

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### Recessionary Effects

In the book, "The Coming Internet Depression," by Michael J. Mandel (Basic Books, 2000), the author gives a concise and often insightful historical perspective into some of the causes of the Great Depression.

Though the book focuses on why the "high-tech boom," mostly caused by the Internet, will go bust (though some say it already has), Mandel proposes ways in which we can ride this out.

(Internet stocks really caused the great expansion of the '90s, and so, like the industrial revolution, a downturn is inevitable.)

But what was appealing was the way Mandel explained how the Great Depression came about.

Mandel believes back in the late 1920s and very early 1930s, the feds, because of their moralistic stance, wanted to "punish" the people responsible for the excesses of the Roaring '20s. You know, the time it took people to invest all they had, put it in stocks, make lots of money, live like kings and queens, and eventually lose it all.

So why did many suffer so much?

According to Mandel, the federals simply turned what should have been a mild recession into something worse. The feds stubbornly kept money out of the economy, refused to budge in lowering interest rates to boost business, got callous when banks went belly up, and continued to lock up any hopes of bailout.

The recession then worsened, leading the country and the world down a dark, slippery slope, which it took a world war to cure.

The time's saving grace? About 30 percent of the U.S. population lived on the farm. When times got tough, the farm provided for you. You had food and shelter. What else was important?

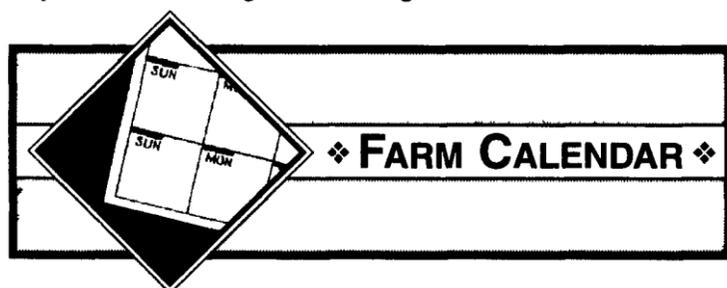
What economists fear is: what if a Great Depression would happen today, with less than 2 percent of the entire population making a living on the farm?

Many agree: it would be a nightmare. Who knows how chaotic it could be?

A potential long-term recession this year will hinge on what the public will do with the proposed \$1.5 trillion President Bush tax cut. If the money is spent, so say economists, a recession could be avoided. Potentially. But if the money is stashed away — it's supposed — there goes the economy.

These are theories.

But it makes you wonder. Thirty (and some figures put it higher) percent of the public on the farm! Maybe, despite a big depression, those times truly were the "good old days." Certainly, for some, it may have taken the edge off some tough economic times.



#### ◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

##### Saturday, March 24

Pennsylvania Brown Swiss Breeders' Association, Ramada Inn, State College, 11 a.m.

BQA Certification Training Workshop, Herr Angus Feedlot, Nottingham, 9 a.m.

Pruning/Grafting Clinic, Miller's Orchard, Clarks Summit, 9 a.m.-noon, (717) 836-3196 or (717) 963-6842.

##### Sunday, March 25

##### Monday, March 26

Select Sire Power Customer Meeting, New Midway Fire Hall, Woodsboro, Md., 7:30 p.m.

2001 Area Leadership Conference and Annual Delegate Meeting, Hyatt Regency Crown Center Hotel, Kansas City, Mo., thru March 28.

Improving Your Horse Pastures, Fayette County Fairgrounds, 7 p.m.

Pesticide Training For Core Credits, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 7:30 p.m.-9 p.m., (610) 378-1327.

BQA Certification Training Workshop, Penn State Ag Arena, State College, 7 p.m.

Heifer Project International Fundraising Dinner, Midway Mennonite Reception Center, Lititz, and March 27, Yoder's Family Restaurant, New Hol-

land, both 6 p.m.

