

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Another Potential Drought?

In the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Update newsletter of March 30 this year, several Penn State College of Ag Sciences water specialists point to the 1999 drought.

One big conclusion: the 1999 drought "caused major agricultural losses throughout the state," they wrote. "Crop losses statewide were estimated at \$1.3 billion, while economic loss from decreased milk production was estimated at \$1.5 billion."

In that devastating, history-making year, stream flows reached record low levels in nearly every corner. Groundwater levels reached record lows. Mandatory water rationing began in many places. Dry streams and aquatic habitat losses of the magnitude experienced in 1999 caused both immediate and long-term damage to fisheries and aquatic resources.

David E. Hess, acting DEP secretary, noted in the excellent pamphlet, "Water Is Life," handed out at a recent groundwater symposium in Carlisle, that Pennsylvania has spent four of the last six years in drought conditions, causing billions of dollars in agricultural losses.

Yet less than one half of one percent, Hess wrote in the booklet, of the municipalities in Pennsylvania know their "water budget" — how much water they have available and how much they are using. Pennsylvania's State Water Plan has not been updated in 25 years.

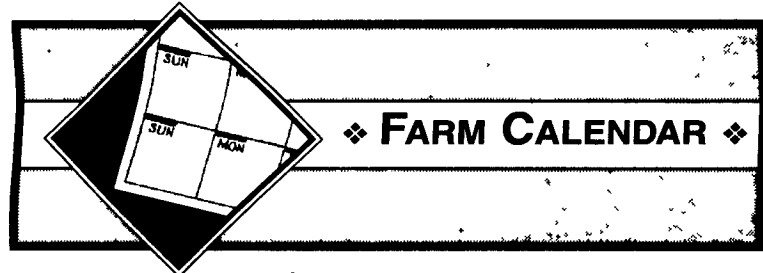
Pennsylvania has a Water Rights Act that was adopted in 1939 that only covers a tiny percentage of water users, and lets everyone else fend for themselves, noted Hess.

What of dire predictions that 2001 will be a repeat of the drought year of 1999?

Paul Knight, state climatologist and meteorology instructor at Penn State, spoke at the "Decisions: For the Real Beginning of the 21st Century" Conference in Allentown in January this year.

Knight noted a persistent cycle: 1990 was a wet year, 1991 dry; 1992 wet, 1993 dry; 1994 wet, 1995 dry; 1996, dry in 1997; wet in 1998, dry in 1999. Wet in 2000... get the picture?

What will 2001 bring?



Saturday, May 19
Pa. Guild of Craftsmen Spring Craft Celebration, Richboro, also May 20.

Keystone Klassic Llama Show, Penn State Ag Arena, (724) 222-0828.

Basic Beekeeping Short Course, Dauphin County Farm Conference Center and Apiary, Hershey, noon-5 p.m.

Perry County Dairy Princess Pageant, Lutheran Parish House, New Bloomfield, 8 p.m., (814) 694-2661.

Sunday, May 20

Monday, May 21
National Egg Quality School, Ramada Inn and Conference Center, Salisbury, Md., thru May 24.

Lehigh Valley Horse Council meeting and lecture, New Tripoli, 7:30 p.m., (610) 759-7985.

Horse Pasture Workshop, Lee and Diane Simons, 7 p.m.
Log Grading Short Course, Ag Arena, Penn State Campus, (814) 863-1113.

Water Resources Forum, Arena Hotel, Bedford, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, May 22

12th Annual Divots For Degrees Golf Tournament, Foxchase Golf Club, Stevens, 7:30 a.m. and 1 p.m., no rain date, (717) 651-5920.

Penn State Cooperative Extension meeting on foreign animal diseases, NIER Building, Mayfield, 1 p.m.-3 p.m., and West End Fire Hall, Brodheads, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (570) 421-6430.

Westmoreland Woodland Improvement Association Meet-

ing, Donohoe Center, 7 p.m., (724) 668-7650.

Berks County Grazing Walk, Shartlesville Road, Mohrsville, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, May 23

Pa. Veterinary Medical Association Spring Clinic, Penn State Conference Center Hotel, State College.

Public Forum on Water Resources, Ramada Inn, Edinboro.

Virginia Vineyard Meeting, Linden Vineyards, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., (540) 869-2560.

Thursday, May 24

Public Forum on Water, Clearfield County Holiday Inn, DuBois.

Devon Horse Show and Country Fair, 8 a.m.-11 p.m., (610) 964-0550.

Tractor Safety Meeting, Susquehanna County office building, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Friday, May 25

Susquehanna County Dairy Princess Pageant, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Montrose, 7:30 p.m., (814) 694-2661.

Saturday, May 26

Massachusetts Sheep and Wool Craft Fair, Cummington, Mass., (413) 625-2424.

Boer Goat Seminar and Sale, Northeast Livestock Marketing Cooperative, Blandford Fairgrounds, Mass., (413) 774-7599.

York County Dairy Princess Pageant, York County 4-H Center, 7:30 p.m., (814) 694-2661.

Clearfield County Dairy Princess Pageant, Curwensville Civic Center, Curwensville, 8

(Turn to Page A38)



To Evaluate Corn Weed Control

Recent dry weather spells potential trouble for weed control in corn. Dry weather affects the performance of both soil-applied and postemergence herbicides.

All soil-applied herbicides require rainfall to activate them for effective weed control. In general, rainfall is needed within 7-10 days after application or before weed emergence.

