



OPINION

This Means You

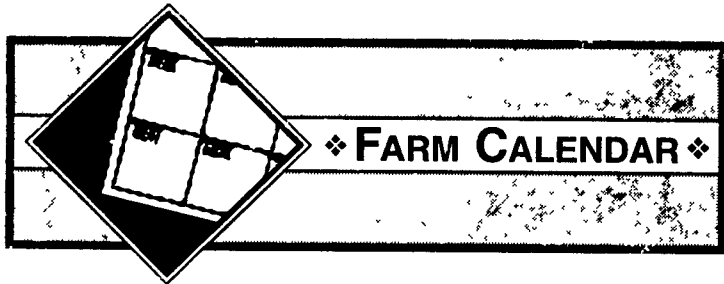
Pennsylvania's Nutrient Management Act went into effect back in October 1, 1997. Under this law, operators of farms fitting the definition of a concentrated animal operation (CAO) are to develop, submit, and implement an approved nutrient management plan. Operators of CAO farms are to submit these nutrient management plans to their county conservation district for approval by October 1, 1998.

This means that farms having an animal density of greater than 2,000 pounds of live animal weight per acre of owned and rented land used for manure application have only this month yet to submit the plan. That's not very much time.

Quite a number of farms are not yet in compliance with the law. And there is not much time to act. The farm community was active in the development of the Nutrient Management Act program that is designed with the understanding that the agricultural community will come forward to comply as they are required. It is important that farmers be responsive in fulfilling their responsibilities under this law because if this law is unsuccessful in getting farmers to participate, a more aggressive approach may be imposed by the federal or state government to address manure and fertilizer practices associated with animal agriculture.

From what we know, we believe it is important that farmers act now to participate in this program. Many opponents of agriculture just can't wait to put greater restrictions on our production facilities and capabilities.

Certainly, we want to protect our local water quality. By complying with the requirements of this act voluntarily, we protect the reputation of the agricultural community as being responsive to the efforts to protect our water resources. Everyone who farms must act now. Yes, we must say it. This means you.



- Saturday, September 5**
Northwest District Dairy Show, Crawford County Fairgrounds, Meadville.
- Mon Valley District Dairy Show, Washington County Fairgrounds.
- Juniata County Fair, Port Royal, thru Sept. 12.
- Sunday, September 6**
Spartansburg Community Fair, Spartansburg, thru Sept. 12.
- Cambria County Fair, Ebensburg, thru Sept. 12.
- Monday, September 7**
Labor Day
Lancaster Farming office closed. Waterford Community Fair, Waterford, thru Sept. 12.
- Ox Hill Community Fair, Plumville, thru Sept. 12.
- West Alexander Fair, West Alexander, thru Sept. 12.
- Tuesday, September 8**
EAYF meeting on farm theft, Dale Stahl, police chief, Clay Township, 7:30 p.m.
- Jamestown Community Fair, Jamestown, thru Sept. 12.
- Claysburg Farm Show, Claysburg, thru Sept. 12.
- Twilight Meeting For Produce Farmers, Karns Market, Lemoyne, 7 p.m.
- Dauphin County Farm Bureau Policy Development Meeting, Ag Center, Dauphin, 7:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 9**
Luzerne County Fair, Dallas, thru Sept. 13.
- Pike County Fair, Matamoras, thru Sept. 13.
- Bellwood-Antis Farm Show, Bellwood, thru Sept. 12.
- Agribusiness Breakfast, McCon-

- nellsburg American Legion Post 561, 8 a.m.
- Water Clinic, Fulton County Extension Office, McConnellsburg, 10 a.m.-noon.
- Farm Field Day, East Neck Wildlife Refuge, Rock Hall, 9 a.m.
- Thursday, September 10**
Prince George's County Fair, Prince George's Equestrian Center, Upper Marlboro, thru Sept. 12.
- Clear Spring Community Show, Clear Spring High School, Clear Spring, thru Sept. 12.
- Twilight Meeting For Produce Farmers, Oregon Dairy Market, Lititz, 7 p.m.
- Nittany Antique Machinery Association Inc. of Central Pa., Penns Cove, Centre Hall, thru Sept. 13.
- Small Grain Roundtable, Hilltop Restaurant, Shade Gap, noon-2 p.m.
- Friday, September 11**
Hay Creek Fall Festival, north of Morgantown, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., thru Sept. 13.
- Ballenger Community Show, Frederick, thru Sept. 12.
- Wicomico County Fair, Wicomico Youth and Civic Center, Salisbury, thru Sept. 12.
- Damascus Community Fair, Damascus Volunteer Fire Dept. Activity Grounds, Damascus, thru Sept. 13.
- Thurmont and Emmitsburg Community Show, Catactic High School, Thurmont, thru Sept. 13.
- York Fair, York, thru Sept. 20.
- 34th Annual Steam and Gas Roundup of the Mason-Dixon Historical Society, Carroll



Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Use Cover Crops in Soil Management

According to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent, cover crops not only keep soil erosion to a minimum in the winter time, they provide several other important functions.

Cover crops act as a nutrient bank. The nutrient of biggest concern is nitrogen. Cover crops are capable of using left over nitrogen from the previous crop season before it leaches into the ground water.

In the spring when the cover crop is killed with a herbicide or plowed down, the nitrogen is released back into the soil during the growing season for the next crop. Cover crops add organic matter to the soil. Whether the entire plant is left in the field or just the roots, this plant material adds to the organic matter in the soil.

Organic matter adds water holding capacity to the soil, provides food for soil microbes, improves soil structure and adds to the soil's ability to hold nutrients.

