



Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Ag Biotechnology Benefits

Biotechnology holds too many promises for feeding an ever-growing world to allow scare tactics and unsubstantiated claims to retard the advances the technology offers.

With the scientific community constantly surveying new products, and rendering biotech crops as safe, Americans should embrace the advances provided by modern technology.

Various federal agencies are responsible for overseeing (biotech) products — the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture, and the Food and Drug Administration.

Farmers and ranchers have great confidence in the judgment of respected scientific authorities who have the experience and expertise required to make informed decisions.

Anti-biotech activists have tried spreading doubt about biotech's safety and benefits globally. Yet they haven't offered a shred of verifiable evidence that biotech food is unsafe to humans or threatens the environment.

We are confident that increased evaluation and examination by experts of the biotechnology process itself and the products that it develops will permit more rapid consumer acceptance of the innovations. As good as our system already is, America's farmers and ranchers welcome the extra emphasis on safety.

We understand the initial consumer concerns regarding biotech crops. But we are also confident that consumers are smart enough to realize many of the alarms sounded regarding biotechnology are simple unsubstantiated scare tactics.

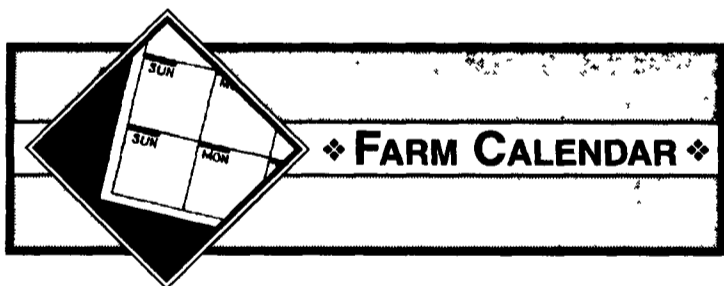
Biotechnology offers the world too many benefits to be chased away by the misguided and misinformed agendas of a few activist groups.

The environment benefits through reduced pesticide applications and less energy requirements. Less runoff means even cleaner water. And soil erosion, already minimal, will be even further reduced. Fewer trips across a field cultivating or spraying means less fuel used.

As an example of what the good biotech crops can do, a new product called "Golden Rice," developed through biotechnology, will be higher in beta-carotene than standard rice. This will help prevent blindness. Golden Rice also will be higher in iron, which reduces the incidence of anemia.

Here's a food that gets a headline that says it's actually good for you. That's quite a change from what consumers have come to expect on food reporting. And Golden Rice will be great for the people in Third World countries, which was the whole idea behind its development.

America's farmers are ready, willing and able to produce enhanced products of biotechnology. Anti-biotech activism does not reflect or, as yet, affect American consumer attitudes. The vast majority of consumers here and in other countries maintain their faith in the integrity and the quality of America's food safety chain.



Saturday, June 10

Dairy Cattle Field Day, Clarksville Facility of the Central Maryland Research and Education Center, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Lancaster County Dairy Princess Pageant, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 7 p.m.

Lycoming County Dairy Princess Pageant, Nesbitt Fire Hall, Nesbitt, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, June 11

Butler County Dairy Princess Pageant, Clearview Mall, Butler, 2 p.m.

Bedford County Dairy Princess Pageant, Arena Restaurant, Bedford, 1:30 p.m.

Monday, June 12

Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Mercer County Wool Pool, Stoneboro Fairgrounds, Stoneboro, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., also June 13, 7 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tuesday, June 13

LCPA Golf Tournament, Foxchase Golf Club, 11 a.m.

Oregon Dairy's Family Dairy Days, 11 a.m.-7 p.m., thru June 15.

Southeast Regional Cattle Association Spring Outing, Flags Warren Pointe Farm, 5 p.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers Farm and Home Security Systems, Schantz Farm, Ephrata, 7:30 p.m.

Southeast Pa. Fruit Growers Twilight Tour, Skyline Drive Orchard, Reading, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 14

Corn/Alfalfa Crop Walk, John Piwowar Farm, Uniontown, 7 p.m.

Ohio 4-H Youth Expo, Columbus Campus, Ohio State University, thru June 16.

Thursday, June 15

Lancaster Holstein Association Field Night, Trout Spring

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Now Is The Time
By John Schwartz
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

To Sign Up Crop Acreage

It is now time to sign up your crop acreage with your local Farm Service Agency.

Small grains (wheat, barley, oats) should be reported by June 15. Remaining crops (corn, soybean, grain sorghum, hay, and tobacco) should be reported by July 15.

This is a voluntary sign-up. However, as federal government programs are being developed, sign-up could be a condition for receiving payments.

Programs that might require reporting of acreage include loan

deficient payments, disaster payments, and facility loan payments.

Do not lose your future eligibility for federal programs by not reporting your acreages. For more information, contact your local Farm Service Agency.

To Watch For Hot Hay

Baling hay that is too green may cause heating. This heating could lead to spontaneous combustion and burn down the hay storage facility, reports Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agronomy agent.

Hay should not be stored until the moisture level reaches 20 percent or less. At higher moisture levels, there is a greater risk of fire.

