



## OPINION

### Always Inspect Equipment For Hazards

In November of 1998 a Huntingdon County farmer was working on his farm filling Ag Bag with high moisture shelled corn. Because the wet corn wasn't flowing out of the gravity wagon very well, the farmer climbed into the wagon and pushed the shelled corn out into the bagger.

On the 14th load of corn that day, the wagon began to tip over while he was pushing the corn out. Most of the corn was out of the unloading side, but about 50 to 60 bushels were lodged on the opposite side of the wagon.

"I thought the whole wagon was tipping," the farmer said, "I didn't want to be pinned under it so I tried to jump at an angle."

The edge of the wagon box hit the ground before the farmer could jump clear, catapulting him out of the wagon with unbelievable force. He rolled an additional 15 feet after slamming onto the ground.

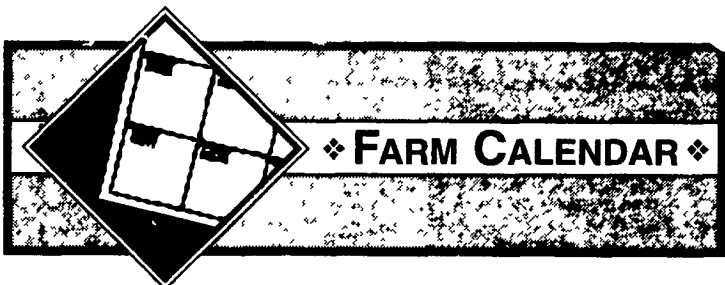
Upon further inspection of the wagon, which he had borrowed from a neighbor, he found that the gravity box actually tipped off of the wagon chassis. The two rear brackets holding the gravity box to the chassis were not fastened, and the right front bracket had been cracked, welded, and had broken again. The left front bracket was fastened, but had bent when the wagon went over.

After this incident, the farmer said he changed and repaired the brackets on this wagon and on his own three gravity wagons. He also secured the gravity wagons to the chassis with heavy safety chains.

Luckily, the farmer was not seriously injured. He suffered a cracked pelvis, and was on crutches for two weeks, but he has since fully recovered. Luckier still was the fact that his 12 year old son who had been in the wagon just a short time before, was not injured.

This accident demonstrates that even though you are familiar with a piece of equipment, and have just recently used it, you should always inspect the equipment for potential hazards and wear.

Wagon brackets are not something that you may automatically think of as potentially hazardous if they fail, but this farmer can tell you otherwise.



#### Saturday, July 31

Pa. Holstein Southwest Championship Show, Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 9:30 a.m.

Cattlemen's Field Day, Dunwalke Farm, Far Hills, N.J.

West Central 4-H/FFA Dairy Show, Grange Fairgrounds, Centre Hall.

Pa. Cattlemen's Association Summer Field Day, Haller Beef and Forage Research Farm, University Park, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Washington County Ag Expo, Sharpsburg, Md., thru Aug. 6.

Windmill Dedication Ceremony, Montgomery County Agricultural Center, Gaithersburg, Md., 11:30 a.m.

#### Sunday, August 1

Potter County Fair, Millport, thru Aug. 7.

Union County West End Fair, Laurelton, thru Aug. 7.

#### Monday, August 2

Morrison Cove Dairy Show, Martinsburg, thru Aug. 6.

Clearfield County Fair, Clearfield, thru Aug. 7.

Cochranon Community Fair, Cochranon, thru Aug. 7.

Goshen County Fair, West Chester, thru Aug. 7.

Schuylkill County Fair, Summit

Station, thru Aug. 7.

Northcentral FFA Dairy Show, Troy Fairgrounds, Troy.

#### Tuesday, August 3

10th Ag Horizons Conference, Wildwood Conference Center, Harrisburg Area Community College.

New Stanton Farm and Home Fair, Westmoreland, thru Aug. 7.

Dairy Tour 1999, West Branch N.E. Michigan, van to leave Quality Inn/Super 8 parking lot, Erie, 6:30 a.m., returns Aug. 4.

Twilight Forestry Tour, French Creek State Park, 6:30 p.m.

#### Wednesday, August 4

Lancaster County 4-H Fair, Lampeter Fairgrounds, thru Aug. 7.

Global Soy Forum '99, Sheraton Chicago Hotel and Towers, thru Aug. 7.

Lancaster County 4-H Swine Roundup Show and Sale, Mannheim Fairgrounds.

York County Holstein Association Summer Picnic, Glenn and Dawn Anderson Farm, York.

Northeast Dairy Compact Commission meeting, Northern Stage Opera House, White River Junction, Vermont, 1 p.m., public hearing 7 p.m.

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## Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

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Agricultural Agent

### To Assess Corn Crop

Because of the lack of rain since late May, corn growth has stopped in many areas and in the worst areas corn fields are beginning to dry up.

Although we can do little to change the weather, we can make some management decisions now to help minimize losses and salvage as much from a bad situation as possible.

The condition and yield potential of the crop should be assessed. Dairy and livestock farmers may want to collect a forage sample for moisture, forage quality, and nitrate levels. Grain farmers may want to begin identifying ways to market their crop as silage.

All farmers should be checking with their crop insurance or Farm Service Agency (FSA) representative before harvesting the crop. When leaves cease to unroll at night and the tops start to brown out, the plants are probably not going to recover. As browning of the crop continues, the forage quality will decline as the plants are using stored carbohydrates in the leaves and stalk to sustain themselves. Farmers should probably consider harvesting the corn for silage.

