



OPINION

Come To The Country

National Farmers Union President Leland Swenson recently sent a letter to members of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees urging them to come to the heartland of America and listen to the concerns of producers, not Washington, D.C. insiders. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle have determined there is a growing crisis in farm country and that Congress must take action. This is true in the Northeast as well.

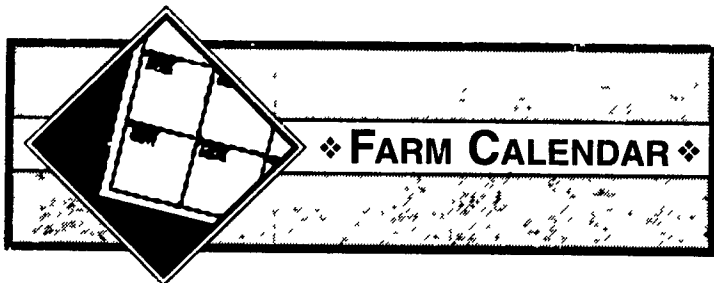
"There is deep division in Washington regarding the best way to help producers," Swenson said. "The best way to bridge that gap is to schedule hearings in rural America to listen to the concerns of producers, not handpicked agriculture and agribusiness spokespersons in Washington. The Senate and House Agriculture Committees should schedule several hearings in all regions of America to provide a forum for all farmers and ranchers to voice their opinions," he said.

Swenson added that this week's events have been pivotal in highlighting the crisis facing American agriculture. Earlier this week, Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D., House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt, D-Missouri, Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, Sen. Kent Conrad, D-N.D., Sen. Byron Dorgan, D-N.D., and Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., held a press conference to press for changes in the 1996 farm bill. The group of farm-state legislators called for immediate action to address the farmers' financial problems by removing the caps on marketing loans, extending marketing loan terms, eliminating trade actions, creating indemnity payments, requiring mandatory price reporting by large meat packers, and requiring country-of-origin labels on all imported meats.

Montana Senator Conrad Burns and 12 other farm-state Republicans also unveiled a proposal to address the growing farm crisis. The Burns proposal provides no immediate relief for low commodity prices, but instead relies on increased trade, and a reduction in taxes and regulations to help farmers, such as passing fast track legislation, creating a farmer Individual Retirement Account, and ending trade sanctions.

"This was a good new-bad news type of week in Washington, Swenson said. "The good news is that Democrats and Republicans are recognizing that there is a crisis in rural America. The Daschle-Gephardt proposal to remove the caps on marketing loans would have a positive impact on the prices farmers receive. We are not opposed to discussing long-term strategy — but we must also focus on the current situation. After all, a farmer cannot tell the local banker that he is going to repay him with less regulation. Although less regulation may be justified, it just won't pay the bills," the farm leader said.

"Come to the country, reserve a big arena and listen to the real experts on agriculture — the farmers and ranchers whose livelihood is dependent upon commodity prices," said Swenson.



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, July 11

Tioga County Annual Farm-City Day, David and Donna Cleveland's Farm, Wellsboro, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Turkey Hill Giant Ice Cream Sundae, Capitol City Mall, Camp Hill, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Summer Beef Field Day, hosted by Mullinix family, Woodbine, Md., carcass evaluation July 15, Mt. Airy Locker, Mt. Airy, Md., 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, July 12

Ice Cream Social, John and Bonnie Hess Farm, Gettysburg, 1 p.m.

Monday, July 13

4-H Dog at Work, Chester County Romano 4-H Center, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Eastern Apicultural Society Short Course and Conference, Short Course at Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Champion, thru July 15.

Pa. Wool Pool, Wyoming Fair-

grounds, Meshoppen, noon-7 p.m., also July 14.

Tuesday, July 14

Western Pa. Junior Holstein Show, Crooked Creek Horse Park, Ford City, 10 a.m.

Centre/Clinton Holstein Association picnic, Paul and Dee Courter Farm, Mill Hall, 7 p.m.

Southeast District Dairy Show, Lebanon Area Fairgrounds.

Jacktown Fair, Wind Ridge, thru July 19.

Wool Pool, Wyoming Fairgrounds, Meshoppen, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

Christmas Tree Growers meeting, Helen and Ed's Tree Farm, Dorrance, 6 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

NPPC Pork Quality and Safety Summit, Hotel Fort, Des Moines, Iowa, thru July 15.

DEP CAFO Proposal Meeting/Hearings, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 6:30

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Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Understand Heat Stress

With the hot, humid, hazy days of summer upon us, dairymen's thoughts turn to the comfort of their cows as they try to protect them from heat stress.

Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent, states some of the impact of heat stress on lactating cows is quickly visible in the form of reduced milk production. However, the biggest impact is long term.

It occurs in the form of reduced conception and longer calving intervals, reduced immune response and greater vulnerability to diseases and infections, delayed and only partial recovery of milk production lost in current lactation and a shortened productive life.

When temperatures climb above 78 degrees Fahrenheit and



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Editor:

Our peace was shattered.

In summertime Lancaster County Amish rise early, farmers are up at 4 a.m., no time to kiss the wife, quick get the boys up, slip on shoes and hat and dash out to the barn, dish out some feed.

Ga hole die kee.

