

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### Take Your Breath Away

The technical genetic advances made in dairy cattle are staggering.

Most people are too young to remember the 1953 bull catalog of the Southeast Pennsylvania Cooperative. And the Lucifer bull also means nothing to you. But to us old dairymen, Lucifer was the benchmark bull of the era and formed the backdrop for the Ivanhoe bull that made his daughters tall on top of Lucifer's daughters of strength. By some breeding ingenuity there was still an Ivanhoe daughter in a recent Pennsylvania Holstein state sale.

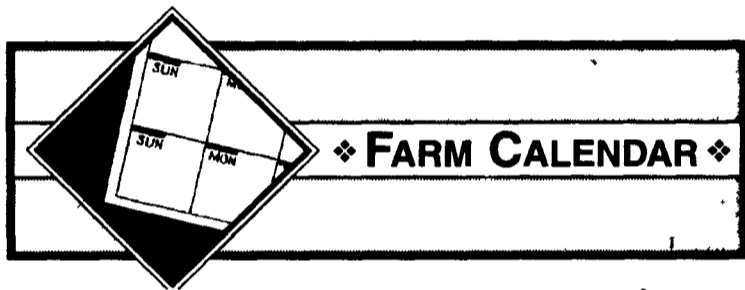
The reason we mention it is because Lucifer had a proof just over 12,000 pounds of milk. His daughters matured slowly and would never have been kept in today's atmosphere of "disposable heifers" that are expected to give all their milk in the first or second lactation.

Of more importance is the contrast in this 50-year record of dairy history. Now the high production, on the average, expands into the incredible future ahead for cloning the best animals to be the seed stock in tomorrow's herds.

Here's an example of how far we have come.

On September 7, 2000, Hanoverhill Starbuck II was born. Starbuck II is the clone of the famous Starbuck with all those All-American and All-Canada offspring. Starbuck II is expected to be available by the next World Dairy Expo.

So there you have it. The incredible history of the dairy industry wrapped in biotechnology. And the possibilities in the future can only take your breath away.



**Saturday, February 10**  
Beginning Bee Seminar, Mercer County extension office, Mercer.

Pennsylvania Shorthorn Breeders' Association annual meeting, New Staunton.

Great Chef's Marathon, Reading Terminal Market Kitchen, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

**Sunday, February 11**

**Monday, February 12**  
Poultry Management and Health Seminar, Kreider's Restaurant, Manheim, noon.

Capitol Area Turf and Ornamental Winter School, Grantville Holiday Inn, 8 a.m.-3:10 p.m.

New York State Vegetable Conference, Holiday Inn and Convention Center, Liverpool, N.Y., thru Feb. 15.

Southeast Pennsylvania Grazing Conference, Hoffman Building, Solanco Fairgrounds, also Feb. 13.

Cornucopia 2001, Capitol Building, Harrisburg, noon.

**Tuesday, February 13**

Solanco Young Farmers Meeting, Custom Crop Production, Solanco High School, 7 p.m.

New York Vegetable Conference, Holiday Inn and Convention Center, Syracuse, N.Y.

Northeast Fruit Growers' Meeting, Iron Skillet Restaurant, Avoca, 8:30 a.m.

Tractor Safety Course, Deerfield Ag and Turf, Watsonstown, 6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Conservation and Pesticide Update Meeting, Neshaminy Manor Center, Doylestown, also Feb. 20, 7:15 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Dairy Market Outlook, Berks County Ag Center, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m., and 7:30 p.m.

Southeast Pa. Grazing Confer-

ence, Solanco Fairgrounds. Pork Quality Assurance Certification, Kish Valley Buying Station, Belleville, 7 p.m.

Schuylkill County Vegetable Meeting, Pottsville, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Well Plugging Program, Warren County, Jefferson DeFrees Family Center, 2 p.m.

NCC Farmers Breakfast Meeting, ChesDel Diner, 7:30 a.m.-9:30 a.m.

Pesticide Update/Conservation Meeting, Neshaminy Manor Center, 7:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., also Feb. 20.

Empire State Potato Growers' Meeting, Holiday Inn and Hotel, Liverpool, N.Y., 7:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, February 14**

2001 Southwest Beef Management Workshop, Session 3, Cedarbrooke Golf Course, Belle Vernon, 7 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

Dairy Marketing Outlook and Future, Montgomery County 4-H Center, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Tree Fruit Meeting, Berks Ag Center, Leesport.

Vegetable and Small Fruit Meeting, Family Heritage Restaurant, Franconia.

Penn State Corn Planter Clinic, Penn State's Ag Arena, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.

TMR Workshop, Dennis and Todd McHenry Farm, New Bethlehem, noon-3 p.m.

Landscape Seminar, Luzerne Community College Conference Center, Nanticoke, 9:15 a.m.

Bucks-Montgomery County Dairy Day, Montgomery County 4-H Center, Creamery, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Clarion County Feeder Workshops, Todd and Dennis McHenry Farm, New Bethlehem, 7:30 p.m.

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

#### To Look At Burning Corn

When the price of corn is low and the price of energy is high, farmers may wonder if it would be cheaper to burn shelled corn rather than propane.

The answer, according to Dr. Dennis Buffington, Penn State agricultural engineer, is "it depends."

Buffington has developed a chart to help people to decide whether to burn shelled corn or propane.

To use the chart, find where the intersection point of the value of shelled corn and the price of propane meets. The territory where the intersection point falls tells you whether it is cheaper to burn shelled corn or propane.

In late 2000, when corn had a value of \$2 per bushel and pro-

pane cost about \$1.30 per gallon, the intersection fell in the "burn corn" territory. On the basis of combustion values, it is cheaper in this case to burn corn than propane.

