

Lancaster Farming OPINION

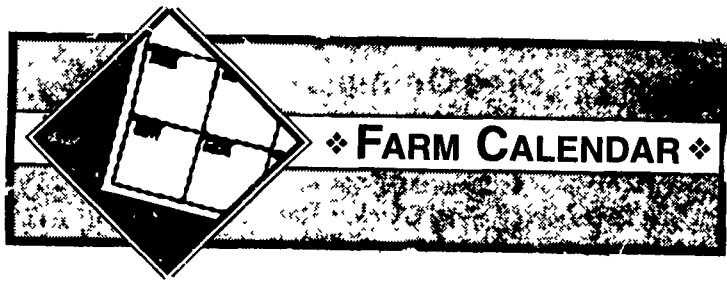
Fear Becomes Fact

Now that we have reduced the risk of environmental contamination from pesticides in our cornfields with biotechnology, you would think all would be well on the farm front. Not so. Now farmers are getting a new set of federal governmental regulations because genetically modified corn killed monarch butterfly caterpillars in a lab experiment.

Known as Bt corn, it carries a gene from a bacterium, which produces a toxin that kills pests that eat the corn plants. Because of public fear, farmers are now to plant traditional corn around the edges of Bt cornfields and plant 20 percent of their corn as non-Bt corn.

We know of one farmer who had an extreme problem with corn stalk borer until he started to use Bt corn. Now he will need to go back to his old problem. In addition, the seed companies in the last several years have put forth their best effort for increased yields into the Bt varieties. Farmers have seen better resistance to high winds and a yield of eight to 10 bushels per acre more than traditional corn.

But a perceived fact, even one that is generated by fear, becomes a fact that must be recognized. The fact: farmers will now need to go back to non-Bt corn varieties for at least part of their crop.



Saturday, February 19
Western Pa. Gardening and Landscaping Symposium, Pittsburgh Zoo, Pittsburgh, 8 a.m.-3:45 p.m.

Beginning Beekeeping Seminar, Beaver County Cooperative Extension, Beaver, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Sunday, February 20
2000 Sorghum Industry Conference, Omni Bayfront Hotel, Corpus Christi, Texas, thru Feb. 22.

Pa. Game Breeders and Hunting Preserves Meeting, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, thru Feb. 22.

Monday, February 21
Adams County Fruit Growers' Meeting, Biglerville High School.

Dairy Disease and Biosecurity Practice, Hoss's Steak and Sea House, Elizabethtown, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Bradford County Dairy Day, SRU Middle School, East Smithfield, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Tuesday, February 22
Solanco Young Farmer Dairy Herd Health and Management, Solanco High School, 7:30 p.m.

Capitol Region Advanced Crop Weed Management School, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Lykens Valley Dairy Day, Gratz.

Schuylkill County Regional Vegetable Meeting, Schuylkill County Ag Center, Pottsville, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Dairy Disease and Biosecurity Practices, Washington Inn, Boyertown, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pesticide Update Six-Pack, Blair County Extension, Altoona, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Advanced Crop Weed Management School, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, Lebanon.

Regional Beef Producers Meeting, Otterbein United Meth-

odist Church, Sunbury, 7 p.m.
Lancaster DHIA PC Dart Workshop, Kreiders Restaurant, Manheim, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Wednesday, February 23
Mid-Atlantic Direct Marketing Conference 2000, Parsippany Hilton, Parsippany, N.J., thru Feb. 27.

Capitol Region Introductory Crop Weed Management School, Franklin County Cooperative Extension, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Farm Financial Health Checkup, Cochranville Community Center.

Southeast Pa. Vegetable Growers' Day, Family Heritage Restaurant, Franconia.

Dairy Disease and Biosecurity Practices, Sunny Crest Home, Inc., Morgantown, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

York/Lancaster County Tree Fruit Growers' Educational Meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 8:15 a.m.

Northeast Region Landscape Seminar, Holiday Inn, Bartonsville, 8:45 a.m.-4 p.m.

Thursday, February 24
Managing Weeds in Field Crops, 4-H Center, Creamery. New York State Farm Show, Syracuse, thru Feb. 26.

Ag Outlook Forum, Crystal Gateway Marriott Hotel, Arlington, Va., thru Feb. 25.

Mid-Atlantic No-Till Conference, Four Points Hotel, Hagerstown, Md., continues Feb. 25 at the Holiday Inn, Grantville, Pa.

Berks County Vegetable Growers' Meeting, Kutztown. York Garden and Flower Show, York Expo Center, thru Feb. 27.

Centre County Cooperative Extension meeting, Logan Grange Hall, Pleasant Gap, 7 p.m.

Dairy Disease and Biosecurity Practice, Russellville Grange

Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Look At Land Rent

When renting land, the income potential of the land is a critical consideration when determining rental rate. To determine this the renter needs to know the production capability of the land, the value of the product at market time and the cost to produce the crop. For example, the soil will produce 165 bushels of corn, 51 bushels of soybeans and 4 tons of alfalfa hay per year in a 3 year crop rotation.

The value of corn is \$2.35 per bushel, soybeans is \$5.75 per bushel and alfalfa hay is \$110 per ton. The gross income is \$387.50 (165 x \$2.35) for corn, \$293.25 for soybeans and \$440 for alfalfa hay for an average income of \$373.59 per acre. With production costs of \$230.13 per acre for corn, \$145.85 per acre for soybeans and \$276.88 per acre for alfalfa hay or an average cost of \$217.65. This leaves an average net income per acre of \$155.94. The farmer then needs to deduct the value of his time and management and the balance is the maximum amount that may be paid for land rent. A poultry, dairy or livestock operation may be willing to subsidize the land rental rate from the animal enterprise in order to have the necessary land for proper manure utilization.