##### Tuesday, March 27

Solanco Young Farmer Meeting, Nutrient Management Uptake, Solanco High School, 7 p.m.

Business Leadership Training Seminar, Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 8:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Turf Conference, Ramada Inn, Somerset, 9:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m.

Southeast Regional Christmas Tree Growers Meeting, Berks

County Ag Center, Leesport, 7 p.m., (570) 622-4225.

Pesticide applicators update training, extension office, Honesdale, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (570) 253-5970, ext. 239.

Barn Meeting, TMR Feeding, Rolling Acres Farm, Tim Ludwick, Sugar Grove, noon-3 p.m., (814) 782-0033.

##### Wednesday, March 28

Dairy Feeding Systems Management, Bomberger Dairy Farm, Lebanon.

Pesticide update meeting, Lebanon Valley Ag Center, 2 p.m.-4 p.m., and repeats at 6:30 p.m.

PCDART Workshop, Huntingdon, Blair, and Bedford counties, Williamsburg Farm Show Building, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Working Together: Supporting

(Turn to Page A44)



### Now Is The Time By Leon Ressler

Lancaster County Extension Director

#### To Recycle Agricultural Plastic Waste As Plastic Lumber

The waste materials generated on farms have changed a lot over the past few decades. Today plastic is used for many purposes, including bale wrap, silage bags, trench silo covers, plastic mulch in horticultural production, and shrink-wrap for palletized supplies.

All of this has contributed to a tremendous amount of waste accumulating on farms.

Burning in open fires is an unacceptable solution since it creates a tremendous amount of pollution both as particulate matter in the smoke and as petroleum by products left by this low-temperature burning. Taking this material to the Lancaster County Municipal Incinerator, where the material is burned at very high temperatures under controlled conditions, has been a

good option. The waste energy produced is captured to create electricity and the high temperatures and controlled environment results in very clean burn.

Now a lower cost option is available to recycle this waste plastic. This material is being collected and baled in Lancaster County for use in the production of plastic lumber. The bales of recycled plastic material will be hauled to the Trex company factory in Virginia for this purpose. There it will be mixed with waste wood chips and sawdust to produce a product for use in plastic decking.

The waste material is being collected at the Dan Zook farm located at 183 South Farmersville Road, Leola. Any polyethylene product will be accepted, which includes plastic mulch, ag bag plastic, bale wrap, silage covers, greenhouse covers, and shrink-wrap. Materials that are not acceptable include plastic twine, row covers, molded plastic such as greenhouse trays and pots, milk jugs, and pesticide or other containers.

A \$25 per ton tipping fee will be collected when the material is delivered to the farm. This is less than half of what it would cost to take the material to the municipal incinerator in Lancaster County.

If you have a collection of waste plastic, take the time to remove it while this opportunity is still available. Call Dan Zook at (717) 656-4422 to make arrangements before delivering your material. This will insure you can be unloaded in a quick and efficient manner, saving time for all.

#### To Evaluate Small Grain Fields

Take this opportunity before your spring fieldwork begins in earnest to walk your small grain fields to evaluate the stand.

Satisfactory yields depend on

having approximately 40 heads per linear foot of row when planted in seven-inch rows. To achieve this, we need a stand of 18 to 20 plants per foot of row.

Winter grains have the ability to increase tiller production as the population is reduced. This reduces the effect of low populations on yield. However, populations can be reduced to the point that the land area should be replanted into another crop later in the spring. This occurs when we have about a 50 percent stand remaining or 9 to 10 plants per linear foot of row.

#### To Welcome A New Faculty Member

Erick De Wolf recently joined the Department of Plant Pathology as an assistant professor.

Dr. De Wolf, a native of Michigan, received his doctorate from North Dakota State University, where his research dealt with prediction and management of wheat foliar diseases.

