

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

You Want To Get Mules

Fuel prices have come down a bit. But not enough to reduce the pain in the bottom line of farmers who must get ready to prepare the ground and plant crops this spring. This takes a lot of fuel if you farm with tractors.

But the fuel suppliers whoever they may be, friend or foe, care not about fuel prices and what they do to the American economy. We nearly fell off our editor's chair in mid-March when the first paragraph of an Associated Press article by Mark Babineck caught our attention. The article appeared in our local town paper.

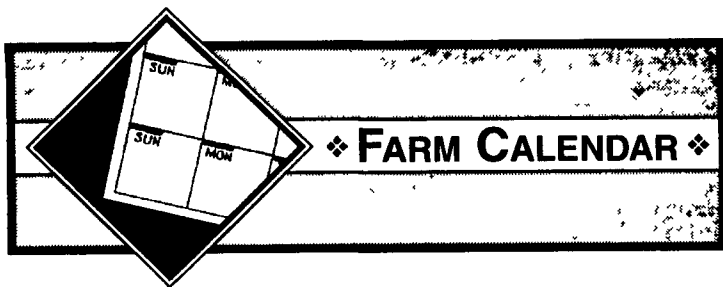
Dateline Huston (heart of oil country, we guess), the paragraph said, "Despite wallet-shrinking prices at gas stations nationwide, history suggests the current record price per gallon is not unusually high when adjusted for inflation."

This statement is true according to the rest of the article. But oh-my, how everyone must view the record LOW prices farmers get for their grains, milk and meat. The farm-gate prices for commodities not only have no room for inflation to be built in; they also have no room for the advancement of time since the 1980's.

Can you picture the outcry of the oil interests if farmers were somehow able to force fuel prices back down to the \$.30 to \$.60 per gallon some of us old-timers remember. We haven't seen the line-up of cars at gas stations this time around. The oil companies are smarter now. They keep only enough fuel in the pipeline to make sure all the cars (and tractors) can run, but not enough to create a surplus that would help bring prices down.

When we beg our enemies, "please send us more oil," they say they will increase production to make us feel good. But when you see the figures, the increase they promise is still way below the consumption levels of the U.S. economy. Why would they increase production when they have us "over a barrel?" That would be an oil barrel, of course.

Anyway, the whole doggone mess is enough to make you go out and get a team of mules.



Saturday, April 1

Delaware Valley College Green and Gold Spring Spectacular, Equestrian Center at Delaware Valley College, Doylestown, noon.

Maryland Cooperative Extension On-Farm Processing: Alternative Income Opportunities For Milk Processors Workshop, Frederick, Pa.

Family Farm Appreciation Celebration "Hoedown," Hamburg Field House, Hamburg, 7 p.m.

Annual Wye Angus Sale/3rd Annual MBEP Central Bull Test Sale, Wye Research and Education Center, 12 p.m.

Sunday, April 2

Daylight Saving Time begins.

Monday, April 3

Pa. Dairy Stakeholders Economic Education Task Force, PDA Office, Harrisburg, 9:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Tuesday, April 4

Solanco Young Farmers Time Management, Solanco High School, 7:30 p.m.

Pennsylvania Poultry Sales and Service Conference, Grantville Holiday Inn, thru April 5.

Beef Management Short Course, Eisenhower Farm, Wellsville, 7 p.m.; South Branch Farm, Seven Valleys, April 11 at 7 p.m.; Hoss's Steak and Sea House, West York, April 18, 6:30 p.m.; and York extension office, April 25, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 5

Thursday, April 6

Pa. Dairy Princess Southeast

Meeting, Weaver's Banquet Facility, Adamstown, 9:30 a.m.

Luzerne County Nutrient Management/Farm Tour, departs from Luzerne County Community College, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

Beef Production Meeting, Appalachian Environ Center, Frostburg Md., 6:30 p.m.

York County Holstein Barn Meeting, Meadow Valley Farm, Spring Grove, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Friday, April 7

Fundamentals of Marketing, Lancaster Center at Greenfield Corporate Center, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday, April 8

30th Annual Maryland State Holstein Show, Timonium Fairgrounds, 9:30 a.m.

Farm Safety Day Camp, Heidel Hollow Farm, Germansville, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.

East Central Pa. Two-Cylinder Club Inc., Ron Boyer Farm, Hereford, 9 a.m., rain date April 15.

A Morning In The Vineyard, Naylor Wine Cellars, Stewartstown, 10 a.m.-noon.

Antique Tractor Pull and Show To Benefit Cecil County Farm Museum, Carson/Jackson Farm, Rising Sun, Md., 9 a.m. (Rain date April 15.)

Sunday, April 9

National Garden Week, thru April 15.

Monday, April 10

Keystone Farm Credit Annual Meeting, Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, and April 11, Holiday Inn and Conference



Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Call Before You Dig

Want to pick up a shovel? Planning on digging a ditch? Planning to build a building? Save yourself some trouble. Pick up the phone first and make one call at least three days in advance of the scheduled work.

By making that one call to contact the Utility Location and Coordination Council (ULCC), you can save time, money and maybe your life. The ULCC has a uniform color code that alerts contractors and excavators to utilities in the work area. The council will give you the green light to dig that posthole, put in the new swimming pool, excavate for an addition or move earth for any project. Call before you dig. It is the law. In Pennsylvania call 1-800-242-1776.