To Use Cover Crops for Feed

Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent, reminds us cover crops can

- County Farm Museum, Westminster, Md., thru Sept. 13.
- New-Generation Coalitions For Value-Added Products and Marketing Opportunities, Christ Lutheran Church, Millmont, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
- 8th Annual Hinkelfest, Farmer's Pride Airport, Fredericksburg, thru Sept. 13.

- Saturday, September 12**
Lancaster Farmland Trust 8th Annual Membership Picnic, Leola, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.

- Sunday, September 13**
Honey Harvest Festival, Hashaha Environmental Center, Westminster.

- Equine Trivial Pursuit, Green Lane Reservoir Pike, 9 a.m.
- Mason-Dixon Red and White Dairy Cattle Association Picnic and Field Day, farm of Paul and Lucinda Moyer, Bernville, 1 p.m.

- Monday, September 14**
Green Township Community Fair, Cookport, thru Sept. 19.

- Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.
- Beef Producers Meeting, Country Cupboard Restaurant, Lewisburg, 5:30 p.m., and Byerly Brothers Meats, West Milton, 7 p.m.

- Tuesday, September 15**
Albion Area Fair, Albion, thru Sept. 19.
- Sinking Valley Fair, Skelp, thru Sept. 19.
- Denver Fair, Denver, thru Sept. 19.

also provide additional forage for livestock feed. If the crop is harvested as a silage crop, the nitrogen which it captured from the soil becomes a source of protein when fed to ruminant livestock.

When the cover crop is used to produce silage, not only is the nitrogen kept from leaching into the ground water, the silage harvested will replace purchased feeds at a very small cost to the farmer.

A little money for seed and a little time to plant are small costs to pay for the many returns cover crops may provide. Erosion control, nutrient bank, feed source, organic matter, water holding capacity and soil structure are a few of these returns. Cover crops offer the most advantage when planted immediately after removing corn silage or tobacco.

To Test Private Water Supplies

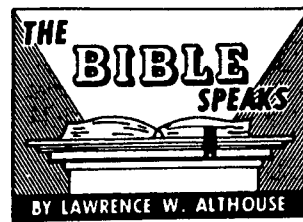
If your water supply is from a

private well or spring, monitoring water quality is your responsibility. Leon Ressler, Lancaster County Extension Environmental Agent, reminds us that the only way you may be certain your water is safe to drink is to have it tested periodically.

Several screening tests can give you a pretty good idea about the quality of your water. A test for total coliform bacteria should be run annually. The acceptable test results are zero colonies of coliform bacteria in the sample.

Make sure the lab running the test is certified for microbiology tests by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Other tests you might want to consider are nitrate nitrogen, hardness, iron, total dissolved solids and pH.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "You lead people and you manage things."



ON BLAMING THE SNAKE

September 6, 1998

Background Scripture:
Genesis 3
Devotional Reading:
Romans 7:15-25a

As a teen-ager, I assumed that the sin of Adam and Eve was a sexual one. My assumption was understandable because people very often portrayed them in that light. The 'forbidden fruit' — usually depicted as an apple — was usually suggestive of sexual pleasures. It probably wasn't until my theological studies that I realized that their sin was much more encompassing. They disobeyed God in eating the forbidden fruit and it robbed them of their innocence, making them ashamed of their nakedness.

This misconception is only one of many which people entertain about the meaning of the Garden of Eden. Among others is that God counts us as sinners because of what Adam and Eve did eons ago. One bright lad in one of my confirmation classes said he thought it was very unfair of God to hold us responsible because people disobeyed him so long ago.

My response was that this story is not so much about what happened long, long ago, but what is happening in our lives right now. Like Adam and Eve — not because of what they did — we willfully disobey God's commandments today. That responsibility does not rest with them, but each of us. It is not so much *history* as it is *our* story.

NOTHING TO HIDE

Just compare their situation with ours. Their initial relationship with God was an ideal one. They "were both naked," but they were "not ashamed." Innocent up to this point, they had nothing to hide, either from God or from each other. That is the kind of unashamed relationship for which God creates us.

Then, introduced into the story, is the one factor that always ruins that guileless relationship: the tempter. Note that the tempter in Genesis 3 is not the obvious "bad guy." Genesis portrays the tempter as a serpent, "who was more subtle than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made." The worst temptations are the subtle ones that persuade us that they are

not temptations, but ideas that are fully rational and justifiable.

The tempter always tries to confuse us with suggestive words: "Did God say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'" (Maybe politics is the world's oldest profession!). But Eve knew that God had restricted them from eating only the fruit of "the tree in the midst of the garden." She remembered also that God had warned: "... lest you die." Note that Eve rejects the tempter's suggestion, not because God forbade them, but because she is afraid of the dire consequences.

EQUAL WITH GOD!

This is where the tempter excels: he makes us doubt sin's consequences. "You will not die," he tells Eve. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God knowing good and evil." He suggests a divine conspiracy to keep Adam and Eve from being equal to God. How much more effective these words are than if he had simply said, "Go ahead and disobey God!" Eating the fruit will not be "disobedience" but self-fulfillment (How often we disobey God for the sake of "self fulfillment"!)

Later, when God confronts them, it is evident that the serpent lied. They were not given the power to discern between good and evil, but only to be ashamed of their nakedness. "Who told you that you were naked?", but God already knows the answer. Their shame is not that they are naked, but that they feel naked in God's sight. Now, they have something to hide and he can see them exactly as they are.

I always marvel when I read their self-justifications. Adam blames Eve, even implying that God is also at fault: "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree..." Eve at tempts to shift the blame too: "The serpent beguiled me..."

It seems no one is ever wrong today. Either we blame our disobedience upon some other person or we are still trying to blame the snake — with the same consequences!

Lancaster Farming
Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
- by -
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinman Enterprise
William J. Burgess General Manager
Everett R. Newschwager Managing Editor
Copyright 1996 by Lancaster Farming