To Check Us Out On The Web

As technology continues to permeate into our daily lives, we are presented with an ever increasing access to information, goods and services, thanks to the internet. We invite you to join us on the net and bookmark your favorite pages. To start with, here are addresses to some of Penn State's web pages: Penn State www.psu.edu, College of Agricultural Sciences www.cas.psu.edu

Lancaster County Cooperative Extension lancaster.extension.psu.edu

College of Agricultural Sciences Publications www.cas.psu.edu/news.htm

Dairy and Animal Sciences www.das.psu.edu

Dairy Outlook and Market Update www.aers.psu.edu/DairyOutlook

Dairy Cattle Nutrition www.das.psu.edu/dcn

Drought Related Information www.cas.psu.edu/docs/issues/drought

PENpages www.penpages.psu.edu

Hall, Oxford, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
2nd Annual Altoona Tree, Shrub, and Turf Conference, Altoona.

Crop Master's Farming After
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Veterinary Science

www.vetsci.cas.psu.edu

Agronomy

www.agronomy.psu.edu

Poultry

poultry.cas.psu.edu

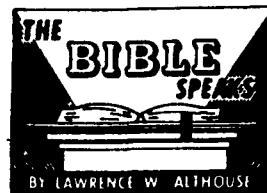
Science

To Practice Child Safety

Thousands of children are injured and hundreds killed each year by hazards found on the farm. Some of these children were working on the farm, while others wander into trouble on their own. Implement injury prevention strategies to protect agriculture's greatest resource - the children. Design a fenced safe play area near the house away from work activities. Do not allow children to roam freely on the farm. Inspect your farm regularly for hazards that can injure children.

Equip all barns, farm shop, chemical storage area, livestock pens, etc. with latches that can be locked or secured so children cannot enter. Children who are physically able to perform farm work should be only assigned age appropriate tasks that they are fully trained to do. They should only perform these tasks under close adult supervision. Do not expose children to hazards. Never carry them on tractors and equipment or invite them into the farm shop, livestock barn, grain bins, etc.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "Without change there can be no breakthroughs. Without breakthroughs there can be no future."



ESCAPING THE CROSS

February 20, 2000

Background Scripture:

Matthew 27:32-61.

Devotional Reading:

John 19:16-30.

Mean-spirited though it was, the challenge the spectators hurled at Jesus on the cross would seem to be a valid one: "You who would destroy the temple and build it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!" (Mt. 25:40). They did not expect that Jesus would be able to meet this challenge, for the Son of God does not belong on a cross. Therefore, a person hanging on a cross cannot be the Son of God, for he would have the power to call down from heaven legions of angels to overcome the military might of even Rome.

As they saw it, these agonizing hours on the cross completely nullified any legitimate claims he might have made. His helplessness at the hands of the secular rulers meant that he never had the power that had been ascribed to him. "He saved others; he cannot save himself; he is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him" (25:42). This is a taunt, not an offer; they are not offering to follow him if he can descend from the cross. They believe he cannot "save himself" and therefore that he never really "saved others." It was a trick, an illusion—virtually what we would say if Jesus came working his miracles in our midst today.

Was God Not Able?

So, if not to free himself of this terrible ordeal, why, if Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, did he not save himself in order to prove to these scoffers that he was God's appointed Son? What a demonstration of the power of God and the validity of Jesus of Nazareth if God had delivered him from the cross. Did Jesus not want to be saved from this terrible death? Was God not able to save him?

Actually, the gospels lead us to believe that there was nothing inevitable about the cross. He had numerous alternatives to Golgotha. He could have avoided coming to Jerusalem. What was there in his mission that determined that he had to go there? Wouldn't it have been better to build up support in Galilee before risking a clash in Jerusalem? Having come there,

he also could have left when the conflict with the authorities began to heat up. Or he could have answered their probing questions a little more judiciously than he did.

If he had to be in Jerusalem, why not keep a lower profile? Did he have to make that Palm Sunday procession and drive the moneychangers out of the temple (they were probably back at their old places a few days later). If he knew that Judas's loyalty was suspect, shouldn't he have avoided the Garden of Gethsemane? Even at the last moment, why didn't he answer Pilate in a way which might have persuaded the Roman governor to find him innocent and release him? Actually, he had an opportunity to do so because the charges against him could have been demonstrated to be false, at the most the product of misunderstanding.

Who Drove The Nails?

These and similar questions lead some people to conclude that Jesus and the Father wanted the cross in order to fulfill prophecy and a grand plan of salvation. I submit to you, however, that the cross was attributable solely to human sin, not the will of God. Those were men who nailed Jesus to the cross, not angels.

You see, the question was never whether God was able to save Jesus from the cross, but did these people have the free will to perpetrate this terrible crime? And, if they did have that free will, would God's purpose be better served by saving him from death by crucifixion or by letting men do their worst and giving God the opportunity to show once and for all that the best of God is more powerful than the worst of men?

Jesus was actually confronted with two choices: remaining faithful to his mission and accepting a cross if it meant that, or seizing the opportunity to escape the cross and failing the Father. Jesus chose not to fail the Father and so he accepted the cross. So, Jesus does not expect that we will seek crosses, but that neither will we shirk them when the purpose of God is at stake.

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—by—

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