



## OPINION

### Before It's Too Late

The dairy industry may now need to take more seriously the need for biosecurity in their dairy herds. According to David Tomsche, DVM from Minnesota, who spoke recently at the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Conference, current practices of the dairy cow farming industry are inadequate to deal with the present threat of infectious disease. As dairymen, we have assumed the cows were big enough to ward off any disease that may be transmitted by visitors to our barns. But with the new diseases cropping up, this is not true anymore. Among the traditional domesticated livestock species, the general biosecurity measures and practices used by those who raise dairy cows falls far behind what peers do who raise other livestock species.

Through experience with infectious diseases, concerns about consumer confidence, and demands of other nations regarding agricultural trade, the poultry industry has developed strict research-based, industry-wide disease control protocol. The same is true for many swine facilities, where permission to enter farm lanes is reserved only for those with a need and prior clearance to enter the lane.

Some dairymen and industry people do practice some biosecurity measures, such as washing footwear before leaving a farm, taking pains not to contaminate the boots or other equipment before it is loaded onto a vehicle for a trip to the next farm on the circuit.

However, if it should be discovered or even widely perceived that an infectious disease of dairy cattle can infect humans, it can be expected that many dairy farms will face either adopting similarly strict biosecurity measures or face going out of business.

It makes sense to begin an industry-wide emphasis on biosecurity for dairy farms now before public opinion forces us into it. The dairy industry in other countries has been forced into strict regimens of health control to guarantee a safe dairy product for the consumer. These regimens begin on the farm, not in the processing plant.

We believe the U.S. dairy industry will be forced into the same biosecurity position in the near future. Let's make traffic into our dairy barns meet the same requirements as anyone or anything that comes into a poultry or swine operation. And let's do it before it's too late.



### Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Prepare for Y2K

Most people feel the Y2K issue might be an inconvenience but not a disaster. At a recent conference it was reported that the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission is not anticipating large scale power outages or loss of telephone communications. State wide, the banking industry is nearing 100 per cent compliance.

Experts are predicating that 5 per cent of the 5 billion computer chips in the world may fail. That means many individual machines or pieces of equipment may fail. These same experts stated that 90 per cent of the problems which do develop will be corrected within three days.

Experts are recommending to prepare for Y2K like any other type of emergency, like a snow storm. Have on hand a five to seven day supply of food, water, flashlights, battery operated radio, etc. You should make a list of all equipment that uses a computer or has computer chips and determine if they are Y2K compliant, Y2K noncompliant or do not know. Then you need to develop plans on dealing with the noncompliant and do not know groups.

Work with your dealers now so you may prevent a disaster on January 1, 2000. Any event you should develop back up plans in case the electricity does go off for several days. Make sure your generators work and you have adequate fuel supply.

#### To Shop for Electricity

In the era of deregulated electricity, consumers should be very savvy shoppers, according to Dr. Dennis Buffington, Penn State Agricultural Engineer. Each customer's local utility is still responsible for transmitting and distributing electricity to homes and businesses.

Power generation companies are currently marketing services across Pennsylvania. Customers need to know whether prices listed by suppliers are just for generation or if transmission of power is included. You need to be sure the price you pay per kilowatt hour is listed. Are there special peak and off peak rates?

Customers should determine if the supplier includes a monthly

ducers. A representative of the 200-member organization said the Compact would mean an end to the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board (PMMB) and the relatively high premiums enjoyed by his members. Dennis Schad of Land O'Lakes testified that the Compact would supplement local milk regulation and would not replace the PMMB. Beverly Minor, chairwoman of the PMMB, supported Schad's statement.

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charge, a minimum monthly charge or a membership fee. Remember, you cannot receive the rate quoted or lowest price if you do not sign up and monitor your bill.

#### To Make Tractors Safer

Each year an average of 132 American farm workers are crushed to death as tractors overturn during operation. Nearly all fatalities resulting from a farm tractor roll over could be prevented.

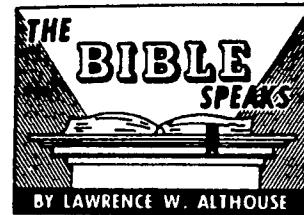
The key to prevention is the presence of Roll Over Protection Structure (ROPS) on every tractor. Sweden recorded a 92 per cent reduction in tractor roll over fatalities between 1961 and 1983 due to legislation that required all tractors to have ROPS installed. Similar reductions were found in Nebraska study. Since 1967, the Nebraska study found that 40 per cent of the persons involved in tractor roll over accidents with a tractor not equipped with ROPS died.

Only two per cent of those

having accidents with tractors equipped with ROPS died. The two per cent death rate was the result of one accident in which the operator was not using the safety restraint or seat belt and was thrown from the tractor with a ROPS system installed. ROPS may be either enclosed or open. However, a seat belt must be used in conjunction with ROPS to keep the operator inside the protective structure during a tractor roll over.

It is estimated that there are 161 million tractors in the United States. Of these, over half are not equipped with ROPS or seat belts. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health estimates that over the next 31 years there will be 2,800 deaths as a result of roll over deaths from tractors without ROPS. Make sure you or a family member is not one of these statistics by making sure all your tractors have ROPS.

*Feather Prof.'s Footnote*  
"Champions are made by risking more than others think is safe."



POINTING  
THE RIGHT WAY  
March 14, 1999

#### Background Scripture:

John 1:19-42

#### Devotional Reading:

Ephesians 4:25 through 5:2

One of the finest Christian voices of the 20th century came from a land most of us cannot locate on a world map. The more familiar name of this teardrop-shaped island at the tip of India is Ceylon, but today it is known as Sri Lanka.

