

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### Biotech And The Silent Majority

In a recent poll released at the World Food Prize Awards in Des Moines, Iowa, more than two thirds of the Americans polled support the use of food and agricultural biotechnology as a tool to help solve world hunger.

According to the Alliance for Better Foods, of 1,000 adults surveyed, hunger and malnutrition are considered an urgent problem by 75 percent of American adults. That compares to 68 percent who believe disease and epidemics are urgent problems, 66 percent for pollution and environmental damage, and 43 percent for global warming.

By a margin of two to one, according to the Alliance (69 percent to 26 percent), Americans support biotechnology use in food and agriculture. About 71 percent believe biotech can help resolve problems of world hunger and malnutrition.

From the rice that is grown and fed to third-world countries with enough Vitamin A to prevent blindness in children . . . to fruit crops engineered to fight off deadly fungus, which can destroy them . . . to biotechnology to stop bugs from destroying a grower's bread-and-butter crops . . . the poll also found strong support for biotech.

The survey, conducted by KRC Research and Consulting, consisted of a random sample of 1,000 adults in the U.S., with interviews conducted from Sept. 15-18 this year. The full survey is available on the Website, [www.betterfoods.org](http://www.betterfoods.org).

Other findings from the poll:

- 80 percent support using biotech to make foods more nutritious.
- 81 percent support using biotechnology to develop crops requiring fewer chemicals.
- 81 percent support using biotech to develop crops that need less land and water.
- 82 percent support using biotech to develop trees that grow faster.
- 75 percent support biotechnology to develop foods that stay fresh longer.
- 71 percent support biotech to develop foods containing natural vaccines.

"The response by Americans in (this) poll is heartening," said Dr. C.S. Prakash, director of the Center for Plant Biotechnology Research at Tuskegee University. "It affirms what most agricultural scientists and policymakers have been saying all along. Science and technology can continue to make a positive contribution in alleviating world hunger, and Americans overwhelmingly support initiatives to increase agricultural productivity and the use of biotechnology in addressing concerns of global food and nutritional security."

Science has proven biotechnology to a safe, assured way to benefit growers and those who benefit from it. The silent majority seems to approve of it, too.

**FARM CALENDAR**

**Saturday, October 21**

- Pasture Walk, Dave and Maggie Johnson, Provident Farms, Liberty, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
- Keystone Autumn Klassic, Waynesburg.
- Harvest Fest, York Central Market, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Delmarva Forestry Seminar, Wor-Wic Community College, Salisbury, Md., 8 a.m.
- Pa. State Grange Convention, Clarion Hotel (formerly Embers), Carlisle, thru Oct. 24.

**Sunday, October 22**

- Lebanon County Extension Annual Meeting, Schaeffers-town Fire Hall, 7 p.m.
- Pa. State Grange Recognition Banquet, Clarion Hotel (formerly Embers), Carlisle.
- Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties Cancer Coalitions presentation on "Living Downstream," Wyoming County Courthouse, 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
- First Annual Lancaster County Pace Event, Lancaster County Central Park and Rockford Plantation, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Tuesday, October 24**

- Lancaster County Poultry Banquet, Willow Valley Conven-

- tion Center, 6:30 p.m.
- Alfalfa Intensive Training Seminar, Wooster, Ohio, thru Oct. 26.
- York County Ag Land Preservation Board meeting, County Annex Building, 7 p.m.
- Pa. Council of Cooperative's Annual Meeting, Nittany Lion Inn, State College, 10 a.m.
- Horse Pasture Workshop, Cambria County extension office, Ebensburg, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.
- Northampton County Cooperative Extension, Conservation District, USDA FSA and NRCS banquet meeting, Gateway Holiday Inn, Bethlehem, 6:30 p.m.
- Susquehanna/Wyoming counties annual meeting, Montrose Bible Conference's Torrey Lodge, Locust Street, 7 p.m.
- Southeast Regional Christmas Tree Growers Meeting, Berks Ag Center, 7 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 25**

- Greenhouse Grower's Short Course, Lighthouse Restaurant, Chambersburg, also Nov. 1 and Nov. 8
- Luzerne County Cooperative Extension Meeting, Best Western Genetti Hotel, Wilkes-Barre, 6:30 p.m.

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

**To Plant**

**Winter Cover Crop**

Growing winter cover crops is a low-cost management tool which provides many benefits, according to Leon Ressler, Lancaster County extension agricultural agent.

One of the overlooked benefits is the contribution to soil organic matter levels. The root systems of small grain cover crops provide for a significant contribution of organic matter to the soil system.

Soil organic matter contributes to soil quality in a number of ways. As the organic matter decomposes, nutrients are released to the following crop. Well-decomposed organic matter becomes humus and this contributes to the ability of the soil to store important nutrients such as calcium, magnesium, and potas-

sium.

Soil organic matter also contributes to the good physical condition of the soil needed for growing crops, known as soil tilth. As soil organic matter breaks down, it produces sticky substances that help bind soil particles together in aggregates. These aggregates are important to promote soil drainage, aeration and improved water holding capacity.

**To Use Cover**

**Crops As Part**

**Of Nutrient Management**

Cover crops are a very important part of nutrient management, according to Leon Ressler, Lancaster County extension agricultural agent.

Many farmers need to empty their manure storage units during the fall season. This means these crop nutrients are applied to cropland at a time of year when they are not needed by a growing crop. Therefore these nutrients may be lost to the environment because of soil erosion and leaching.

