



## OPINION

### The Drought Is No One's Fault

"Rationality" is a term for a state of mind open to reasonable and logical thinking and behaving.

In good times, not everyone has it.

In bad times, it can become as elusive as the perfect cow.

This drought is a statistical once-in-a-lifetime experience that would have been nice to miss, but it is no time to lose mental calmness and rationality.

The drought is the drought. It's not anything else. It's not a precursor to Armageddon. It's a drought.

The American agricultural community is used to disaster and at times calamity, but we're not immune to becoming so stressed as to lose our rationality.

The mind can race with all the unanswered "What ifs?" and lock up like a cattle trailer with bad brakes.

There is help for those facing a loss of crops and a loss of cash flow. That information is in the news stories we publish and available at local Cooperative Extension offices.

But there is also help for those for whom this drought is the last straw to continuing farming as they have.

A North Dakota State University Extension article authored by Deb Gebeke, a family science specialist, and Kim Bushaw, a Parent Line Program specialist, is published in this issue.

The article is about how to talk to children about tough times.

Here is an excerpt:

"Take time to reflect on your situation — you are not in control of things such as weather and downsizing of a business.

"Once you have resolved yourself of the need for change, begin to think about the real message you want to send your children. Some of the points to consider:

- "It's not the children's fault. Remind them that they are not responsible for what's happening.

- "The family will need to make some changes, and you will appreciate their cooperation.

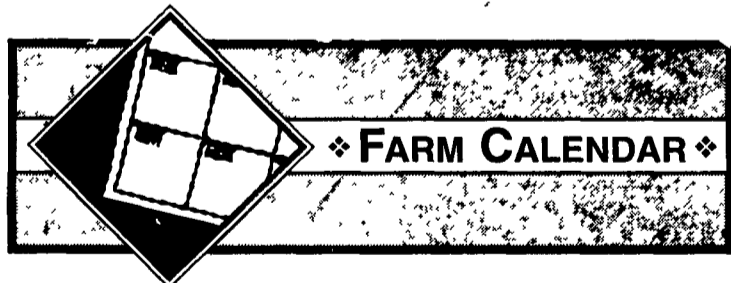
- "Many decisions will need to be made. Children will be involved in discussion but must remember that the adults will need to make difficult choices that are in the interest of the entire family. Not everyone will appreciate every decision.

- "Your children's ideas are welcome and respected. Appreciate their helping out, and do not ridicule their ideas, regardless of what they are. Point out the helpful parts and explain why other parts are not workable. Listen.

- "No matter what happens, there is no problem so great that together you and your family cannot work through it. To get through this, the family must be open to seeking out whatever help is available.

- "This is a temporary situation. Keep the 'big picture' in mind, and work toward the end goals set by the family. Keep the children informed about progress and what to expect. Pull together and make it through.

- "The most important thing you can do for each other is simply to listen and then help the others turn their thoughts in a positive direction."



#### Saturday, August 7

Pa. Performance-Tested Ram And Invitational Ewe Sale, State College.

Clinton County Fair, Mackeyville, thru Aug. 14.

Wayne County Fair, Honesdale, thru Aug. 14.

Kids' Day On The Farm, in conjunction with Old Time Plowing Show, Pennsylvania German Heritage Center, Kutztown University, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., thru Aug. 8.

Old-Time Plowboys Club Antique Tractor Show, Kutztown University Heritage Center Farm, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., thru Aug. 8.

#### Sunday, August 8

Bedford County Fair, Bedford, thru Aug. 14.

Transfer Harvest Home Fair, Transfer, thru Aug. 14.

#### Monday, August 9

Chester County 4-H Livestock Shows, Romano 4-H Center, Honey Brook, thru Aug. 15.

Kutztown Holstein Show, Kutztown Fairgrounds, Kutztown.

Sykesville Ag and Youth Fair, Sykesville, thru Aug. 14.

Butler Farm Show, Butler, thru Aug. 14.

Dawson Grange Community Fair, Dawson, thru Aug. 14.

Kutztown Fair, Kutztown, thru Aug. 14.

Tioga County Fair, Whitneyville, thru Aug. 14.

Warren County Fair, Pittsfield, thru Aug. 14.

Montour-DeLong Community Fair, Washingtonville, thru Aug. 14.

Sewickley Township Community Fair, West Newton, thru Aug.



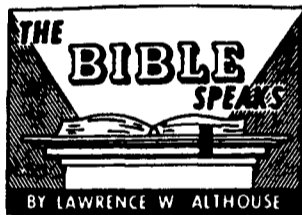
### Now Is The Time

By John Schwartz

Lancaster County  
Agricultural Agent

#### To Watch Drought Satellite Program

On Tuesday evening, August 10 Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences will be holding a satellite conference on drought. The program will be from 7 P.M. to 9 P.M. with a 30 minute question and answer session from 9 P.M. to 9:30 P.M. Faculty members from agronomy, veterinary science and forest resources will address issues facing farmers during this dry period. Also, family stress issues that result from decreased income, crop insurance and feeding questions will be discussed. Those people with satellite dishes may view the program on Satellite: SBS 6 transponder 2, KU band. Many Pennsylvania county cooperative extension offices will be down linking the conference. For more information on this meeting contact your county cooperative extension office. Lancaster County will be down linking the program in our downstairs meeting room at the Farm and



A LOT TO COME BEFORE THAT!