The amount of rainfall needed for good weed control is determined by the soil conditions, the herbicide, and the type of weed to be controlled. Usually 1/2 inch of rainfall is considered minimum for effective weed control. The less mobile products such as Prowl, Atrazine, and Scepter, and deeper germinating weeds such as velvetleaf, ragweed, cocklebur, and yellow nutsedge, will require even more rainfall for effective control.

If it has been more than 10 days since you applied your herbicide and weeds are starting to

break through, there are several options you should consider. The first one is using a rotary hoe, which is relatively quick and will uproot germinating weeds in the white root stage as well as incorporate the herbicide.

Operate the rotary hoe within the designed speed range of 5-15 mph. Higher speeds increase the surface aggressiveness but reduce penetration. Worn tips greatly reduce performance, so they should be replaced as needed. Rotary hoes are very effective but the crop needs to be planted deeper than the germinating weeds.

A second option is using a postemergence herbicide if your first treatment has failed. While some "reachback" can be expected on small annual weeds when rain arrives, it is risky to count on this for control.

If you decide to use a post-application, there are some factors to consider. First, small annual weeds are easier to control than larger ones. Second, post herbicide performance is also affected by dry weather, so study your adjuvant options recommended under dry conditions.

The third option is to plan on getting out your cultivator or upgrading your cultivation equipment. In recent years, cultivation technology has improved significantly. Everything from rolling cultivators to electronic guidance systems, which keep the tool centered on the row, have greatly increased the efficiency of this ancient task. Joining with another producer to share equipment costs may be a good option if appropriate sharing arrangements can be worked out.

To Recycle Empty Pesticide Containers

This year the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture will again be collecting empty pesti-

cide containers for recycling. The program is available to all pesticide users. There are drop-off locations available in most counties and many counties have multiple locations.

In order to drop off containers, applicators must insure that the containers are free of pesticides both inside and outside. The containers must be triple-rinsed or pressure-rinsed.

All label booklets, plastic sleeves, and caps should be removed. Only containers from EPA registered agricultural, structural, turf, forestry, and specialty pest control products, as well as containers from crop oils, surfactants, and fertilizers will be accepted. Only containers made of #2HDPE plastic are acceptable.

After collection, the containers are granulated into chips and recycled as a part of a program sponsored by the Agricultural Container Research Council. A number of end uses for the recycled HDPE are being developed, including fence posts, pallets, speed bumps, marine pilings, and field drain tiles.

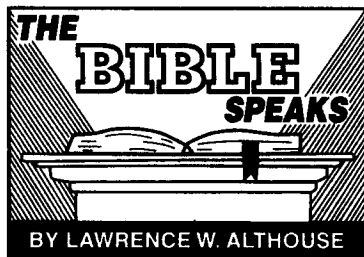
For more information and the location of drop-off sites near you, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture at (717)-705-5858, your local Penn State Cooperative Extension office, or the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences Website at <http://www.pested.psu.edu/pdaprog.html>.

After you have identified the drop-off site nearest you, remember to check with the site to verify the schedule for receiving containers.

Quote of the Week:

"I do not pray for success. I ask for faithfulness."

— Mother Teresa



WHERE IS YOUR 'MACEDONIA'?

Background Scripture: Acts 16:6-40.

Devotional Reading: Philippians 1:3-11.

As Acts tells it, there was no grand strategy in the minds of the earliest Christians. The church in Jerusalem did not decide to mount a mission to the rest of Judea, let alone to Asia Minor and Europe.

The Jerusalem church began as witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus Christ gathered together as a community of which Acts tells us, "And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people." (2:46,47).

It took persecution to move the early Christians into mission! On the day of the martyrdom of Stephen, "a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria..." (8:1b). One of the Christian communities that was founded by these persecution-scattered brethren

was at Antioch, and it was from here that Paul and Barnabas began their missionary efforts that established Christian congregations in parts of Asia Minor.

God's Next Move

Note that it is God, not the disciples, who acts to extend the reach of the gospel. God used the persecution in Jerusalem to scatter Christians throughout Judea, Samaria, and as far as Antioch. He then used Paul, Barnabas, and the Church at Antioch to bring the gospel into Asia Minor. He used the opposition of certain Jews to get Paul and Barnabas started on a mission to the Gentiles. What next would God do?

Next, God would use the hostility of Paul's opponents in Asia Minor and a dream in which Paul would see and hear a Macedonia calling: "Come over to Macedonia and help us" (16:9). Remembering our terminology of several weeks ago, God used Paul's closed doors to open another door through which the gospel could be carried from Asia to Europe.

In this case, it would seem that God was responsible for the "closed doors" in Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia. He wanted Paul to be receptive when he experienced this "night vision." (This term and "dream" were used interchangeably in New Testament times and were regarded as channels of God's revelation.)

Luke's 'Philippi'?

Some scholars have contended that Luke was from Philippi in Macedonia.

When they reach Philippi, Luke seems particularly proud of this city which he styles "the leading city of the district of Macedonia." (16:12).

It is interesting that immediately after this vision of the Macedonian call, the writer of Acts slips into the pronoun "we."

"And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them" (16:10). It was at this point in Troas that Luke joined Paul.

The meaning of this passage, however, is much more personal. Each of us has a Macedonian call of some kind to which we need to respond. There is for each of us a place or places in our lives where we need to break out and take a "continental" next step.

You can find Paul's "Macedonia" on the map. But the real question is: Where is the Macedonia to which God is calling you?

Lancaster Farming

Established 1955

Published Every Saturday

Ephrata Review Building

1 F Main St.

Ephrata, PA 17522

—by—

Lancaster Farming, Inc.

A Steinman Enterprise

William J. Burgess General Manager

Andy Andrews, Editor

Copyright 2001 by Lancaster Farming