Winter cover crops can help farmers prevent the economic loss of nutrients and reduce the environmental damage caused by movement of nutrients to the water supply.

If you are applying manure to cropland this fall, consider planting a small grain cover crop such as rye. The rye will take up the available nitrogen and hold it in the plant, preventing its loss to the water supply. If the rye is harvested, the nutrients will be utilized as high-quality feed. If the rye is killed or plowed down in the spring, the nutrients will become available to the following crop.

**What Now, Lord?**

"After this (the memorial for King Saul and Jonathan), David inquired of the Lord" (2:1). David did this because he believed that God had been guiding and directing his life from the day he sent Samuel to anoint him. So David was not asking God for his guidance for the first time. God told him to go to Hebron, beginning a long and convoluted path from King of Judah to King of all Israel. But the path was begun because David inquired of the Lord.

Shouldn't we all? The death of Saul did not make David king of all the tribes of Israel. First, it was only the people of Judah who anointed him. The other tribes looked to Saul's surviving son, Ishbosheth, as their monarch. It was only after years of fratricide and cruel warfare and the death of Abner, Ishbosheth's commanding general and power behind the throne, that at last all the tribes of Israel finally came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you that led out and brought in Israel; 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel'" (5:2).

What brought them around? Everyone must have been sick and tired of the unceasing warfare and bloodshed. Just as in Northern Ireland today people on both sides of the struggle are joining together to try to bring peace there, so there must have been Israelites and Judeans who at long last decided enough was enough. Besides, David continued to act in an exemplary manner.

They saw that he was the kind of ruler who could recognize and appreciate the efforts of even opponents. Told that the men of Jabesh-gilead had buried Saul and saved his body from further indignity, David sent a messenger to them: "May you be blessed by the Lord, because you showed this loyalty to Saul your Lord and buried him! . . . And I will do good to you because you

The rye will also prevent environmental damage by slowing soil erosion. Rye's extensive root system will improve soil tilth. Rye can be planted as late as November, but the earlier it is planted the more nutrients it will take up and the more it will produce in the spring.

**To Understand Ear Fill**

Incomplete ear fill is not necessarily a bad thing.

According to Dr. Joe Lauer, University of Wisconsin agronomy professor, you may expect about one inch of underdeveloped kernels at the ear tip when plant populations are at the proper level for optimizing grain yield.

If conditions are optimum early in the crop's development, a corn plant can produce about 600 to 1,000 ovules. Unfortunately, only 400 to 600 ever actually pollinate and develop into kernels.

Growers have a corn plant with the optimum number of ovules. It pollinates as many ovules as it can, resulting in more kernels produced than it has resources to fill. The plant adjusts by filling as many as it has resources for, and leaves the rest. Since the process starts at the stem and works out to the tip, an unfilled tip means the plant has given its all.

Deformed cobs or unfilled ears back much more than an inch may indicate real problems at silking or in ear development or too high plant populations.

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "The currents that determine our dreams and shape our lives flow from the attitudes we nurture every day."*

have done this thing" (2:6). They were not his supporters, but he was not too proud to praise them.

**Greater And Greater**

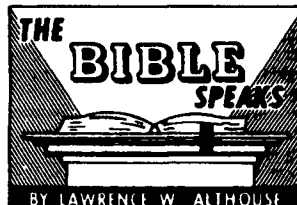
As he became more powerful, David became an even more exemplary king.

"And David became greater and greater, for the Lord, the God of hosts, was with him" (2 Sam.5:10).

Many leaders have started out with the intention of being serving their followers, but as they gained more and more power, they became corrupted by that power. Historian Arnold Toynbee's schoolmaster had this motto emblazoned in Greek on the foot of his bed as a reminder. In English it read: "Rule (meaning power) will reveal the man." The way a person wields power shows what kind of person he is.

Another passage that tells us what kind of person David had become is 2 Sam. 5:12, "And David perceived that the Lord had established him king over Israel, and that he had exalted his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel." David acknowledged that it was God who had brought him to this state of power and that God had done so, not to exalt David, but the people of Israel. We are stewards of the power he gives us and we are expected to wield it for his purpose, not our own engrandizement.

Keep that in mind when you ask the Lord, "What shall I do?"



**WHAT SHALL I DO?**

**Background Scripture:**  
2 Samuel 2 through 5; 1 Chronicles 11:1-3.  
**Devotional Reading:**  
Psalms 78:67-72.

During this past week, two different people came to me for counseling. Although they verbalized it somewhat differently, both said their greatest concern at this point is to determine what God wants them to do. I think that both of them already know what God wants of them and that they just wanted to try out their understanding with someone else.

We begin and process through life with goals — to start school, graduate from high school, get into college, graduate from college, find a job, wed a mate, and settle down to raise a family. We may also aspire to getting promoted in our business or achieve a certain financial status. But then somewhere along the line, we seem to run out of goals and we get to the point where we do not live for something; we just live. No longer seeking a goal, we begin to drift.

In the church we have the belief that people who want enter the Christian ministry must have a call of some kind. We had to be convinced that God was calling us and be able to convince others of that call. But we realize now that not only does God call people to the ordained ministry, but that he calls everyone to be and achieve something.

All Christians have a calling. So all of us need to ask God what he wants us to do

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