, Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg, 10 a.m. Lancaster 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**

**Now Is The Time**  
By John Schwartz  
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

**To Attend**  
**Town Meeting**  
The second town meeting on Lancaster County — The Next Los Angeles will be held on Thursday, Dec. 12 at the Farm and Home Center in Lancaster.

The meeting will start at 7 p.m. The focus will be on property rights.

John Becker, Penn State agricultural attorney, will be discussing the history and concept of property rights. Stan Lembeck, Penn State, will discuss the zoning hearing process and how a person should prepare for a zoning hearing.

Ron Bailey, Lancaster County Planning Commission, will follow with a presentation on "Planning Vs. Takings." Roger Rohrer, farmer, will discuss "Just Compensation for Public Use of Private Property." I will end the evening with a talk on the "Structure of Lancaster County Farms In the 21st Century."

This should be a very important meeting discussing new ideas and concepts to be considered in developing public policy.

In order to keep Lancaster County from becoming another Los Angeles, we need to develop innovative concepts to preserve our heritage and maintain the sustainability of Lancaster County agriculture.

**To Look At**  
**Dairy Feeding Practices**

The composition of milk is affected in part by what a cow eats and how she is fed, according to Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent.

The one component that is most easily affected by a cow's ration is the fat content of her milk. Some other components that are affected are protein and milk urea nitrogen.

To comply with consumer diet preferences, dairy farmers have been breeding and feeding cows to produce milk with lower fat content and higher protein content.

Late this summer when fat supplies became tight and butter prices escalated, farmers began feeding cows so they would increase the fat content of milk. In today's competitive economic environment, farmers need to be constantly looking at the pricing structure and making necessary adjustments.

**THE CLASSIFIEDS**  
EVERYONE'S MARKETPLACE

Consult with your nutritionist and veterinarian when considering making feeding changes in order to avoid serious diet and health problems.

**To Take A Break**

Glenn Shirk, extension dairy agent, reminds us that dairy farming is a very grueling business.

The dairy herd needs attention twice daily, 365 days a year. There are no planned breaks, not even for Sundays or holidays.

It is very beneficial for farmers to have the opportunity to break away from the daily rigors of farm chores. Ways to do this includes trips or family vacation, take care of family emergencies, or devote time to other pressing business matters.

To do this you need a trained relief milker or trained farm sitter. A good way to train relief workers is to have them work for you periodically before they are needed. This will give them the opportunity to learn what is expected of them.

Before you leave the farm, let them know your schedule and how you may be reached in case of an emergency. Also, provide a list of telephone numbers of key support people such as the veterinarian, plumber, milking equipment people, helpful neighbor, etc.

All of this should help you have peace of mind, so you can truly enjoy your well deserved break from the demands of the farm.

*Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity."*

**THE BIBLE SPEAKS**  
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE  
**GOD'S SPECIALTY**  
December 8, 1996

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**Background Scripture:**  
Luke 1:26-56  
**Devotional Reading:**  
Luke 1:4-56

Youth camp at Perkasio, Pennsylvania, was a long time ago, but I nevertheless remember many of the old camp songs. One of my favorites goes like this:  
*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable? Got any mountains you can't tunnel through? God specializes in things thought impossible. He'll do for you what no other power can do.*

It is our thinking, not God, that is limited. We think that some things are beyond His power. Oh, we may not say it that way — that there are things that God can't do — but we act like it all the same. Sometimes our prayers reflect this. There are times when I leave God off the hook, so to speak, giving him an out if the request I'm making seems too difficult or complicated for the Creator of the universe. Generally, I find, not that people ask too much of God, but not enough. And the reason they don't ask enough is that they don't really trust God to be able to deliver.

This is what we find in Luke 1. First, Zechariah and Elizabeth, than Mary and Joseph. "In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph . . . and the virgin's name was Mary" (26,27). Gabriel — who certainly was one busy angel those days — came saying: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" And just as Zechariah was troubled by Gabriel, Luke tells us, "But she was greatly troubled at the saying . . ."

**WHY BE TROUBLED?**

Why was Mary troubled? Gabriel told her she was "favored" and that "the Lord is with you." Why should that trouble her? Was it not because, although Mary did not know what God wanted of her, she knew that whatever it was, it would change her life — and many of us don't want our lives changed.

I can't help thinking of some of

the responses Gabriel might get if he came to us today. "No thanks, Lord, I just want a normal life!" Don't we all! "What will it pay? What are the perks? How about retirement benefits? Can I write a book about it?"

But the angel said to Mary, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God" (1:31). As Gabriel had comforted Zechariah, so he now comforts Mary. What does this favor mean? "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus" (1:31). Gabriel goes on to assure that this child will be called "Son of the Most High."

**GOD'S 'FAVOR'**

Mary does not reject this prophetic utterance, but she still does want to know, "How can this be, since I have no husband?" It is natural for us to question how something can happen when it doesn't seem possible. "I have no husband" is a reasonable human response, but Gabriel takes her beyond mere reason: just as the Holy Spirit had made barren Elizabeth conceive, so "The Holy Spirit will come upon you . . ." Humanity has its limitations; God's Holy Spirit does not.

The key is found in Luke 1:37, "For with God nothing will be impossible." For that is God's specialty. To be sure, it usually requires our cooperation. Gabriel had not given her a contract or explained the fine print. She is going to have to make her decision on the basis of trust. And so, unlike Zechariah, Mary overcomes her troubled doubts and commits herself: "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word" (1:38).

When Mary went to visit Elizabeth in a little town outside of Jerusalem, the unborn John leaps within Elizabeth's womb and she says to Mary, "Blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord" (1:46).

God's specialty is what you and I call "impossible." Our specialty must be to believe and trust in his promises.

*God specializes in things thought impossible. He'll do for you what no other power can do.*

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