"Go fetch the cows."

Another day has begun, and June 23, 1998 in the early morning was no exception, but on that day 3 Amish families would experience a tragedy, a profound disturbance of family ties like never before.

The sunrise was overcast, farmers eyed the sky, should more hay be cut, housewives fed their babies, also watched the weather, would the wash dry, could I work in the garden? Amish shop families ate their breakfast, wives packed lunches for husband, sons and daughters. Van drivers circled through the county, picking up their charges, already a slight mist was falling, looked like it's going to rain.

Vans pulled up to the neat Amish houses.

Da driver is doo.

"The driver is here."

And the husband is out the door and in the van, off to work. Young Amish brides who mar-

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humidity levels also rise, cow discomfort begins. With several days of high humidity and temperatures in the 90's and little, to no relief at night, cows become severely stressed.

To Know The Signs of Heat Stress

One of the first signs of heat stress, according to Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent, is a reduction in appetite, especially for the more fibrous feeds, such as forages, which produce more body heat during digestion. As feed intakes go down so does milk production and body weight.

Sudden loss of body weight may cause costly calving problems and metabolic problems in the weeks after calving. Thus, it is very important to provide the proper care of dry cows and springing heifers.

To Reduce Heat Stress

Glenn Shirk, Lancaster County Extension Dairy Agent, offers the

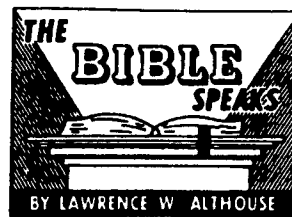
following tips to reduce heat stress in dairy cows: Provide cows shade while preventing sloppy areas.

Provide breeze for cows by using fans. Give cows easy access to good quality water. Feed in a clean, shaded area close to water and rest area. Keep feeds fresh and managers clean.

Feed lower fiber, palatable feeds but observe cows' minimum needs for digestible fiber and effective fiber long enough to stimulate cud chewing. Feed more fibrous feed during the cooler hours of the night and early morning.

Increase the mineral levels of rations to compensate for those lost due to increased sweating and urination. Avoid any practices such as vaccination, hoof trimming, regrouping, etc., which subject cows to additional stress. In severe cases, hose cows down with water.

Feather Prof's Footnote
"Accomplishments are their own reward."



YOUR NEIGHBOR

July 19, 1998

Background Scripture:

Proverbs 3:27-35; 14:21

Devotional Reading:

James 2:1-13

Christians sometimes make the mistake of assuming that Jesus' admonition to "love your neighbor as yourself" was something new to his religious contemporaries. It was not. There are many texts in the Old Testament that urge right just and compassionate treatment of one's neighbor. What was new in what Jesus said was the simple way in which he compressed all those teachings into one simple statement.

Jesus also expanded the believer's understanding of who our neighbors are. In the Parable of the Good Samaritan, he helped his followers see that anyone whom we can help is our neighbor. The derivation of the word neighbor comes from the word "nigh" meaning near and "gebur," dweller — so the neighbor is one who dwells near us. In this day and age we live in a potentially much bigger neighborhood than ever before. Actually, if we know of someone's need and we can minister to it, they are our neighbor.

The sage of the Book of Proverbs does not use the word "love" in connection with one's neighbor, but he does the next best thing; he speaks of doing good to and for our neighbor. And that's what love really is, not just a warm and fuzzy feeling about someone.

INCOGNITO CHRISTIANS

What we do not do can often be as important as what we do. "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is your power to do it." Sometimes we can hurt our neighbor by withholding the help we can give him. Just because we don't plan to harm our neighbor does not mean we are a good neighbor.

A man once told me that when a neighbor died, he was surprised to find that he was a "pillar" of a church in the community. "I never knew he went to church," he said,

"or that he was even a Christian." If our Christian discipleship does not show in our neighborhood, will it show anywhere?

As I sit at my computer, I can look out the window and see most of the houses in our block. I wonder whether all my neighbors in those houses know I am a Christian? Some, of course, know that I am a retired clergyman, but that's not the same thing, is it? One can be a clergyman and not a Christian. The first is a profession, the second a way of living.

WHAT WE WITHHOLD

Can my neighbors tell that I am a Christian by the way that I treat them? If you don't count telling one of my neighbors to please turn down his boom-box, I haven't quarreled with my neighbors nor trespassed against their property. But have I withheld anything from them that I could have given them? I hope not, but you would have to ask them — as I would have to ask yours.

The sage also says, "Do not envy a man of violence and do not choose any of his ways" (3:31). I'd like to put that on large banners outside every cinema in the city of Dallas, for these are too often temples dedicated to the worship of violence and the violent person. Come to think of it, it needs to be emblazoned upon thousands of television screens where violence is also displayed and admired.

Another verse that needs to be widely posted is this: "He who despises his neighbor is a sinner, but happy is he who is kind to the poor" (14:21). Apparently that is not the prevailing mood today. In my experience, whenever the poor are mentioned — outside the church, that is — it is with derision and contempt. It is as if poverty were some virulent social disease that people choose for themselves. Today it appears to be perfectly acceptable to despise the poor.

Maybe that helps us feel justified in refusing to "be kind to them."

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