



Lancaster Farming

OPINION

What Flag Is Flying Over Your Dairy?

If you have watched a car race for any length of time, you know that no one is more important to the race than the flagman in the tower. His job is to monitor the track for problems and if a problem develops, he has to fly a different colored flag to let the drivers know that a problem exists ahead. The driver depends on the flagman to warn him of problems, because he is concentrating so hard on "the windshield view" — the challenges that are directly in front of him.

What view do you have in managing your dairy? Do you have the "long view" of the flagman, or do you operate week after week with the short-sighted "windshield view" of the driver? The flagman at a race is looking for situations that are very apparent — accidents, breakdowns, etc. As the "flagman" for your dairy, what you need to look for may not be so obvious. Following are some items that will help you to measure whether the "race" is running well at your dairy. These factors are related directly to your profitability, and can signal some hidden problems with your nutritional program. Your nutritional consultant should be monitoring these control points with you every month. If they are not doing this, I encourage you to start tracking these indicators.

Peak Milk — In first lactation Holsteins — should be higher than 85 pounds.

In second lactation and older Holsteins — should be higher than 105 pounds.

Remember the old rule — for each extra one pound of milk at peak, you get 250 pounds more milk during the lactation (this is without bST).

Persistence — First calf heifers — lactations should be at 95 percent persistence.

From the first to the second test, the herd should average 110 percent persistence.

All cows in the first 100 days should average 100 percent persistence.

Udder Health — 70 percent of your herd should have a weighted SCC score of three or less.

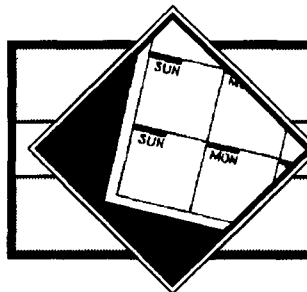
Milk Components:

True Protein % = 82-88%

Milkfat %

Monitoring these factors will help to assure that the green flag continues to fly over your dairy — and that the race for producing quality milk in a profitable manner continues in your business.

— Dave Swartz
Perry County
Extension Agent



◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

- Saturday, July 8**
 Sheep Day, OARDC, Wooster, Ohio.
 Town and Country Day, Richard and Martha Rhoades Farm.
 Pa. Simmental Association Field Day, Triple L. Farm, New Oxford, thru July 9.
 Piketon Annual Open House, Piketon Research and Extension Center, Piketon, Ohio.
 Piketon Horticultural Field Night, Piketon Research and Extension Center, Piketon, Ohio.
 Field Day — Marketing Your Knowledge and Sustainable Lifestyle, Quiet Creek Herb Farm, Brookville, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.
 Sidewalk Sizzle and Ice Cream Freeze, Reading Terminal Market, Philadelphia, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.
 Tioga County Farm-City Day, Sunset Mountain Farms, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
 Ohio Florists Association Short Course, Columbus, Ohio, thru July 12.
- Sunday, July 9**
 Mercer County Grange Fair, thru July 15.
 Derry Ag Fair, New Derry, thru July 15.
 Ephrata Area Young Farmers

- Summer Picnic, Ephrata Park, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
Monday, July 10
 Derry Township Fair, thru July 15.
 Mason Dixon Fair, thru July 15.
 Junior Holstein Judging School, Mercer County, noon.
 Pa. Association of Ag Educators Summer Institute for Excellence, Shippensburg Area Senior High School, thru July 13.
Tuesday, July 11
 Pa. Young Farmers Association Summer Conference, Shippensburg Area Senior High School, thru July 12.
 4-H Teen Leadership Conference, Lebanon Valley College, Annville, thru July 14.
 Marketing Business Farm Tour, Paul and Sandy Arnold, Argyle, N.Y., 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
 Beef Improvement Federation, Wichita, Kan., thru July 14.
 Ephrata Area Young Farmers meeting, Zoning, Zartman Farms, Ephrata, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday, July 12
 National Brown Swiss Convention, The Hilton, Harrisburg, thru July 15.
 Pa. Holstein Junior Judging School, Susquehanna County, noon, thru July 13.

(Turn to Page A11)



Now Is The Time
 By John Schwartz
 Lancaster County
 Agricultural Agent

To Be Aware Of Potato Leafhoppers

Potato leafhoppers have been reported feeding on alfalfa in Lancaster County, according to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agronomy agent.

Each year these small, green insects reach Lancaster from overwintering populations in the South. Once established in an alfalfa field, their populations can increase rapidly. Both the adult leafhopper and nymph cause feeding damage.

Scouting fields on a weekly basis can help prevent significant forage and yield losses this little pest causes. The first

visual sign of damage is often yellowing of the alfalfa leaf, especially on new growth. The brassy yellowing often occurs in a V-shaped wedge and is referred to as hopper burn.

Often by the time the yellowing is noticed, significant losses have already occurred.

Severe damage causes stunted plants with shortened internodes. Stunting and leaf loss results in the loss of quantity and quality hay. Under severe feeding pressure, an entire cutting of hay may be lost.

