



OPINION

How Gullible Are We?

Opponents of agriculture often use half-truths, innuendo, and false science to back their disparaging remarks about our efforts to feed the world.

In a report from Terry Downs of Twin Falls Idaho on Dairy-L of the Internet, a freshman at Eagle Rock Junior High School won first prize at the greater Idaho Falls science fair when he showed how conditioned we have become to alarmists practicing junk science and spreading fear of everything in our environment. His project urged people to sign a petition demanding strict control or total elimination of the chemical "dihydrogen monoxide."

The student gave plenty of good reasons since:

1. it can cause excessive sweating and vomiting;
2. it is a major component in acid rain;
3. it can cause severe burns in its gaseous state;
4. accidental inhalation can kill you;
5. it contributes to erosion;
6. it decreases effectiveness of automobile brakes; and
7. it has been found in tumors of terminal cancer patients.

Of the 50 people the student ask to support the ban of the chemical, 43 said yes, six were undecided, and only one knew that the chemical was water.

Appropriately, the title of the prize winning project was "How Gullible Are We?"

Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Attend Environment Commission Meetings

Governor Tom Ridge established the 21st Century Environment Commission to recommend methods and policies to improve the environmental quality of the Commonwealth and measure the results, while allowing for enhanced economic and social progress. The commission is to define environmental priorities and recommend strategies to achieve these priorities. The commission will be holding 15 regional roundtables throughout Pennsylvania between October 30 and December 16, 1997. The purpose of the roundtables is to have the commissioners listen to the concerns and ideas of local community leaders.

To receive more information or to register your attendance at a meeting, call 1-888-PADEP-21.

Schedule of meetings are October 30 and 31 - Williamsport, November 5 - Bedford, November 6 - Pittsburgh, November 12 - DuBois, November 13 - Franklin, November 20 - York, December 4 - Mayfield, December 12 - Allentown and December 12 - Upper Merion.

To Manage

Replacement Ewes

According to Chester Hughes, Lancaster County Extension Livestock Agent, ewe lambs born in March and April are excellent candidates to be used as replacement ewes in spring lambing flocks. With proper feeding and breeding management, spring born ewe lambs should have lambs by the time they are 12 to 14 months old. Ewes that have their first lambs as yearlings have a higher lifetime production than ewes

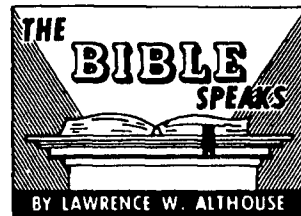
lambing first as two year olds. Select the fastest growing twin or triplet ewe lambs as replacements. Not only is there an advantage in improved prolificacy, but twin and triplet lambs have a more moderate growth rate, which prevents excess fat deposition in the udder. Lifetime milk production maybe reduced in ewe lambs grown at an accelerated rate before reaching puberty. Ewe lambs should weigh approximately 60 per cent of their mature body weight at the time of breeding. Expose the ewe lambs to rams for 50 days. Use marking harness to monitor breeding activity. To ensure proper development, ewe lambs should receive one pound of grain daily up through lambing. To prevent excessively large lambs at birth, grain should not be increased during late gestation.

To Turn Clocks Back

This week end marks the end of daylight savings time. Most people will turn back their clocks one hour before they go to bed

Saturday night. This is a good time to replace your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors batteries. If you do not have these detectors installed in your home, this would be a good time to install them. Detectors do save lives. Considering you have only a few minutes to escape from a burning house, the extra time a smoke detector gives you could be priceless. Every year we see more reports of people suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning. If you have not installed a carbon monoxide detectors in your house, you may want to consider buying and installing ones at several locations in your house. This is inexpensive insurance you may purchase that could save your family's lives. Also, remember dead batteries will not sound an alarm. Replace your batteries this week end when you are turning your clocks back.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "It is not important where we stand, but in what direction we are moving"



DOES PRAYER REALLY DO ANYTHING?
October 26, 1997

Background Scripture:

Daniel 9

Devotional Reading

Daniel 7:7-14

I've been praying as long as I've been talking. I cannot remember a time when I did not pray.

I've prayed, not because someone persuaded me that I *should* pray, nor because anyone taught me *how* to pray. To be sure, I've experienced some of both the "shoulds" and the "hows," but that is not why I first prayed and have continued to do so.

As best I can remember, I first prayed because praying was as natural as crying, being hungry, and all those other things humans seem to "know" from the very beginning. I prayed because it was the natural way for me to react to God's presence in my life — something else which I don't think I was taught.

I don't mean that my parents didn't teach me about God and that they did not mention prayer, nor that I was not influenced by the Sunday schools to which they took me. But my awareness of God and practice of prayer seemed to precede the formal instruction of both parents and church. Maybe my recollection is in error, but that is really the way I remember it. **EARLIEST REMEMBRANCE**

Furthermore, I doubt that my experience of God and prayer are unique. Maybe others do not remember it quite as I do, but I believe we all come into this world with a knowledge of God and prayer that may vary only in degree of consciousness and unconsciousness of it. What may provide the difference in earliest awareness may be primarily the spiritual support that surrounds us in the family. I think I prayed to God before I knew who God is and what prayer can be. My family and my church simply gave a name to what I already knew.

