



# OPINION

## "Whistlin' go-fers" And You At Pennsylvania Farm Show

It's Pennsylvania Farm Show time again. As the folks from C.B. Hooper, Inc., said in a recent ad in Lancaster Farming, it's "time for the annual appearance of the creature known as the 'whistlin' go-fer.'" This creature was created by non-farmers who go to the Farm Show and stop by the farm machinery display, look the equipment over, then whistle and ask "What's that go for?"

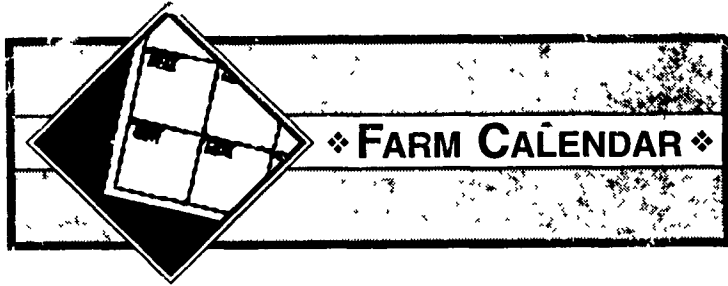
We know each year there are fewer farmers in our agriculture community. So naturally, there are fewer farmers available to go to the show. We should, however, be pleased that the non-farm community has enough interest in our industry to take the time to come see the technological advances we have made in an effort to feed them, even with our fewer numbers. What an opportunity to show the non-farm community what farming is all about in a situation where we are able to show off agriculture in the best possible light.

We also note that the Farm Show has become the hub of international exporting activity. Each year the international delegation that comes to the Farm Show with checkbooks in hand to see Pennsylvania agriculture has been growing.

And while in recent years the cry has gone out that farmers don't attend the Pennsylvania Farm Show, this is a false impression. The thousands of animal and commodity exhibitors who are obviously farmers not only attend the show, many of them stay all week. You could say these farmers are a captive audience for exhibitors of agriculture equipment and services. And don't forget our future in agriculture that rests in the hundreds of FFA students and families who attend their state convention and present their Keystone degrees at the Farm Show. And from practical experience, literally thousands of farmers stop by the Lancaster Farming booth to say "Hi" and renew their subscription. So, we know they are there.

So, along with Charley Hooper's gang and many other agriculture exhibitors, we will again be at the Farm Show, hoping to leave a good impression of Pennsylvania agriculture to the "whistlin' go-fers" who stop by for information. We believe the future of agriculture in Pennsylvania literally rests in being available to create a bridge of information and empathy between us (the Pennsylvania agriculture community) and them (the general public who is Pennsylvania agriculture's food and fiber customer and the holder of the regulatory opinions that will determine if we can legally farm in the future.) Of course, we especially look to meet the host of friendly farmers who annually stop at our booth and tell us to keep up the work of being the bible of agriculture in eastern U.S.

We hope to see you there, this year, and every year, as far as we can see into the new millennium.



### FARM CALENDAR

#### Friday, January 8

Feeder School, Ja-Lene Farm, John and Todd Ishler Farm, Spring Mills.

Horse World Expo, Maryland State Fairgrounds, Timonium, thru Jan. 10.

Public Hearing On Commodity Prices For Pa. Agriculture, Pa. Farm Show Complex, 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

Mid-Atlantic Cooperative Extension Poultry Health/Management Unit, University of Del., 7:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Dairy Options Program, Wyox Fire Hall, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

#### Saturday, January 9

Pennsylvania State Farm Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, thru Jan. 14.

#### Sunday, January 10

Basic Computer Workshop for

Beginners, Mifflin County Library.

Cornell Cooperative Extension 1999 Winter Dairy Management School, Delevan Fire Training Center, 9:30 a.m.-3:20 p.m.

Advanced Landscape Plant IPM Short Course, Plant Science Building, University of Maryland, College Park, thru Jan. 15.

#### Tuesday, January 12

Solanco Young Farmers Meeting, Computer Education, Solanco High School, 7:30 p.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers pesticide update meeting, Lincoln Family Smorgasbord, Ephrata, 6:45 p.m., also Feb. 9.

Act 6 Nutrient Management Certification/Plan Writing Seminar, Berks Ag Center, certification.

Vegetable Update Meeting, Carroll County extension office,



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

#### To Spread Manure Properly

The Pennsylvania Nutrient Management Act that went into effect last year specifies some common sense regulations for winter manure spreading. Since the ground is often frozen when our winter rains occur, manure runoff may be a big problem.

Therefore, try to keep winter spread manure away from environmentally sensitive areas like streams, road ditches, sinkholes, wells, etc. Specific regulations you should follow are:

1. Do not spread manure within 100 feet upslope of a sinkhole, well or spring unless the manure is plowed under within 24 hours.

2. Do not spread manure within concentrated waterways such as diversions, swales or waterways when the ground is frozen or saturated, and

3. Do not spread manure within 100 feet upslope of streams, lakes, pipe outlet terraces or springs when the soil is frozen or saturated.

If the slope of the fields is greater than 8 per cent, you should stay 200 feet upslope of these areas. Winter spreading can waste a lot of valuable fertilizer, especially if it is spread on bare soil. Keep as much soil as possible in cover crops to save your manure nutrients for, your crop.

#### To Know About Y2K

Leon Ressler, Lancaster County Extension Agricultural Agent, reports there has been a lot in the news lately about the millennium computer bug.

