

# Lancaster Farming

## OPINION

### Avoiding 'Agri-Heartburn'

Some time ago, we reported about a farmer on a panel who described his experience with "agricultural entertainment," or what he calls "agri-tainment."

This gentleman, who farms close to Bedford, N.J., could not express the message he has learned any clearer: farmers' market stand operators who want to expand into traditional pick-your-own operations, offer hayrides, build corn mazes, and sell baked items may soon come under intensified federal scrutiny.

The warning: invest in liability insurance and keep all lines of communication between you and customers open, or face potential legal consequences.

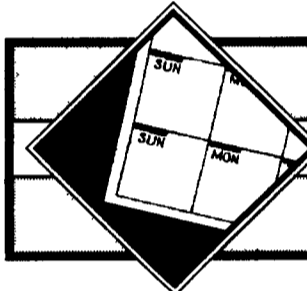
One farmer/panelist reminded the growers who attended the segment of the much-publicized Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention at Hershey in early February of the travails experienced by one southeast Pennsylvania farm market that had to deal with an alleged e.coli problem linked to a petting zoo at the market.

So, the message went, don't wait for federal prosecutors to come knocking. Be preemptive. At petting zoos, install wash stations. Follow all safety procedures.

One manager noted a problem with parking at his farm market. People — some with baby strollers and toddlers — were crossing on a busy highway. He saw an accident waiting to happen. So the market manager changed the entire parking area scheme, removed the potential hazards, posted the new routes, and clearly defined a parking "plan" that emphasized pedestrian safety.

Good call.

Have liability and customer safety plans installed on your farm market. Now that produce auction season is under way, also, have a great year!



◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

#### Saturday, March 31

Delaware Valley College Green and Gold Spectacular, Equestrian Center, Doylestown, noon.

Income Opportunities For Rural Areas, Adams County extension office, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Goat Field Day, York County 4-H Center, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Income Opportunities For Rural Areas, Adams County Cooperative Extension, Gettysburg, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences Open House, Agricultural Sciences and Industry Building, University Campus, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Quality Deer Meeting Association, Governor Mifflin Middle School, Shillington, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., (610) 856-1124.

Bucks County Annual NFO Dinner, Plumsteadville Fire

House, 7 p.m.

#### Sunday, April 1

Daylight Saving Time begins.

Animal Health and Biotechnology and Trade, Antlers Adams Mark hotel, Colorado Springs, Colo., thru April 5, (270) 782-9798.

#### Monday, April 2

BQA Certification Workshop, Bedford and Somerset counties, Bedford County Fairgrounds, 7 p.m.

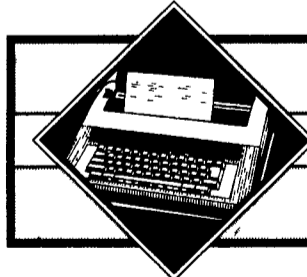
Farm Website Seminar, Gateway Building, Columbia, Md., 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m., (410) 313-6500.

#### Tuesday, April 3

Poultry Sales and Service Conference, Nittany Lion Inn, University Park, thru April 4, (814) 865-5573.

Organic Crop Production, Boyertown Eatery, (610) 378-1327.

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◆ FARM FORUM ◆

Editor:

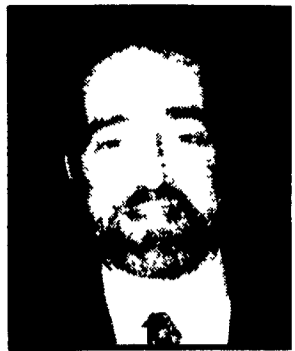
Did the dairy industry voluntarily yield to the soda industry in public schools? That's certainly the way it looked when I started going over USDA statistics showing the steady decline of milk and the rise of soft drink consumption these past 20 years.

Soft drink companies have been actively targeting teenagers, offering large sums of money in exchange for the placement of colorful vending machines throughout public schools. Contracts often include quotas and the ability to withhold funds should quotas not be

met. In many schools, sales approach three cans a day per student.

The downside of high soda consumption is that it has recently been linked to rising obesity levels by Lancet, a medical journal. And, obesity is tied to an increase in diabetes, heart and kidney disease among the teen-age population. Plus, the consumption of sodas and its level of caffeine and phosphoric acid raises the issue of bone density problems among active teen-age girls and a possible flurry of early onset osteoporosis.

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### Now Is The Time By Leon Ressler

Lancaster County  
Extension Director

#### To Topdress Small Grain

Dr. Elwood Hatley in the agronomy department suggests the rate and timing of spring-applied nitrogen depends on several factors:

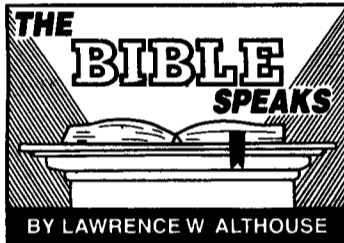
- The first factor is growth stage. If the plants are at growth stage 2 (main stem and one or two tillers) or less, apply the nitrogen as soon as plants start "greening-up." If the plants are past growth stage two, the nitrogen can be applied from "green-up" to growth stage 5 (early erect growth). Refer to the Penn State 1999-2000 Agronomy Guide, page 160, for a description of growth stages.