So, 47 or so years ago when I first read Harry Emerson Fosdick's wonderful book, *The Meaning of Prayer*, I understood exactly what Fosdick meant when he said that prayer is a natural human capacity. He quotes Professor Wil-

liam James — who became another favorite of mine — in saying, "We hear in these days of scientific enlightenment a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer; and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, whilst others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we do pray...The reason why we do pray is simply that we cannot help praying" (Association Press, 1915, 1959, p. 9).

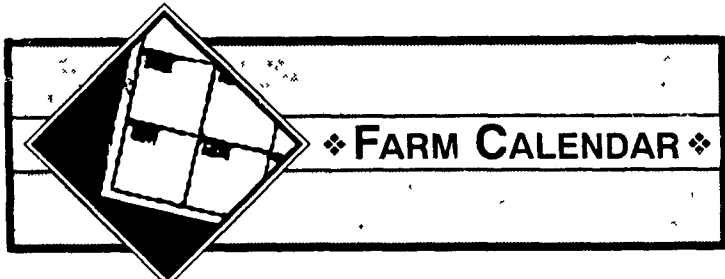
I used to think that people prayed or didn't pray because their previous experiences persuaded them that it does or does not work. But I have changed my mind on that. Lots of my prayers didn't seem to "work" — at least, not as I thought they ought to — but that never dissuaded me from praying. Ultimately, I learned — again in the words of Fosdick — "We must not conceive of prayer as an overcoming of God's reluctance, but as a laying hold of his highest willingness."

CONFIRMATION

When Daniel read the prophecy of Jeremiah (25:11, 12; 29:10), he responded naturally: "Then I turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession.." (9:3,4). Daniel poured out his heart to God, not because he was taught to pray that way, but because it was his natural response to the reality of his God.

Daniel received a confirmation of his prayer in a way that few of us ever experience. The angel Gabriel came to him in a vision and said, "O Daniel, I have now come to give you wisdom and understanding. At the beginning of your supplications a word went forth and I have come to tell it to you..." I believe a "word" goes "forth" from God whenever we pray.

Blessed are those who see the angel who visits them when they pray; but blessed also are those who pray without ever seeing the angels who come to all of us.



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, October 25

Columbia County Grazing Field Day, Greg and Debbie Farr Farm, Millville.

New England Fall Sheep Symposium, University of Connecticut, Storrs, Ratcliffe Hicks Arena., 8:30 a.m.

Dynamic Duo Spotlight Sale, Maryland Shorthorn and Hereford Association, Frederick Fairgrounds, Frederick, Md., 7 p.m.

State 4-H Horse Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, thru Oct. 26.

N.Y. State Grange Annual Session, Binghamton, N.Y., thru Oct. 28.

Sunday, October 26

Daylight Saving Time Ends

Monday, October 27

Watershed Workshop Meeting #1, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

"Stretching Your Feed Supply," Franklin County, 7:15 p.m.

Dairy Feeding Meeting with Dr. Jud Heinrichs, Penn State Extension Dairy Nutritionist, Franklin County Human Services Building Conference Room, Chambersburg, 7:15 p.m.

Tuesday, October 28

Penn State Extension Fair and Open House, Berks County Ag Center, 3:30 p.m.-8 p.m.

Lancaster County Poultry Banquet, Willow Valley Palm Court, 6:30 p.m.

Pa. State Grange Banquet, Leesport Farmers' Market, Leesport, 6 p.m.

Adams County Holstein Annual Meeting, Harney Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, October 29

Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties Cooperative Extension Annual Meeting, Carriage Inn, Tunkhannock, 7 p.m.

Dairy and Animal Science meeting at Penn State, Oct. 29-30.

Thursday, October 30

Lancaster County 4-H Swine Banquet, Farm and Home Center, 6:30 p.m.

Southeast Regional Christmas Tree Growers' Meeting, Berks County Agricultural Center, 7 p.m.

Lebanon County Holstein Annual Meeting, Ono Fire Hall, 7 p.m.

York County Agricultural Land Preservation Board Public Meeting, County Annex Building, York, 1 p.m.

Friday, October 31

Halloween

October Friends of Agriculture Breakfast, Sheraton Inn, Dover, 7:15 a.m.

Saturday, November 1

Identifying Trees In Winter Workshop, Pa. College of Technology Earth Science Center, Montgomery, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Estate Planning Workshop For Farmers, Back Mountain Regional Land Trust, Shavertown, 1 p.m.

Sunday, November 2

Monday, November 3

Wayne County Cooperative Extension Meeting, Joey C's, Seelyville, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 4

Election Day

Ag Science School for Pa. West, Meadville.

Wednesday, November 5

Dairy Practices Council 1997 Annual Conference, Harrisburg East Holiday Inn, thru Nov. 7.

Farm Construction and Facilities Symposium, Rockingham County Fairgrounds Exhibition Hall, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Annual Meeting of Pa. Association of County Agricultural Agents, Atherton, State College.

Thursday, November 6

Berks County Farm-City Banquet, Sheraton Berkshire, 6 p.m.

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