



# OPINION

We rarely toot our own horn, even though we receive many complimentary remarks about the scope of our newspaper. But we have been so honored by this piece in the *InterView*, Penn State University's faculty/staff libraries June/July newsletter, we thought to pass it on to you.

## Top Agriculture Newspaper Preserved On Microfilm

The University Libraries are preserving *Lancaster Farming*, a leading source of Pennsylvania agriculture news, on microfilm. First published in 1955, the newspaper is the largest farm weekly in the United States and reaches 50,000 subscribers in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. Issues printed between 1955 and 1983 will be microfilmed.

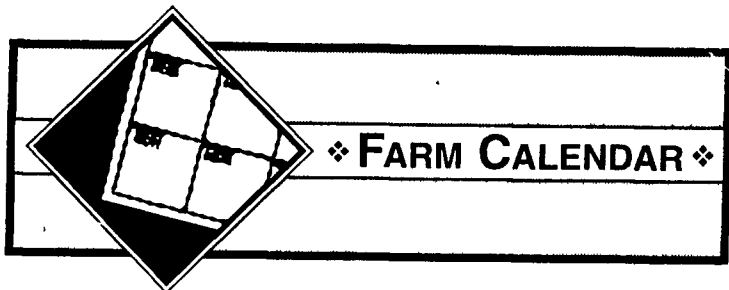
*Lancaster Farming* is a dynamic and vibrant publication, according to Terry Etherton, distinguished professor of animal nutrition and head of the Department of Dairy and Animal Science. "This publication is the voice of agriculture, agricultural policy, and environmental issues related to agriculture," Etherton says.

Helen Smith, life sciences librarian and agriculture sector, says *Lancaster Farming*, which is aimed at both farmers and their families, is also an important resource for agricultural economics and historians. "It is valuable as a record of Pennsylvania agriculture and country life," she explains, adding that *Lancaster Farming* is often the only place to get Pennsylvania specific market prices for crops and livestock.

Microfilming *Lancaster Farming* will allow Libraries' patrons to continue to use the publication while the originals are stored in the Libraries' annex, a climate-controlled area more appropriate for the storage of fragile newspaper.

The project is being funded by the University Libraries, the Thaddeus Stevens Irwin Libraries Preservation Endowment, and the *Lancaster Farming* publishing office, which provided financial support and is providing copies of any missing issues. The microfilming will be completed by the end of July 1999. For more information on preservation projects, contact Sue Kellerman, head of the preservation department, at (814) 863-4696 or email [lsk@psu.edu](mailto:lsk@psu.edu). *Lancaster Farming's* current issue and additional information on the publication are available at <http://www.lancasterfarming.com>.

According to Libraries officials, *Lancaster Farming* is the most sought publication in the Penn State University libraries.



**Saturday, July 10**  
Tioga County Annual Farm-City Day, Wilbur "John" and Sandy Odgen's Farm, Lawrenceville, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

Roth Farm Festival, Roth Farm of DelVal College, North Wales, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Sunday, July 11**  
1999 National Limousin Show and Congress, Great Plains Coliseum and Fairgrounds, Lawton, Okla., thru July 17.

**Monday, July 12**  
Mason Dixon Fair, Delta, thru July 17.

Nutrient Management For Part-Time Farmers, Elkton Library, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, July 13**  
Southeast Capital Region 4-H Leadership Conference, Albright College, Reading, thru July 16.

Penn State Weed Tour, PSU Agronomy Farm, Rock Spring.  
Franklin County Holstein Association Field Day, Marcus and Chester Martin Farm, Mercersburg, 10 a.m.

Jacktown Fair, Wind Ridge, thru July 17.

Living Mulch Research and Demonstration Tour, Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center, Rock Springs, Noon-3:30 p.m.

Penn State Milk Marketing Specialist meeting at Clarion County extension office, Shippenville, 10 a.m.-noon.

Grazier Field Meeting, Brian Bitner Farm, Trout Run, 7 p.m.  
Milk Marketing Meeting, Mercer County extension office, 7:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, July 14**  
Butler County Holstein Association Twilight Meeting, George and Stephen Hartzell Farm, Slippery Rock, 7 p.m.

Somerset County Holstein Show, Meyersdale Fairgrounds, Meyersdale, 7 p.m.

Pa. Vegetable Growers' Association Field Tour to South Jersey, departs 7 a.m. from Home Furnishings Factory Outlet Mall, Morgantown, returns 5:30 p.m.



### To Clean up Pastures after Storms

Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent, reminds us to beware of summer storms and the threat they pose livestock on pasture. Animals standing under trees during a electrical storm are subject to a lightning strike.

You may want to take animals off pasture before a thunderstorm. Also, it is important to clean up storm damage before it injures or kills livestock. A key item on the clean up list is the removal of downed tree branches, especially if they are from a wild cherry tree.

Wilting cherry leaves will poison livestock when eaten. You should check and repair fences to keep livestock in the pasture and not on roads and other fields. Other dangers to livestock on pasture include things added to the pasture by flooding streams, neighbors or passing motorists. Such items could cut, poison or make livestock sick.

### To Clean out Sprayers Correctly

According to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent, you should follow these 8 procedures when cleaning out your spray tank to prevent residue carry over problems.

First, always follow pesticide label for specific cleaning instructions.

