



# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### EPA: Everywhere Rain Falls

EPA has proposed changes to the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and NPDES permit program. In these proposed rule changes, certain agricultural activities have been targeted. EPA is attempting to reverse almost 30 years of Clean Water Act history by reclassifying these agricultural activities from a nonpoint classification of discharge to a point source classification of discharge. Historically point sources were limited to industrial sites, which usually contain pipe sources of discharge. Point sources of discharge are required to obtain a prescriptive NPDES permit from the government before operations initiate.

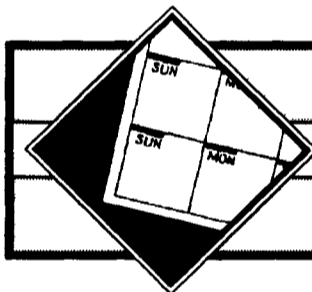
The significance of this change is multifaceted. First, it sets a dangerous precedent. Congress made clear distinctions between nonpoint and point sources of discharge and delegated that they be handled quite differently for obvious reasons. If EPA can now at will redesignate traditional nonpoint sources as point sources, they have sidetracked congressional intent of managing the two quite different entities separately and exposed all nonpoint activities as potential future point sources.

Secondly, point sources of discharge are required to obtain an NPDES permit prior to activity. This means that prior to practicing these activities, landowners will be required to obtain an NPDES permit. It is not clear in the rule whether such a permit will be required for each activity or each entry, undoubtedly that will be settled in the courts.

What does obtaining an NPDES permit mean for a landowner? Permits are expected to cost in the \$10,000 range. They will be subject to delays or refusal. They open the landowner up to public comment and public opposition. They expose the landowner to private litigation under the Clean Water Act. Even if the permit is approved, it can be challenged by environmental groups or other private entities. They require landowner evaluation of other federal laws such as the Endangered Species Act.

Obviously, the cost and liabilities incurred through the permit process will be a disincentive to landowners to maintain their lands in a forested or agricultural state. There are other provisions in the rule which allow EPA to regulate nonpoint discharges, which literally give EPA oversight everywhere that rain falls. This allows EPA to dictate local land use issues through water quality laws.

We believe this rule is unnecessary, unreasonable, and unfair. The rule is scheduled for release in late June. Call your legislator on this one.



### FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, June 17

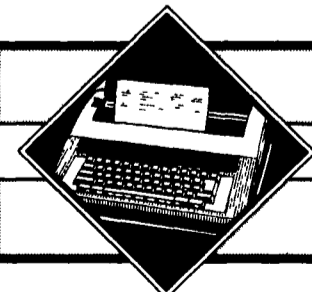
- Hay Day, EORDC, Caldwell, Ohio.
- Hoof Trimmers Picnic, West Pennsboro Township Park, Carlisle, noon.
- Penn State College Picnic, Rockspring.
- Pennsylvania Farm Link-Sponsored Meeting, Pheasant Hill Farm, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.
- Warren County Dairy Princess Pageant, Warren County Fairgrounds, Pittsfield, 8 p.m.
- Sullivan County Dairy Princess Pageant, Dushore Main St.,

- Dushore, 7 p.m.
- Crawford County Dairy Princess Pageant, Richmond's Dairy Farm, Linesville, 8 p.m.

Sunday, June 18

- Father's Day.
- Washington County Dairy Princess Pageant, Washington County Fairgrounds, Washington.
- Potter County Dairy Princess Pageant, Northern Potter High School, Ulysses, 2 p.m.

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### FARM FORUM

Editor,

I used to get your publication, then allowed my subscription to expire, but have been seriously thinking about renewing it, until now.

Your "Opinion" article in the June 3, 2000 issue is the blame. For years, I have shook my head in bewilderment at the hog and poultry farms who adopted the

practice of "biosecurity." The reason — I have always felt that farmers were God-fearing people. People who have ultimate trust in what God gives them will not practice anything that is contrary to His teachings.

In my opinion, biosecurity is contrary to scriptural teachings. The Bible is very clear in that when it states in Matthew 6:34:

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**Now Is The Time**  
By John Schwartz  
Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

#### To Scout Fields For Weeds

With most of the corn planted, now is a good time to check your fields for weeds.

According to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agronomy agent, the best time to scout for weeds and evaluate herbicide performance is two to four weeks after planting.

Escape weeds need to be identified while they are small and still controllable by a postapplied herbicide or other method. Usually the sooner a problem is identified and dealt with, the more successful the treatment will be.

If weeds are scattered or the infestation is light, a simple cultivation or a spot treatment with herbicide may be very effective. If an herbicide application is

needed, most postemergent materials are most effective when applied to small weeds at the one- to three-leaf stage of development. Early identification and early treatment are critical.

Remember, a good scouting program can pay dividends.