In addition, hay baled above that moisture level has a high risk of becoming moldy and dusty.

Haylage, on the other hand, should be put into storage before its moisture content drops below 50 percent. Depending on the storage structure, haylage is best preserved for feed when it is between 50 and 60 percent moisture. Haylage with a moisture content of 45 percent poses a significant risk of fire.

To Check Hay-Mows For Hot Spots

To be safe from fires, inspect haymows at least twice each week during the harvest season, reminds Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agronomy agent.

Check for hot spots and check hot spots for their exact temperature using a thermometer. If hay temperatures reach 150 degrees, there is a danger of fire and a daily monitoring of hay is recommended. If temperatures reach 160 degrees, monitoring should be at four-hour intervals.

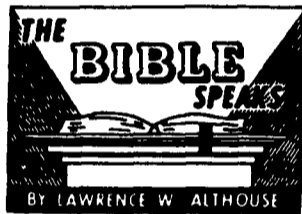
Fire pockets can be expected if the temperature reaches 175 degrees. You should notify your local fire department and place them on standby and be ready to remove hay. If the temperature reaches 185 degrees, have the fire department on hand to put out fires, which may erupt as hay is taken out of storage.

At 210 degrees, hay is certain to ignite.

Even with these safety precautions, fires can start and barns can burn to the ground. Do not wait until it is too late to call for help.

You may also want to check with your insurance company to see what coverage you have.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: Courage does not always roar. Sometimes, it is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, "I will try again tomorrow."



CLIMBING DOWN TO A HIGHER LEVEL

Background Scripture: Philippians 2:1-18.

Devotional Reading: 2 Peter 3:8-18.

Faced with writing about our assigned scriptural passage this week, I couldn't help thinking of a story I heard about an American college student who visited the home of Beethoven at Bonn and asked for permission to play on the great composer's piano.

After playing a few bars of the "Moonlight Sonata," she turned to the guard and said, "I suppose all the great pianists have played during their visits here."

"No, miss," replied the guard. "Paderewski was here two years ago but he said he was not worthy to touch it."

I was tempted to turn in this column with a single sentence pleading "I am not worthy to touch it," but I didn't think that would likely sit well with my editor and maybe even you the reader. So I will comment on it with the caveat that I know there is no way I can do justice to this passage.

Because of space limitations I am going to concentrate upon just one of its themes: the humility of the "mind of Christ."

Identical Love

Paul is proud of this church and at the same time is fearful that it will break apart in factions. So he writes: "... complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind" (2:2).

Let me assure you that Paul is not asking that they think alike. That was impossible at Philippi, as at my church and probably yours.

What is essential for followers of Jesus Christ? That they believe

identically? That they worship in the same way? That they behave according to the same moral standards? No, there will always be differences of opinion, belief, and declarations.

There is, however, one thing which we can and must have in common: the "mind of Christ" — not the thoughts of Christ, but that which preceded the thoughts: the same desire to know and serve God that was the basis for all that Jesus taught and did.

Actually, "being of the same mind" is too weak a translation of Paul's Greek, but there is no comparable English to convey the same meaning. Phillips and the Living Bible render it as having "the same attitude."

Others focus on the love of Christ: "having the same love" (Alford), "united in mutual love" (Weymouth), "fostering the same disposition of love" (Charles B. Williams) and "live together in love" (J.B. Phillips).

The New English Bible says, "Let your bearing towards one another arise out of your life in Christ Jesus." Note that none of these suggest conformity of thought, only a conformity of love.

Each of the people in the Phillipian church probably thought that they were doing God's work by insisting that other conform to their beliefs. They were certainly proud of doing battle for Christ in these matters. But Paul shows them that this is not what Christ wants nor asks of them. Indeed, he contrasts the humble attitude of Jesus Christ whom they think they are serving with their proud attitudes.

"We are in the right!" they undoubtedly assured themselves. But what a contrast Jesus provides.

Grabbing All You Can

Unlike Adam who attempted to grasp equality with God by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Jesus "did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped" (2:6).

Maybe the world in which we live tells us to "grab all you can while you can," but Jesus did not "grab" at power as he could have. Instead, "he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (2:7). Jesus' humility was not a matter of thinking himself worthless, but of voluntarily passing up the use of power. He did not pour out a portion of himself, but "he emptied himself," holding back nothing for himself as a safety factor.

I like the way William L. Sullivan puts it: "Genuine humility does not arise from the sense of our pitiable kinship with the dust that is unworthy of us but from the realization of our awful nearness to a magnificence of which we are unworthy."

Jesus humbled himself taking the form of a servant and because he did, he was exalted by God. "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed upon him the name which is above every name . . ." (2:9). Jesus stepped down to what turned out to be a higher, really the highest level. So he calls us to humble service, not because we are worthless or lacking temporal power, but because in pouring out our lives willingly for others, we too will be exalted with him.

Note: In the Steps of Paul to Rome & Greece, an 18-day tour conducted by Larry and Valere Althouse, is scheduled for April 2001. If interested, please contact us: 4412 Shenandoah Ave, Dallas TX 75205/e-mail: althouses@aol.com; fax: (214) 52109312.

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