Second, clean sprayer as soon after use as possible because dried material is harder to remove.

Third, remove any left over spray materials in the tank and booms in an approved manner.

Fourth, fill the tank about half full with water and add a tank cleaning agent (commercial tank cleaner, detergent, bleach, ammonia, etc.) as listed on the pesticide label.

Fifth, circulate the solution through the sprayer including the booms and nozzles. Allow the solution to stay in the sprayer for several hours.

Sixth, pump the cleaning solution out of the sprayer through the nozzles.

Seventh, rinse the tank twice more with clean water.

Eighth, remove the strainer, nozzle tips and screens for cleaning.

Solanco Young Farmers Annual Barn Tour/Field Day Meeting, Hope Valley Farms, 7:30 p.m.

**Thursday, July 15**  
Chester County Holstein Association Field Day, Sam Stoltzfus farm, Parkersburg, 10 a.m.  
Vegetable Twilight Meeting, Lariland Farms, Maryland, 6 p.m.  
Lycoming County Fair, Hughesville, thru July 24.

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### To Look at Fences

For effective animal control, wire spacing is more important than fence height, reports Chester Hughes, Lancaster County Extension Livestock Agent.

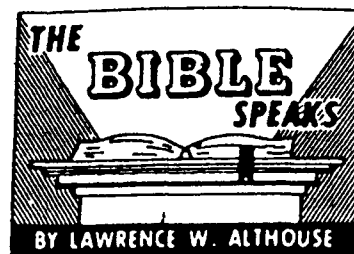
More animals go through and under fences than over. Proper wire spacing makes your fences more effective. Regardless of how many wires your fence has, always position one wire at shoulder height of the animal to be controlled. This is the "nose wire" that your animals see and touch when they approach the fence.

Other fence wires should be

spaced according to the type of animal being controlled - 10 to 12 inches apart for cattle and horses or 6 to 8 inches apart for sheep and goats. The bottom wires should be closer together than the top wires.

Fences taller than 48 inches are not really necessary. Electric fences may be lower - 36 inches for cattle and horses or 30 inches for sheep and goats. Shorter fences also allow closer wire spacing.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "Ice cream is air conditioning for the soul."*



**QUALMS & CHUCKLES**  
July 11, 1999

### Background Scripture:

Genesis 15:1 through 18:15; 21:1-7

### Devotional Reading:

Deuteronomy 7:7-11

God made Abraham and Sarah the best of all possible promises that could be given to a Hebrew: a child to bless their barren marriage and an assurance that they would be father and mother to countless generations. Even today, it would be a magnificent promise, but then it seemed too good to be true. The failure to produce a male heir was one of the most important life issues in Abraham's culture.

We can see just how important it was to him: "O Lord God, what wilt thou give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus" (Gen. 15:2). We must remember that the only immortality in which people hoped in his day was immortality through the continuance of one's males offspring. No male children equaled oblivion.

So, we can hardly appreciate how vital was the promise God made: "Your own son shall be your heir...Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them...So shall your descendants be" (15:4,5). Surely, Abraham had given up hope of ever having and heir and now the Lord was promising him his heart's desire.

### THEY LAUGHED!

The writer of Genesis does not tell us how much time passes before this first declaration of God's promise and the second in Genesis 17. When the call first came to Abraham in chapter 12, Abraham was 75 years old. By the time chapter 17 opens, Abraham was 99 years old (17:1). It seems safe to conclude that some time has passed between the original promise and the reiteration of it. So we might assume that, as Abraham grew older, he couldn't help wonder how God's promise would be fulfilled at an age when men do not impregnate and women most certainly do not conceive. And if Abraham wondered, you and I would probably have just plain doubted, for we like our promises fulfilled instantly, if not sooner.

Yet, the promise is given once again. First, it is implicit: "...you

shall be the father of a multitude of nations..." (17:4). And then explicit: "As for Sarai your wife...I will give you a son by her" (17:15,16). The promise is plain and simple; there is nothing to misinterpret.

So how did Abraham and Sarah react to this incredible promise that had already been long-delayed in fulfillment? "Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed..." Sarah reacted much the same way, a little less openly perhaps: "So Sarah laughed to herself..." (18:12). Well, she thought she laughed to herself, but God heard her and he asks Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh...?" (18:13). "But Sarah denied, saying, 'I did not laugh'; for she was afraid." She should have known better than try to deceive him. He said, "No, but you did laugh" 18:15).

### THEY QUESTIONED

I have to confess that when I read of Abraham and Sarah laughing at God's promise, I grow uneasy for that seems an irreverent response to make to the living God. Yet, as I read this passage again today it occurred to me that God does not seem angry with their laughter. In fact, he seems to understand their reaction and does not mind.

Nor does he seem to mind their qualms. Abraham protests: "Shall a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Shall Sarah who is ninety years old, bear a child?" (17:17). Sarah protests, too: "After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?" (18:33). Let's not judge them too harshly, for wouldn't we be saying the very same thing? The promises of God sometimes seem funny, because they fly in the face of what we think are "the facts" and we question them because they are beyond what we have previously experienced.

When the Lord makes promises to us that seem beyond all probability, God is not offended if we chuckle and question the seeming absurdity, for he understands our incredulity. Faith does not deny incredulity, but it goes on beyond it. So he meets Abraham and us with a question of his own: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (18:14) and how you answer it makes all the difference.

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