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Background Scripture:  
Genesis 32:3 through 33:17  
Devotional Reading:  
Matthew 18:21-35

One of the spiritual mountaintops of the book of Genesis — in fact, of the whole Old Testament — is the single sentence in 33:4: "But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept."

Of course, there was a lot to come before that mountaintop! There is a considerable distance between where we left Jacob last week and we find him this week. Jacob, the cynical, scheming bro-

14. Northeast Dairy Business/Pro-Dairy Parlor Tours, begins at East Hill Farm, Warsaw, N.Y., 9:30 a.m. (Gary Burley), more tours Aug. 10.

Cumberland County 4-H Round-up, Shippensburg Fairgrounds,

Tuesday, August 10

Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, Lightning — How To Protect Yourself and Buildings,

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Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Drive, Lancaster PA.

#### To Attend Drought Meeting

Our office will be holding drought meetings on Wednesday, August 11. Greg Roth, Penn State Agronomist, Jud Heinrichs, Penn State Dairy Scientist, Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent and Timothy Fritz, Lancaster and Chester Counties Extension Farm Management Agent will be discussing the current drought situation in the county. They will be discussing crop damages, harvesting options, alternative crops, purchasing feeds, feeding concerns and herd health.

The first meeting will be held 1 P.M. at the Paradise Community Hall in Paradise Park on the north side of Route 30 near the bridge construction. The second meeting will be held 7 P.M. at Summit Valley School on Eastern School Road, south of New Holland, just east of New Holland Road. Plan to attend one of these meetings so you may learn more about your options, concerns that need to be addressed and precautions that must be taken to prevent major problems.

#### To Manage Alfalfa for Leafhoppers

During dry weather the management of alfalfa is critical.

Potato leafhoppers can cause severe damage to alfalfa during dry growing seasons, according to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County Extension Agronomy Agent. They damage alfalfa in several ways: losses in hay tonnage, delayed re-growth, reduced livability and survivability of the stand. Hopper resistant alfalfa varieties are also impacted by dry weather if not sprayed with an insecticide. When alfalfa fields seem like they are not growing due to dry weather, continued monitoring and spraying to control leafhoppers is essential. Once fields show damage, growth has stopped. To rescue the field and to initiate new growth, the field needs to be harvested or clipped. In addition to cutting the field, it should be sprayed to protect it from re-infestations. To scout a field, use an insect net and make 20 sweeps. If you catch 4 or more leafhoppers and the alfalfa is less than 4 inches tall, then spray. If the alfalfa is between 4 and 8 inches tall and you catch 6 or more leafhoppers you should spray. If the alfalfa is over 8 inches tall and you catch 18 or more leafhoppers then spray or harvest.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote:  
"Perfection is our goal.  
Excellence will be tolerated."

ther who cheated Esau of his birthright and blessing, the unrepentant scoundrel who had to flee his parental home and his doting mother to find safe lodging with his uncle in a far country. Then there was Esau, the man who was so impetuous and unmindful that he traded away his birthright and allowed his brother to defraud him of his blessing. Esau, at last goaded to fury, resolving to kill Jacob at his first opportunity.

The situation is not so different from ones we know of personally or read about every day — people alienated from one another and vowing to "get back at" those who have wronged them. The distance between husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, neighbors and neighbors often seems unbreachable. That is the way it seemed for the family of Isaac estranged forever!

#### HOW LONG IS 'FOREVER'?

One of the things that life may teach us, however, is that "forever" may not be as long a time as we think. Sometimes dysfunctional families can be helped to function constructively. Sometimes family breaches may be overcome. People are sometimes reconciled after a passage of time. People change and that which had seemed impossible now becomes possible.

In Jacob's life this did not happen overnight. On his way to his uncle Laban, he had that strange dream of a "ladder" reaching into the heavens. While he was with Laban, he found his own fraudulent character mirrored in his uncle. He experienced what it was like to be deceived and cheated. He also found God's favor and, despite everything else, he grew exceptionally prosperous. In fact, he grew so prosperous that Laban had become dangerously jealous. He would have to go somewhere else.

But where should he go? Despite his fear of Esau, Jacob decided to go home. In a sense, he was not the same Jacob who fled his home. Because of God's promise, this "new Jacob" was ready to face the consequences of what he had done. He hoped that Esau would no longer seek to kill him. He was very fearful, but he set his face to-

ward home.

#### STILL A SCHEMER!

In other ways, there was some of the "old Jacob" in the "new" one in that he still schemed and plotted. He would send a magnanimous present ahead to Esau — actually, a kind of reparations for what he had done. He would divide his large entourage into different sections several days apart, so that if Esau attacked one, the other might escape. He prayed to God: "Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand . . . of my brother . . ." (32:11). Then, at the River Jabbok he has a deep dreamlike spiritual experience, wrestling with a being whom he later believes to have been the Lord Himself. The nocturnal Wrestler had given Jacob a new name, Israel, meaning "God strives" or "He who strives with God." The same, but a different Jacob — different enough to be given a new name and image.

Limping toward his brother's great array of men, Jacob appears to be a somewhat different man than the one who had run away. Up to this point it seems that Jacob is putting everyone before him for the sake of his own safety, but then the writer of Genesis says, "He himself went on before them bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near to his brother" (33:3).

By the grace of God, the chasm between Jacob and Esau, between the old Jacob and the new Israel had been breached. Fearful enough, repentant enough, humble enough, Jacob/Israel was ready to face the gulf between them. "But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept."

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