This Sri Lankan was known to the Christian world as D.T. Niles, a gifted speaker and evangelist who was selected to give the opening address at the historic Amsterdam meeting of the World Council of Churches. In 1951, his only book in English to that time was published, *That They May Have Life*, (Harper). It is a small book of only 120 pages, but it is the best book on the why and how of Christian witness I have ever read.

At one point he says: "Evangelism is witness. It is one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. The Christian does not offer out of his bounty. He has no bounty. He is simply guest at his Master's table and, as evangelist, he calls others too." Forget all the things you think you know about evangelism and begin with the idea that we are all "beggars." There are people in the church that seem naturally endowed to be preachers, teachers, and evangelists. But we don't have to be any of those to be involved in evangelism, for we are, like all human beings, beggars trying to find food.

#### BEING A CHRISTIAN

So, as a beggar who has found food at the Lord's Table, it is incumbent upon me to help other beggars find that food. I don't have to point to myself and say, "Look at what I am and what I know." What I need to do is simply tell other hungry souls where to find the same food to which someone else directed me. That is no less true for you. You, too, can at least point other beggars in the right direction. As Niles puts it, "Evangelism is not a program, it is being a Christian."

The religious authorities were very concerned about John's cre-

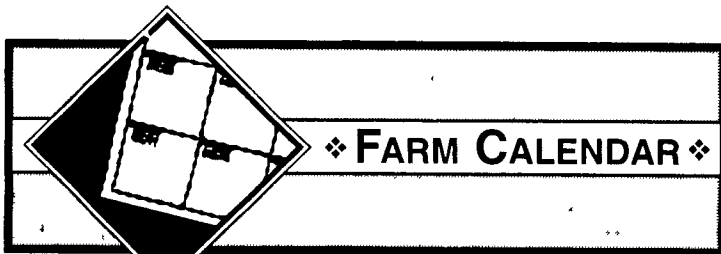
denials. Levites and priests were sent to him to ask, "Who are you?" John did not hesitate to confess "I am not the Christ" (1:19), "And they asked him, 'What then? Are you Elijah?' He said, 'I am not.' 'Are you the prophet?' And he answered, 'No.' They said to him then, 'Who are you?'" John was not willing to play their name games and said simply, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord'."

Both friends and foes alike wanted to focus on John personally, but instead he determinedly pointed away from himself to the Christ: "... among you stands one whom you do not know... the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie." Again and again they tried to focus on John, but each time he pointed to Jesus and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (1:30). As a Christian that is our task, too — to point to Jesus and say, "Behold the Lamb of God!" (Not in those words, of course, because they are not meaningful to most of the fellow beggars we encounter.)

#### AN INVITATION

Niles says that "Evangelism is the proclamation of an event, it is also an invitation to an encounter — an encounter with the risen Christ." Many of us are "not merely prodigal from their Father's home but have actually forgotten the Father's address..." It is our task to make the Father's address known, to be signposts directing travelers to the Father's presence...

That's what John the Baptist did, he pointed people to an encounter with the Christ. When two disciples of John came to Jesus asking, "Rabbi... where are you staying?", he invited them to a personal encounter: "Come and see" (1:39). Then one of them, Andrew, found his brother Simon Peter, and made the same invitation to him. If they could point people in the right direction, so can we.



### ❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

#### Saturday, March 13

The New Farm Entrepreneur Fifth Annual New and Beginning Farmer Workshop, Holiday Inn, Grantville.

Viticultural and Enological Symposium, Forsgate Country Club, Jamesburg, N.J.

York County 4-H Center Education Series For Gardeners, 4-H Center, York, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Home Gardeners' School, SUN Area Career and Technology Center, New Berlin, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Southeast Pa. Fellowship of

Christian Farmers Spring Outreach Meeting, Leola Family Restaurant, Leola, noon.

Eastern Bison Association Annual Show and Sale and Winter Conference, Pa. Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, noon.

#### Sunday, March 14

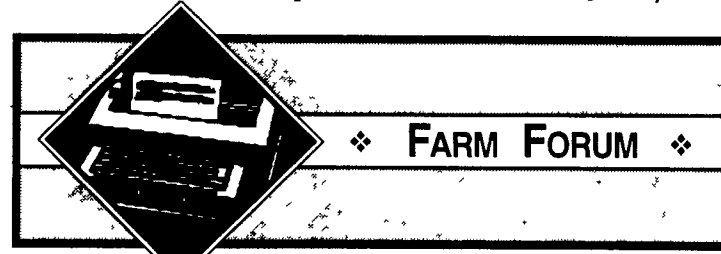
State 4-H Week, thru March 20.

#### Monday, March 15

Coudersport Crops Day, Coudersport Elementary School, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Potter County Vegetable and Potato Growers meeting,

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### ❖ FARM FORUM ❖

#### Editor:

Last Friday, March 5, the bottom fell out of the milk price when the Basic Formula Price (BFP) decreased from \$16.27 to \$10.27 per hundredweight (cwt.). At the end of this month the advance price dairy farmers will receive for February milk will fall the entire \$6.00 per cwt., while average

blend prices will fall to these new levels in April.

Last week all but one of the farm organizations and all of the state's dairy cooperatives testified in Harrisburg in favor of Pennsylvania's joining the Northeast Dairy Compact. The only farm group opposed to the Compact was the Independent Dairy Pro-

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