#### To Use Presidedress Nitrate Test

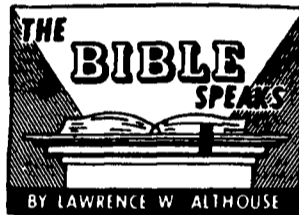
The presidedress nitrate test (PSNT) for corn is a soil nitrogen test designed to provide assistance in making agronomically and environmentally sound nitrogen recommendations for corn, according to Mark Goodson, capitol region extension agronomist.

This test is especially useful in systems where manure has been applied, because it eliminates some of the uncertainty associated with utilizing manure nitrogen.

To use this test, 12-inch deep soil samples must be taken when the corn is at least 12 inches tall. Samples must be dried immediately and sent to the laboratory.

Samples are analyzed for nitrate nitrogen. Based on this result and information on expected yields and field history, a sidedress nitrogen recommendation is made.

Currently this test is available for corn only. To use this program, purchase a standard soil test kit from your Penn State Cooperative Extension office and request a PSNT information sheet. The results for nitrate nitrogen along with recommendations will be telephoned or faxed to you or a designated individual within 24 hours of receipt by the lab.



#### HALFWAY THROUGH?

Background Scripture: Philippians 3.

Devotional Reading: Hebrews 10:19-25, 32-36.

Bennett Cerf tells a story about Tommy Noonan, a young man who picked up "a nice piece of change" mowing lawns for neighbors during the summer vacation. One afternoon his mother, seeing that Tommy seemed to be taking his good old time in getting started, chided him. But Tommy replied, "I'm waiting for them to start themselves. I get most of my work from people who are half through."

Tommy Noonan was a satirist: people will start a lot of things they do not finish. Somewhere between beginning and ending, their enthusiasm and self-discipline wanes and then quits altogether.

This is particularly true in spiritual growth. The churches seem altogether dedicated to nurturing children and youth in growth as Christians. But when these same individuals reach adulthood, there seems to be no additional growth called for. Whereas youth are put through catechism or confirmation classes, adults all too often are not challenged to grow beyond the point they have already attained. These people are only "halfway through" and have no idea that they are expected to continue to grow in Christian discipleship.

#### Expected To Grow

Jesus, of course, presents a considerably different picture:

"You therefore must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Mt. 5:48). Maybe that's where some of the problem is: Jesus seems to be setting a standard that is out of reach for us and every one we know. Excluding Jesus, how can any human being attain to that state of perfection?

The problem is that the English word "perfect" is misleading. It implies moral perfection, becoming just like God. But the Greek word means the whole will and being to be turned wholly to God as he is turned to us. So the "perfection" to which we are called is not a destination to be reached so much as the process of getting there.

Jesus is not calling us to be sinless and without and weakness or limitation as God is, but to constantly moving in that direction. This, then, is exactly what Paul is saying to the Philippians and us: "Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect: but I press on to make it my own . . ." (Phil. 12:3). Here, Paul's word which is rendered in English as "perfect" means literally "full grown." In other words, Paul is saying I have not yet become what Christ wants me to become. What he wants of us is always beyond where we are at any given moment.

As Robert Browning put it so well: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, Or what's a heaven for?" (Andrea del Sarto). In this Christian life, we must always be extending our reach toward, but not attaining to, perfection.

#### The Upward Call

Paul never reached perfection and neither will we, but he never stopped growing in the faith: "Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies

#### To Be Aware Of Heat

The recent hot days reminds us summer is coming.

Most farmers know the importance and how to keep their animals cool during hot weather. But are you aware of the impact of heat on you and your workers?

Every summer, hot weather causes hundreds of deaths from heat strokes.

Jeff Stoltzfus, Eastern Lancaster County School District Adult Farmer Program instructor, offers the following commonsense tips that can keep you and your workers healthy and productive in the summer heat.

- Drink plenty of liquids. Water is the coolant for the body. Take frequent breaks for water. Your body gives off salt and electrolytes with sweat. Sport drinks really do work at recharging the body's electrolytes and provide extra energy.

- Try to stay cool. Splashing cold water on the face and arms helps to keep the body cool. Even a few ice cubes under your hat will help.

- Know the symptoms of heat stroke. If your skin begins to feel cold and clammy and you stop sweating, it is time to get a shower and find some shade. Take the rest of the day off.

A little rained-on hay is a small price to pay for your health. If someone faints or passes out, or you do not feel better in a few hours, it is time to get medical help. Remember, heat can kill.

*Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."*

behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:13,14).

Paul didn't stop when he was halfway through.

Why did Paul feel he had to write these words to the church at Philippi? It appears that there those who complacently believed that human perfection was attainable in this life and, saved by Christ, they were thus "perfect" and nothing further was required of them. They were content to rest on their laurels because they had forgotten that it is only by God's grace that we reach any place on this journey.

Paul makes it clear that the prize is not reaching the goal, but the "upward call" itself. Responding to the "upward call of God in Christ Jesus" is what is in Paul's hands — and ours. Reaching the goal is in God's hands. So, he refused to bide his time when he was halfway through and pressed on.

And where are you at this moment?

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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