

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

China Trade?

Like most American businesses, American farmers have fought hard this year to achieve "normal" trade relations between the U.S. and China. The notion has been accepted that granting China these favors will result in greatly expanded U.S. farm exports to China.

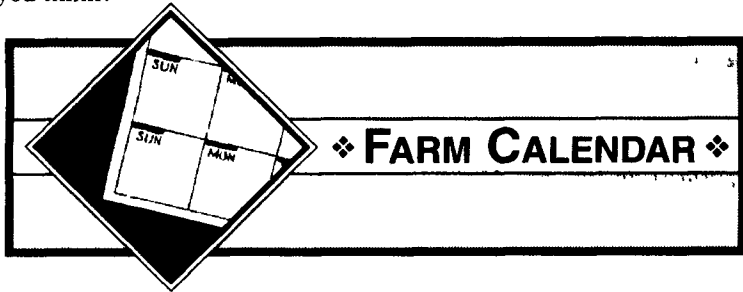
But Mike Coursey, a Washington D.C. lawyer, said in their rush to China, U.S. farm interests have overlooked some troubling facts. Foremost is that 800 million Chinese, about three times the entire U.S. population, are farmers and the Chinese government is committed to produce agriculture products for our market.

On the other hand, in an interview with U.S. Senator Joseph Pitts — who was on his annual farm tour in southeastern Pennsylvania this week — the senator said he did not see this as a problem if we keep the standards up to the level American farmers must meet.

"Our farmers are the best producers," Pitts said. "Of course markets will be opened up both ways. But if we keep the standards the same, our farmers will have no trouble competing. And we have the U.S. antidumping law, which prevents any country from flooding the market here."

Coursey counters with the idea that unscrupulous imports from China will come in labeled from some other country.

So, we have two different viewpoints on China trade. What do you think?



Now Is The Time By John Schwartz

Lancaster County
Agricultural Agent

To Consider Vaccinating Horses For EEE

Dr. John Enck, Pennsylvania state veterinarian, is urging horse owners to consult their veterinarians about the need to vaccinate their horses against Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

This follows the report of the death of a horse in New Jersey from the disease and three in Virginia.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis is not to be confused with West Nile Virus (WNV). EEE, though transmitted by mosquitoes, is a virus that affects the central nervous system of horses.

The virus cannot be spread from horse to horse or horse to humans by mosquitoes. It has not been seen in Pennsylvania. Enck highly recommends that all

owners of horses consult their veterinarians for vaccination protocols against this disease.

It is generally recommended that horses not vaccinated within the last six months be given a booster. Questions relating to this issue may be addressed to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services at (717) 772-2852.

To Look At Fall Weed Control

Fall is a good time to get ahead of hard-to-control perennial weeds such as Canada thistle and hemp dogbane, according to Jeff Stoltzfus, Eastern Lancaster County School District adult farmer instructor.

These weeds are storing up energy reserves for winter and are susceptible to winter kill if they are sprayed at this time. After corn silage harvest is an excellent time to control these weeds with Roundup or Touchdown.

If the weeds have matured and gone to seed, you will need to mow them off and wait for some regrowth before spraying. Do not plow for at least two weeks to allow the herbicide to get into the roots.

To Practice Silo Filling Safety

Silo filling is a busy and dangerous time on farms. Here are a few tips to make this busy time a safer time.

- Keep children far away from the silo and the areas wagons travel. There are many blind spots involved with maneuvering wagons to and from the silo. Drivers do not have the time to watch for children. There are no

safe jobs for children under 12 to be doing during silo filling. Keep them away.

- Make sure everyone unloading the wagons is aware of the dangers of spinning PTO shafts. Silo filling is the worst time for PTO accidents because workers are often working around at least two spinning shafts. A PTO shaft spinning at 540 RPMs spins 9 times per second.

- Make sure all PTO shields are in place. Do not wear any loose or frayed clothing that can easily get caught in PTO shafts. Forage wagons also contain many gears, chains, belts and pulleys. Make sure shields covering them are in place as well.

- Make sure the PTO is disengaged before working on any equipment. In addition, make sure all moving parts have stopped. Disconnect the PTO shaft to make sure the PTO is not accidentally engaged.

- Make sure everyone is rested. Fatigue is the cause of many accidents. If you need to work long hours, have relief workers available to give other workers a break.

- Know your worker's limits. More than half of the 40 farm fatalities that occur each year in Pennsylvania involve people older than 60 or less than 14 years of age.

Young people are not experienced and have the attitude that accidents cannot happen to them. Older workers have a "done it all their lives" attitude and may not be aware that their strength, reactions, and reflexes are not what they once were.

Feather Prof's Footnote: "It is not a good harvest unless it is a safe harvest. Work smart. Think safe."

Saturday, September 9

Adams County Farm-City Day, Hollabaugh Brothers Orchard Farm, Biglerville.

Sunday, September 10

Veal 101, Penn State, State College, thru Sept. 12.

Preferred Stock Shorthorn Sale, McElhaney Stock Farm, Hookstown.

Monday, September 11

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

Green Township Community Fair, thru Sept. 16.

Tuesday, September 12

Ephrata Area Young Farmers Computer Class, Ephrata High School, 7:30 p.m.

Serving Seminar — Berks Ag Center, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., 6 p.m.-9 p.m.

Adams County Field Day, Dan Winter's Farm, McSherrystown, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Wednesday, September 13

Denver Fair, Denver, thru Sept. 16.

Albion Area Fair, thru Sept. 16.

Berlin Brothersvalley Community Fair, thru Sept. 16.

Sinking Valley Fair, thru Sept. 16.