To Learn Infrared Aerial Photography

Aerial photography is a new tool to provide information for managing crops, according to Leon Ressler, Lancaster County Agricultural Environmental Extension Agent. This can provide information on soil variability, where diseases and insect pests are concentrated or where drainage problems exist. Color infrared photography is a technique that provides this kind of information for improving crop management. With infrared photography green vegetation appears red. The healthier and more vigorous the growth, the darker the red will be. Sparse vegetation or weak growth will appear as a light red or pink color. Bare soil typically appears as white in the photos. Looking at the color differences in a color infrared image enables one to evaluate the vigor of the crop.

To Use Infrared

Photography to Locate Wells
During the summer of 1999 the Lancaster County Geographic Information System Department

Center, Fogelsville, 6:15 p.m.

Tuesday, April 11

Beef Management Short Course, South Branch Farm, Seven Valleys, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, April 12

National Agri-Marketing Association Marketing Conference and Trade Show, Kansas City Marriott Downtown, Kansas City, Mo., thru April 14.

Financial Planning For Retirement, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., also April 19.

Thursday, April 13

Manor FFA Banquet, Penn Manor High School, 6:30 p.m.
Cumberland Valley FFA Banquet, Cumberland Valley High School, 7 p.m.

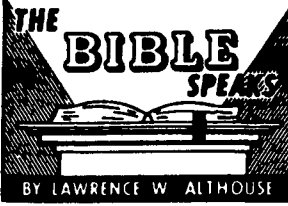
Chester-Delaware County Farm

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flew three flights of the entire county to collect color infrared images, reports Leon Ressler, Lancaster County Agricultural Environmental Extension Agent. Due to the severe drought stress the photos revealed information about the underlying geology across the county. Some of the images showed clear evidence of water bearing fractures in the bedrock under the soil surface. Over these fractures the crop condition was more vigorous reflecting the moisture coming from the fracture in the bedrock. Folds in the bedrock are also obvious in some of the images. These photos provide a new tool for locating wells. If you are interested in drilling a well, viewing the images to look for

water bearing fractures on your property would be a good first step. While identifying the fractures on the images does not guarantee a strong well, it does increase the probability of finding water. With the high cost of drilling a well any steps you can take to improve the likelihood of a good well are worth the effort. If you are interested in more information on how to use these images for locating your well, contact Penn State Cooperative Extension in Lancaster County at 717-394-6851. The images are available only for Lancaster County at this time.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "If you are not riding the wave of change, you will find yourself beneath it."



THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

PREACHING OR MEDDLING
April 2, 2000

Background Scripture:
1 Corinthians 6:12 through 7:16

Devotional Reading:
1 Corinthians 7:25-35

I'm sure that some of the Corinthians, when they read this portion of Paul's letter, decided that he had progressed from preaching to meddling. It appears that some of them assumed that sexual practices were outside the province and concern of the Christian faith. What I do with my body, they reasoned, does not affect my spirit.

They had written him on a number of problems that were dividing the church: marriage (7:1), food offered to idols (8:1), spiritual gifts (12:1), the contribution to the saints (16:1), and the role of Apollos (16:12). So, Paul says, "Now concerning the matters about which you wrote" (7:1). He is responding to specific Corinthian problems.

Christ is Coming!

Secondly, Paul is convinced that the return of Christ is immanent, coloring much of the advice that he gives for it is based upon what will keep them spiritual ready for Christ's return. We need to remember too that he distinguishes between those teachings that have come to him from the Lord and those which come strictly from him (7:10, 12).

Some of what Paul is teaching here, then, is dependent upon the situation- "To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do. But if they cannot exercise self control, they should marry." If he didn't believe that "the form of this world is passing away," it is doubtful that he would have given this because it is at variance with the teaching of the Old Testament: "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18) and rabbis considered that marriage was an unqualified duty for a man. Paul's "It is not well for a man to touch a woman" (7:1) is not for all time. So, in this period just prior to Christ's return, he taught that it is best for people to remain as they are, unless the sexual impulse made marriage a better choice.

Some of his teachings, howev-

er, were not dependent upon the immanent return of Christ and are still authoritative for us. Paul's teaches that acts of the physical body do affect the human spirit, both negatively and positively. Along with contemporary Jews and the Old Testament, he believed that a person was not divided into three separate entities as the Greeks believed. The person was a mind-body-spirit, all one being and essence. So these are not separate and what affects one aspect of our self affects all others. "Do you not know," Paul asks, "that he who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her?" (6:16). These are not just physical acts, they are spiritual realities as well.

Depths of Intimacy

Furthermore, "Do you not know that you body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...?" (6:19). Casual sex does not "go away" because it is over so soon, but because it reaches the depths of intimacy, the effects of that intimacy remain with us and our sexual partners. Rather than condemning sex, he speaks forcefully for it within the intimate bonds of marriage. "The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband...Do not refuse one another except perhaps by agreement for a season, that you may devote yourselves to prayer"(7:3-5)- mutual consent.

Paul gives us two principles to help us. First, "All things are lawful for me," but not all things are helpful"-helpful to me, to you, to others and society at large. Sex outside the bonds of marriage may seem right and good to two people, but in the long run it breaks down people and society.

The second principle is also vital: "All things are lawful for me," but I will not be enslaved by anything" (7:12). If I give in to this temptation, am I likely to become enslaved by it? The answer all too often is 'YES!' Alcohol, drugs, food and sex are able to enslave us so easily that we are no longer in a position to enjoy freedom, because we have lost the ability to choose.

Lancaster Farming
Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
-by-
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinman Enterprise
William J. Burgess General Manager
Everett R. Newswanger Editor
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