Delaying harvest will reduce yield and quality and reduce the potential for planting a second crop. If half the leaves are dead or dying, the corn would be a good candidate for evaluating for silage harvest.

A rough estimate of wet (70 percent moisture) silage yield is about one ton per foot height of corn without ears or poorly pollinated ears. This estimate may be high on very short (one to three foot tall) corn.

### To Look At Small Grains For Forage

Because drought conditions across most of Pennsylvania have resulted in lower quantities of forages and grains, many livestock and dairy farmers may need additional forage for fall and spring.

According to Dr Elwood Hatley, Penn State professor of agronomy, winter small grains are a possible source. Winter grains can be grazed in the fall and early spring without greatly affecting grain yield if they go into winter with approximately two to three inches of growth.

You should also remove cattle in the spring prior to growth stage 6 or stem elongation. When used for pasture, small grains should be planted in mid-August to early September for grazing from October to late December and again in early spring.

If you are harvesting the small grain for silage, grazing should be discontinued prior to growth stage 6 in the spring. Spring oat also

can be seeded in mid-August for fall grazing or silage production

### To Select Small Grains For Forage

All winter grain species can be harvested for forage. Winter rye traditionally has been the major small grain used for forage because it has the most winter hardiness and can be planted the latest for both erosion control and forage.

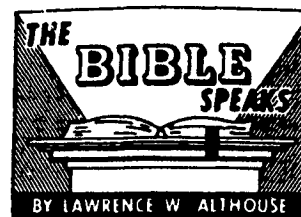
Because its quality drops faster than the other small grains, you should harvest it prior to head emergence (boot stage). Other small grains can be harvested later. Most are harvested near head emergence to allow earlier planting of corn.

In most years, rye is ready in late April, barley in early May and wheat in early to mid-May.

Seeding other winter grains with rye (rye-wheat) has helped maintain quality when rye harvest is delayed past head emergence.

Spring oat and spring barley also can be used for forage. Seed early, in mid- to late March. When planting small grains for forage, the seeding rate should be increased by 30 percent. If grazing in the fall, apply 40 to 50 pounds nitrogen per acre at planting to stimulate late summer and fall growth.

Do not delay applying spring nitrogen. Apply the required amount at green up in early spring. Early applied nitrogen can stimulate additional tillering that may contribute to dry matter production but not to grain production.



### HOW FAR CAN YOU RUN?

August 1, 1999

#### Background Scripture:

Genesis 27:41 to 28:22

#### Devotional Reading:

Psalms 121:1-8

"Why are children and youth today so much more violent than they were in our generation?" This was a question a news commentator asked of a psychologist on a television program I was watching in the aftermath of the tragedy in Littleton, Colorado. The psychologist replied that, it wasn't just the tremendous amount of violence young people watch on television or in their ghoulish computer games, but the fact that so often they never witness any serious consequences to that violence. The TV camera rarely focuses on the consequences: people maimed for life, others suffering painful death, lives ended too early, children rendered fatherless, motherless and so on.

Look at the cartoons that children watch on TV. The cartoon character is pushed off a cliff and, although experiencing some pain, he or she is not killed but gets up to go on to the next episode. Elmer Fudd opens the 'birthday present' from nemesis Bugs Bunny, and it blows up in his face. Elmer is left with a blackened face, but there is no impairment or death. Violence is thus robbed of its seriousness.

### SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

In the story of Jacob and Esau don't miss the serious consequences that follow from the antics of this dysfunctional family. When Jacob extorted Esau's birthright and then defrauded him of his dying father's blessing, he assumed that, after a bit of unpleasantness on Esau's part, he could take over as head of his deceased father's clan. But, although Esau may have been a bit slow to figure things out, he was not slow to react to what Jacob had done to him. "Now Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing with which his father had blessed him, and Esau said to himself, 'The days of mourning for my father are approaching; then I will kill my brother Jacob.'" Jacob would now have to pay the price of his brother's hatred.

Their mother, Rebekah, realized this, so she plotted with

Jacob to deceive his father into sending him away to stay with his uncle long enough to pick a bride from the family of Laban, her brother. So, instead of being able to stick around and enjoy the advantages that Isaac had bestowed upon him, Jacob had to flee. Although Jacob had outwitted his brother twice, these were hollow victories.

Rebekah also had to suffer the consequence of the role that she had played. She assumed Jacob would be away only for a little while and then, Esau's anger abated, he could return. But Genesis doesn't give us any reason to believe that she ever again saw her favorite son. From the text we may draw the conclusion that, by the time Jacob finally returned, she had died.

### WHAT A DREAM!

So Jacob flees from his home to a far country where he will be safe. Resting for the night on his journey, Jacob has a marvelous dream of a heavenly ladder (more accurately "stairway" or "ramp") with the angels of God ascending and descending between heaven and earth. In his dream, the Lord reveals himself as the God of his father Isaac and his grandfather Abraham and repeats the promise to which he has become heir. Don't worry, Jacob, God will be with you!

Jacob, however, is not yet Israel the great patriarch and he responds to this wonderful revelation at Bethel with a childish attempt to bargain: "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I will go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear... of all that thou givest me, I will give the tenth to thee" (28:22). As Walter Russell Bowie comments, "A cheap prayer if there ever was one!"

God is not put off by the crudity of Jacob's declaration. He has a purpose for Jacob to fulfill so he can wait until Jacob grows up in spirit. From here on, however, Jacob would know that no matter where he might go to escape, God could not be put off nor outdistanced.

How far can you run? The answer, when God is the pursuer—never far enough.

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