- The nitrogen rate will depend on anticipated yield, previous crop yield, previous fertilizer amounts, and frequency and amount of manure applied. Each bushel of wheat grain produced will require 1.3 to 1.5 pounds of nitrogen. Estimating the amount of nitrogen that will be supplied by the soil is important. Excessive nitrogen applications effect profitability, increase disease pressures, increase lodging potential, decrease yields, and increase the potential for nitrogen leaching.

- Inadequate nitrogen also affects profitability since it will result in reduced yield.

- One of the major factors affecting soil available nitrogen is frequency of manure applications. Research indicates that when fields are manured every one or two years, one should apply 0 to 30 pounds of nitrogen per acre. If applied every three to four years, one should apply 30 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre. When applied less frequently, one should apply 60 to 90 pounds of nitrogen per acre.

- Winter barley has less resistance to lodging than wheat; therefore, the nitrogen rates should be reduced accordingly. Keep the nitrogen rates between 45 and 60 pounds of nitrogen per acre when manure is not applied frequently to the field. When manure is frequently applied, use only 0 to 30 pounds of nitrogen per acre.



### NO "MERE" ANYTHING

Background Scripture:

6:1 through 8:3.

Devotional Reading:

Micah 4:1-7.

It doesn't sound all that interesting or important, does it? Waiting on tables — a menial job, whether at home or in church. The twelve apostles in the post-resurrection church of Jerusalem made it sound that way: "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables" (6:2). While we cannot know exactly what the twelve meant, it does sound as if they are denigrating the task of waiting on tables.

Because there were rising complaints within the church that the Hellenist (Greek-speaking) widows were not getting their share of the daily distribution of food, the apostles knew they had to do something to correct that condition. Their proposed solution was to appoint seven men to be responsible for this task, so that the apostles could devote themselves to prayer, teaching, and preaching.

Some regard this passage as the first demarcation in the church between laity and clergy, what some would deem between a "lower" and "higher" calling.

Whether that is so or not, there does appear to be a qualitative difference between these two vocations: one group would be servants of the word; the other, servants of the serving tables.

#### Full Of The Spirit

I am not certain, however, that the difference isn't more apparent than real.

The contrast was not so much the spiritual quality of the two different groups, but of function. The qualifications laid down by the apostles is indicative: "... seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom" (6:3). Those sound like pretty heavy qualifications for people just waiting on tables. But then, where did we ever get the idea that preaching the word is qualitatively more advanced than serving the needs of fellow human beings? The calling of the clergy is not a higher calling, just a different one.

First selected was Stephen, described as "a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit" (6:5). That hardly represents a step down in spiritual qualifications, does it? And then the apostles "prayed and laid hands upon them" — pretty impressive for men who were chosen "merely" to wait on tables and equitably provide food rations for the widows.

If this was the first experience of church organization, it seemed to have been successful: "And the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith" (6:7).

Stephen was not called to preach, but that did not keep him from witnessing for his Lord: "Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people" (6:8). When he disputed with the members of certain synagogues, we are told that "they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke" (6:10). There was a lot more to Stephen than waiting on tables. First of all, he was a witnessing disciple to Jesus Christ.

#### To Visit The Agricultural Analytical Services Laboratory Website

The Agricultural Analytical Services Laboratory (AASL) has recently upgraded its Website and moved it to the following location: <http://www.aasl.psu.edu/>.

This Website contains a description of the services offered by the laboratory. It also includes online access to the Soil Test Recommendations Handbook for Agronomic Crops. To view the handbook, click on the "programs" button on the left panel of the screen and select "Soil Test Recommendations Handbook for Agronomic Crops" on the next page. Here you can now view the recommendation tables for all agronomic crops online and print them as needed.

As any changes are made to the recommendations, the tables on this site will be updated. A sample soil test report as well as a multiple sample information form for agronomic crops are also available on this site for viewing or printing.

Quote of The Week

"Whoever is spared personal pain must feel himself called to help in diminishing the pain of others."

— Albert Schweitzer

#### Angel Face

Something else that we need to see is this man's great spirituality. The Council sat to examine this upstart and they were amazed at him: "And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel" (6:15). Of how many of the apostles was something like that said?

Stephen went on to preach a sermon to his antagonists, but it was not the sermon, but what happened when it was over that settled once and for all that Stephen was no "mere" anything. When his listeners evidence their rage and "ground their teeth against him," Stephen responded with an act of discipleship that was neither clergy nor lay, apostle nor deacon — it was the act of a true follower of Jesus Christ: "But he, full of the Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God... And as they were stoning him, he prayed, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, 'Lord, do not hold this sin against them'" (7:55,59,60).

We do not know how the other disciples died or what they said in their last moments, but we may be assured that none of them rose above Stephen's example, for it was the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. When we live and die as he did, there is nothing "mere" about our lives.

#### Lancaster Farming

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—by—

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