When developing this chart, Dr. Buffington assumed the heating value of shelled corn at 31,000 BTU per bushel, the heating value of propane at 91,600 BTU per gallon, the combustion efficiency of corn at 75 percent, and the combustion efficiency of propane at 85 percent.

To obtain graphs or for additional information, contact Dr. Dennis Buffington by phone at (814) 865-2971 or by e-mail at deb2@psu.edu.

#### To Consider Costs Of Burning Corn

Before you switch to burning shelled corn, you will need to do some homework to find out how much it will cost to make the transition.

Additional expenses include burner modifications and handling and storage facilities for the corn. These expenses are not trivial and must be considered before any plans are finalized.

Dr. Dennis Buffington, Penn State agricultural engineer, suggests that farmers consider having two different burners to switch between, depending whether prices fall in the burn corn or burn propane territory. You may want to consider burning last year's corn or corn of a lesser quality. Homeowners who have their own heating system, particularly wood stoves that burn wood pellets, could also burn shelled corn.

Burning corn smells good, like baking corn muffins. It is easier to handle than wood.

Check with the company that manufactured your wood stove to find out what accessories are available to make the transition to pellets and/or corn. The heating value of 63 bushels of shelled corn is equivalent to one cord of firewood.

#### To Educate Middle School Students

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) have stepped up their activities, targeting middle school students.

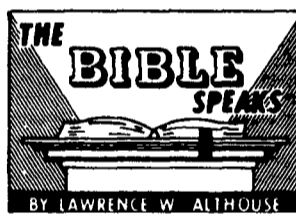
PETA is beginning to hand out cards that look like sport trading cards that display animal rights messages. They are targeting middle school students because they are more open to receiving the cards.

PETA's latest campaign is the distribution of antimilk trading cards to preteen students. There is no question that the young teen set is a key audience for PETA and others wanting to deliver an extreme animal rights message.

What are you doing to tell the agriculture message to students? By not responding, we are giving credibility to PETA's message. We need to support ag in the classroom and similar agricultural education programs. We need to monitor activities and what is being taught in the classroom.

We need to develop a dialog with school administrators, teachers, and school board members about the importance of food production and local agriculture. If we do not tell our story, someone else will tell one for us!

*Feather Prof's Footnote: "Our lives are not determined by what happens to us, but how we react to what happens."*



### TRUE GREATNESS

**Background Scripture:**

Luke 22:1-30.

**Devotional Reading:**

Mark 10:25-45.

Over the years, I have noted that sometimes the most profound moments in life are followed by the silliest, most shallow reactions.

Many years ago in the parish I was serving, we scheduled an administrative board meeting of the church to take place shortly after the Maundy Thursday communion service. For the life of me, I cannot imagine why we did that, but we did and it was a disaster.

Not more than 20 minutes after the conclusion of what I thought was a moving service of holy communion, the board meeting broke out in a verbal brawl over some aspect of the church's building project. That night, after the meeting was over, I went home in a deep sense of depression.

Then, however, I realized that something similar had happened on the night of the first Maundy Thursday, the night when Jesus introduced his twelve disciples to what would become the most profound sacrament in Christendom. What moment more holy could Jesus and his disciples share than the Passover breaking of bread and sharing the cup?

But how did the disciples react to this profound experience? They quarreled over "which of them was to be regarded as the greatest" (22:24)!. How could they have been so childish and

ego-driven? The answer: it came easily to them — as it does to us.

William Barclay has commented upon this passage: "It is one of the most poignantly tragic things in the gospel story that the disciples could quarrel about precedence in the very shadow of the cross." Instead of feeling humbled by the momentous night and what it portended for Jesus, they let their egos run wild.

#### Where To Sit

The momentous issue was of where they were to sit at the Passover table. Normal custom dictated that the tables were to be formed into the shape of an inverted "U," with the host sitting in the center of the bend of the "U." To his right would sit the most honored guest and to his left the next most honored guest. Back and forth from right to left the most honored guests were seated. The least important were those who sat at the bottom of "U." I assume that the dispute arose when the disciples began to jockey for positions of honor.

I think we may safely assume that Jesus had already spoken to them about humility and the preference of humble service. If he did, it evidently did not make much of an impression on them. You and I may find it difficult to think that his disciples would openly argue on this matter. We would be much more likely to feel what they felt, but keep it to ourselves, for we wouldn't want Jesus to realize how egotistically we could behave. Today we are not ashamed to want to be first, so long as it doesn't seem like we are acting that way.

Although we have learned to be more subtle about it, our problem today is still very much the same. No less than the twelve disciples themselves, we have not grasped the teaching of Jesus that the standards of the kingdom of heaven are not the

standards of this world. As in almost everything else, Jesus revolutionized the standards for greatness: "... let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves."

#### A Living Example

I might have trouble accepting that teaching from most people, but Jesus himself was the living example of what he asks of us: "I am among you as one who serves" (18:27b).

Jesus did not consider serving others as demeaning. Humble service was not something enforced, but chosen. As Martin Luther put it, "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to everyone." That is what true greatness is — humble service after the example of Jesus Christ.

Let us also understand that humble service is not just for those with the most spectacular gifts. Frederick William Robertson wrote: "It is not the possession of extraordinary gifts that makes extraordinary usefulness, but the dedication of what we have to the service of God."

The widow's mite was a more important gift than the rich man's gold coin. The question of discipleship is not "who is most gifted?" but "who serves most with the gift he or she has been given?" That is true greatness.

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—by—

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