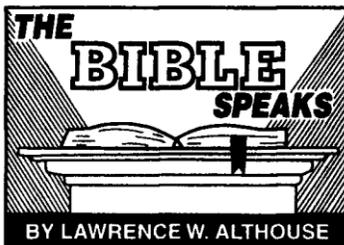
Subsequently, De Wolf took a position with The Ohio State University where he was part of a multistate effort to manage wheat head scab. Erick, his wife, and two daughters moved to State College in early January.

De Wolf's responsibilities at Penn State include extension and research. He will develop an extension education and research program for field crop diseases. De Wolf's specific research interests include the biology and management of residue-borne pathogens. Erick is looking forward to working with you to address disease management issues of Pennsylvania.

#### Quote of The Week:

"If, to please the people, we offer what we ourselves disapprove, how can we afterward defend our work? Let us raise a standard to which the wise and honest repair."

— George Washington



### IS THIS ANY WAY TO RUN ANYTHING?

Background Scripture:

Acts 5:12-42.

Devotional Reading:

Psalms 103:15-18.

It is fascinating to me how, on the one hand, we can so applaud biblical heroes, and on the other, we condemn those who emulate them.

From early times to the present, the Church has not had a very good record in its responses to reformers. The Pope did not write Martin Luther a letter saying, "Martin, you've got some good ideas here." The Anglican hierarchy did not present John Wesley with any "Evangelist-Of-The-Year" awards.

Those of us who on grounds of Christian conscience opposed segregation and the Vietnam War were usually regarded as an embarrassment to our church hierarchies and an affront to our communities.

That's just the way things are in our society. We swear nominal allegiance to God, but it is the secular and ecclesiastical structures that claim our first, highest loyalty and obedience. It is not easy for a Christian to say "no" to either his or her government or church when faith seems to require it.

We don't know how many months or years marked the intervals between Peter's sermon at Pentecost and his second and third arrests, but it would appear

that Peter — and John — got themselves into trouble in no time at all, and repeatedly at that. The first time (Acts 4:5-23), Peter laid down his unyielding position: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard." Because they had no case against them, the authorities threatened them and released them.

#### Touched By An Angel?

The high priest, jealous because of their success among the people, had Peter and John arrested again. But, assisted by an angel, Peter and John escaped from prison. (Can you imagine the ruckus that would arise from a jailed Christian today claiming the help of an angel to escape from prison?)

A third time Peter and John are arrested and this time brought to the council.

"We strictly charged you," said the high priest, "not to teach in his name, but here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and you intend to bring this man's (Jesus') blood upon us" (5:28). How can we afford to let people defy our precise and specific orders? That's no way to run anything. Conscience is all well and good so long as it doesn't get in the way of loyalty and obedience.

Once again, however, Peter sounds the same note he did in their previous encounter: "We must obey God rather than men." Understandably, the council members were enraged at this effrontery, and we are told that the members of the council wanted to kill them. That is also a common human reaction: dead men and women cannot object or obstruct us. How many of our disputes and problems does human nature attempt to "solve" in this manner? Too many.

#### Take Care What You Do!

It is at this point that help for Peter and John comes from an unexpected source — a man named Gamaliel. A teacher of the law and obviously a member of the council, Gamaliel attempts to bring some reason and order into this crisis with a plan so pragmatic and rational that the enraged council cools down and agrees with him.

"Men of Israel," he advises, "take care what you do with these men" (5:33). This well-respected teacher of Hebrew law appeals to the council members' own self interests.

Don't make a terrible mistake, he counsels. Citing two previous insurgents, Theudas and Judas the Galilean, whose movements failed, Gamaliel reminds them of a principle that his fellow council members — and the whole world — tend to forget: "... if this plan or this undertaking is of men, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God" (5:38,39).

Sound advice, is it not? Let God sort it out, for if it is God's will, we cannot defeat it in the long run. So why oppose it in the short run?

But, still, we can't help wondering: is this the way to run anything? A church? A business? A community? A country? A world?

Why don't we give it a try?

#### Lancaster Farming

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—by—

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