In addition, severe feeding reduces plant vigor and reduces winter hardiness. Stunted alfalfa allows light penetration into the canopy and encourages weed growth.

To Scout For Potato Leafhoppers

As alfalfa is cut, the potato leafhopper will move to adjoining fields. The regrowth of cuttings must be scouted carefully.

Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agronomy agent, reminds us that large populations of leafhoppers moving from a cut field to the new growth of an adjacent field can cause considerable damage.

Fields should be scouted on a regular basis (every 5 to 7 days). Begin checking new growth immediately after harvest. Use a sweep net, taking 20 sweeps in five different

areas of each field. Average the number of leafhoppers and nymphs per sweep. For hay less than 10 inches tall, consider an insecticide application if more than 0.1 leafhoppers is found per sweep. If hay is more than 10 inches tall, consider an insecticide application if two or more leafhoppers are found per sweep.

To Be Safe Around Grain Bins

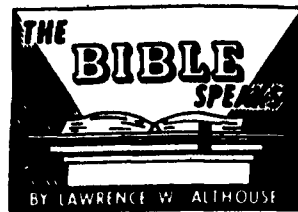
Although automated equipment has made the storage and handling of grain faster and easier than ever, the storage structures and handling equipment create hazardous work areas.

Farm workers should make sure they take the proper steps to prevent illnesses, injuries, and death. Label grain bins to warn of the hazards of entrapment. Lock entrances to grain handling areas to keep bystanders and children out. Install ladders inside bins. Do not enter bins that are being loaded or unloaded.

Flowing grain can trap and suffocate you in seconds. If it is necessary to enter a bin, shut off and lock out power before entering.

Use a safety harness and a safety line. Have several people outside who can lift a person out of the bin.

Feather Prof.'s Footnote: "Well done is better than well said." — Ben Franklin.



WHOM DO YOU FOLLOW?

Background Scripture:

Ephesians 2.

Devotional Reading:

John 17:1-11, 20-23.

I am writing this on a train traveling from Vevey, Switzerland to Verona, Italy. It is a Sunday, and I feel the strangeness of not getting ready for our Sunday school class and worship in downtown Dallas, Texas.

Along the way we see the towers and spires of many churches where presumably Christians are assembling according to their own custom. Then I begin to wonder how many of the other travelers on our train are also fellow Christians.

If Valere and I got off at the next stop and entered the nearest church, would we feel a part of this congregation, or like strangers?

Have you ever noticed that, outside your own congregation, you may feel little sense of identification with other Christians? Presbyterians may feel they have little in common with Baptists. Protestants may find it difficult to think of Roman Catholics and Orthodox as brothers and sisters in Christ — and vice versa.

Why is it that, although we confess the same Lord, we do not feel much of a connection with other Christians? Perhaps it is because our God is too small, our Christ is too narrow, and our churches too parochial. Maybe what we believe about Christ actually erects walls between us and other followers.

While I would never say that what we believe is not important, nevertheless I would remind you

that belief and faith are not identical — and the greatest of these is not our beliefs, but whom we follow. James reminds us that "You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe — and shudder" (James 2:19). You may believe in Jesus Christ, but that does not necessarily mean that you follow him.

Sons Of Disobedience

Ephesians puts the emphasis upon following, noting that before becoming Christians, his readers followed "the course of the world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of the body and mind and so were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind" (2:2,3).

I have called myself "a Christian" as long as I can remember. Yet, although I am certainly a Christian in my beliefs, I am sometimes not Christian in my discipleship. Instead of living as a child of God in Christ, I find that I am living as one of the "children of wrath."

Perhaps that may also be true of you sometimes — when your loyalty, your behavior, and attitudes are those of the world, not of Christ, so that you continue to be a "stranger far off." Whenever your politics, economic status, social standing, race, skin color or sex are more important to you than the teachings and spirit of Christ, you are still living as "strangers and sojourners" instead of "fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God . . ." (2:19).

Ah, yes, you may reply, but Ephesians assures us that we are "saved through faith; and that is not our own doing, it is the gift of God — not because of works . . ." (2:18,19).

Yes, it is true that the chasm

between our good works and the favor of God is too great for us to bridge. A good work for each minute of the day for every year of our whole lives cannot bridge that chasm. It most certainly is "the gift of God."

Where They Fit In

In the next sentence, however, we find just where good works fit in: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (2:10, my italics).

Good works cannot save us, but neither can we claim God's gift if we do not proclaim our gratitude through good works. They are simply the by-product of following Jesus Christ, trying to incarnate in our lives his example, living by his teachings and commandments.

Christians sometimes build walls that continue to make strangers of other children of God. But Christ is a wall-breaker — "he . . . has made us both one and had broken down the dividing wall of hostility . . ." (2:14). If you either build walls or let them divide the household of God, you may possibly believe in Christ, but you are not following him.

So take a good, hard look at your life. Is it Christ you are following?

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
 Copyright 2000 by Lancaster Farming