You may be saying "What is all this about and what should I do about it?" Many computer programs still in use today were de-

Westminster, Md., 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Farm Show Trip From Wayne County, leaves Wayne County Courthouse 7 a.m., stops at McDonald's Restaurant, Hamlin, 7:15 a.m.. Leaves Farm Show Complex at 4:30 p.m. and returns to Honesdale, 7:30 p.m.

Basic Dairy Farm Management Workshop, Clarion County extension office, 7:30 p.m., also Jan. 20.

#### Wednesday, January 13

Workforce Management for Farms and Horticultural Business, Radisson Penn Harris Hotel and Convention Center, Camp Hill, through Jan. 15.

Wayne County DHIA annual meeting, Bethany Methodist Church Hall, Bethany, 12:30 p.m.

Act 6 Nutrient Management Certification/Plan Writing Seminar, fertility, Berks Ag Center, Leesport, exam Jan. 20. Pa. Tobacco Marketing Association (Turn to Page A36)

veloped years ago when computer memory was much more limited than it is today.

Because of that limitation many programmers used only two digits for the year in dates used by the programs. So the year 1999 is recorded simply as 99. Problems could occur on December 31, 1999 when the 99 date turns over to 00.

The computer may confuse the year 2000 with 1900. This could cause some computers to fail. Some feel we will have inconveniences similar to a major winter storm while others project serious failures in infrastructure.

#### To Look For Y2K Problems

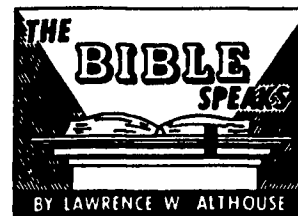
Leon Ressler, Lancaster County Extension Agricultural Agent, suggests individuals should become prepared for Y2K problems.

First, evaluate what appliances, equipment and processes are

using computer programs both at home and in your business. Contact your equipment supplier to see if your products are Y2K ready. If they are not, discuss with the supplier what may be done to get your equipment Y2K ready. Start with the most critical systems first. For example, if you have a climate controlled livestock facility on your farm, make sure the system will still run the ventilation fans, etc.

Do not test the system simply by advancing the clock. This could trigger a major failure which could be very difficult and time consuming to repair. Consult your equipment supplier for professional help to test your systems. Prepare an emergency backup plan to be used in case major disruptions in supplies and services do occur.

*Feather Prof.'s Footnote.*  
"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together."



**THE ONE WITH THE MOST TOYS**  
January 10, 1999

#### Background Scripture:

Luke 12:13-34

#### Devotional Reading:

Habakkuk 3:17-19

Popular wisdom holds that at the end of life the winner is "the one with the most toys." We may chuckle at that, but, in fact, many of us live as though that were the ultimate truth. Isn't that the basis of capitalism? Isn't that what has made America great?

While we give lip service to the teachings of Jesus, we are much more motivated by the law of the market place, supply and demand, profit and loss. We not only order our society that way, but often also our churches. As in commerce and industry, our churches must be "cost-effective."

I confess I have never heard anyone say that Jesus was "all wet" in his teachings about material things. Nevertheless, we tend to live as if, when it comes to money, he didn't know what he was talking about. For example, the parable of the Rich Fool. Actually, if we were being honest with ourselves, we would have to admit that we see nothing wrong with this man. How can we fault him? He is such a good entrepreneur.

#### WISE & PRUDENT?

Who can fault his reasoning? His crops are overwhelmingly successful and he says to himself, "What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops." And he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns, and build larger ones; and there I will store all my grain and my goods." (Luke 12:17,18). Isn't that the wise and prudent thing to do?

It is not the man's good business sense that brings him a rebuke from God. Rather it was his motivation: "And I will say to my soul, Soul you have ample goods laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, be merry" (12:19). He thinks that his security and well-being are founded upon his material goods and it is that smug attitude that brings God's reproach: "Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose

#### will they be?"

This man is truly a fool because, for one thing, he does not seem to realize that he can't take his material goods with him. Isn't that the height of foolishness — to accumulate an abundance of something you have to leave behind when you die? If your soul is required of you this very night, does it matter what is in your bank account or your balance sheet? Will your possessions qualify you for your life beyond death?

This parable is similar to a passage in the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus:

*A man may grow rich by stinting and sparing, but what does he get for his pains? When he says, "I have earned my rest, now I can live on my savings," he does not know how long it will be before he must die and leave his wealth to others.* (11:18,19).

#### TRIUMPH OVER THINGS

Furthermore, it is foolish to depend upon earthly things because, not only can we not take them with us beyond the grave, but they do not even bring us happiness and fulfillment on this side of it. "Take heed, and beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (12:15). As my seminary professor John Knox says, "One's life is made secure, not by things, but by triumph over things."

Actually, says Knox, "One's life does consist of an abundance, but it is an abundance of another sort than that on which the 'rich fool' relied." That's what it means to be "rich toward God." The abundance which God gives us is not an abundance of things but of the spirit.

Not even the essentials of life make us secure: "For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing" (12:23). That "more than" is to be found only in his kingdom. So instead of an abundance of things, "... seek his kingdom, and these things shall be yours as well." In the end, the winner is the one, not with the most toys, but with the most spiritual blessings.

#### Lancaster Farming

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Lancaster Farming, Inc.

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