Family Farm Crisis Regional Meeting, Holy Name Church Hall, Montrose, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Thursday, September 14

Small-Scale Manure Management Solutions, Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, Md., 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Delmarva Breeder, Hatchery, and Growout Conference, Delmarva Conference Center, Delmar, Md.

Natural Landscapes and Habitats Walk, Valley Forge National Park, 3 p.m.

PASA Open House Farm/Store Tour, Milky Way Farms, Canton, Pa., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Friday, September 15

Great Frederick, Md. Fair, thru Sept. 23.

"Do Trees Effect Community Liability?" Dinner Meeting, Best Western Inn, Hunt's Landing, Matamoras, 6:30 p.m.

Delaware Valley Old Time Power and Equipment Association 23rd Annual Days of the Past, Washington Crossing State Park, Titusville, N.J., thru Sept. 17.

Saturday, September 16

2000 Maryland Wine Festival, Farm Museum, Westminster, Md., thru Sept. 17.

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Pasture Walk, Don and Lugene Chamberlain, Mainesburg, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

Pasture Walk and Biosolids Demonstration, Brent D'Atri Farm, Oldtown, Md., 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 17

122nd PennAg Convention, Princess Royale Oceanfront Hotel and Conference Center, Ocean City, Md., thru Sept. 19.

Gratz Fair, Gratz, thru Sept. 23.

Beaver Community Fair, thru Sept. 23.

Monday, September 18

Ohio Farm Science Review, Molly Caren Ag Center, London, thru Sept. 21.

Harmony Grange Fair, thru Sept. 23.

Lancaster County Honey Producers meeting, Lancaster County Environmental Center, 7 p.m.

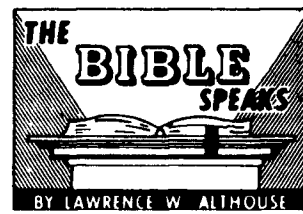
Tuesday, September 19

Windmill Water System Tour, Terry Hoyt, New Albany.

Southern Lancaster County Fair, thru Sept. 22.

Wednesday, September 20

Pa. Vet. Medical Association and Vet. Technicians and Assistants Association of Pa. 118th Annual Scientific Meeting, Lancaster Host Resort, Lancaster, thru Sept. 24.



TALKING BACK TO GOD

Background Scripture:

Judges 6 through 8

Devotional Reading:

Joshua 1:1-9.

It is unthinkable, isn't it? Talking back to God!

Yet, Job talked back to God and the Lord did not punish him for doing so, did he?

Gideon is another person who did not hesitate to challenge and complain to God. Like Job, Gideon did not suffer rebuke or punishment for daring to question the veracity of the Lord. Perhaps there is something in Gideon's experience that could be helpful also to us.

The background situation in Joshua 6 through 8 is familiar: "The people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord gave them into the hand of Midian seven years... When the people of Israel cried to the Lord on account of the Midianites, the Lord sent a prophet to the people of Israel..." (6:1,7,8).

The prophet sent on this occasion was Gideon, a man who didn't know that he was "sent" by the Lord. In fact, when the angel of the Lord appears to him, he is beating out wheat in the wine press of his father, Joash. Told, "The Lord is with you, you mighty man of valor," Gideon does not beat around the bush in his reply: "Pray, sir, if the Lord is with us, why then has all this befallen us? And where are all his wonderful deeds which our fathers recounted to us... the Lord has cast us off, and given us

into the hand of Midian" (6:12,13).

The Patient Lord

Ouch! That is calling God to account in very uncertain terms. But, note, the angel of God does not level Gideon with a mighty blow or consign him to the nethermost regions of Hell. Instead, God recognizes Gideon as a stalwart and courageous man with honest questions. And, turning to Gideon, the Lord says to him: "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian; do not I send you?" (6:14).

God did not requite Gideon for his testiness; he wanted to use it for his own purposes. You are upset, Gideon? Fine, use your hostility to help my people! Do you on think that perhaps God answers us similarly when, upset about some situation in our lives or in the world about us, we complain and ask why God has not done something about it? Gideon is not silenced by God's agreeable response to him and he replies, his tone tinged with sarcasm: "Pray, Lord, how can I deliver Israel? Behold, my clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family" (6:15).

No matter what God asks us to be or do, we can always find good reasons to disbelieve that we heard him rightly or that he really understands what he is asking.

But God Is Able!

We might assume that God had been patient long enough with this man, but the Lord's response is not condemnatory: "But I will be with you, and you shall smite the Midianites as one man."

From the beginning of human history, this has been God's response to those who claim they are not equal to the task. Gideon is quite correct: he is not able —

but God is! Whenever God calls us to do something for him, it is never because by ourselves we are equipped to accomplish the task. God simply sees in us the possibility of doing it if we let the Spirit of the Lord take possession of us.

Gideon, however, is not convinced. "If now I have found favor with thee, then show me a sign that it is thou who speakest with me" (6:17). In Judges 6:19-22, God gives Gideon a pretty impressive sign. That should have ended Gideon's doubts, but later in the valley of Jezreel, Gideon demands another sign.

If God will really deliver Israel by his hand, then let the Lord make moist with dew the sheepskin that Gideon places on the threshing floor. Once again, God does not chastise this questioning man, but gives him the sign he sought.

Surely, now Gideon is ready to accept the call of God, but he says, "Let not thy anger burn against me, let me speak but this once; pray, let me make trial only this once with the fleece" and he goes on to outline yet another test of God's patience and will. God gives him the sign and at last Gideon is ready to do as God asks.

And how many times does God have to call us before we answer affirmatively?

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