

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Demonstration Days Ahead

Two of the Northeast's largest outdoor ag events are on the slate in the following weeks.

The first one is Empire Farm Days, scheduled next week, Aug. 7-9, at the Rodman Lott and Son Farm, Seneca Falls, N.Y.

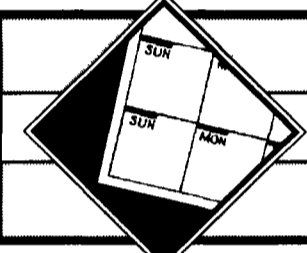
The other is Ag Progress Days, hosted by Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences Aug. 14-16 at the Russell E. Larson Agricultural Research Center at Rockspring, nine miles southwest of State College on Rt. 45.

For Empire Farm Days, special field demonstrations show how good that new equipment is going to be in the field. And other daily events are detailed this issue.

At Ag Progress, special exhibits feature research and educational programs designed to protect the state's natural resources while enhancing agricultural profitability and human health. Displays will focus on converting agricultural wastes and by-products to energy; water issues for the farm, home, and community; growing small farms through niche markets; protecting and restoring wetlands; and preventing ag pollution through quality assurance programs.

Ag Progress also has lots of demonstrations. We hope to feature some of them in these pages.

Have fun at both events!



◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

Saturday, August 4

Pa. Performance-Tested Ram and Ewe Sale and Sheep Field Day, Penn State Ag Arena, (814) 267-3771.

Lancaster County 4-H Fair Beef Show, 10 a.m.

Howard County Fair, West Friendship, Md., thru Aug. 11, (410) 442-1022.

2001 Annual Soil and Water Conservation Society Conference, Kingston Plantation, Myrtle Beach, S.C., thru Aug. 8.

Clinton County Fair, thru Aug. 11.

Greene County Fair, thru Aug. 11.

Lebanon County Master Gardeners, Lebanon County Ag Center, 8:30 a.m.-noon.

Heritage Day at Hans Herr House, Willow Street, (717) 464-4430.

Troy 4-H Horse Roundup, 8:30 a.m.

Ohio Farm Tour: Pleasantview Farm, Circleville, Ohio, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Bucks County Summer Picnic For Pa. Holstein Association, Ray and Deb Detweiler Farm, Perkasie, 11 a.m.

Sunday, August 5

Bedford County Fair, thru Aug. 11.


Transfer Harvest Home Fair, thru Aug. 11.

Adams County Farm Bureau Annual Summer Picnic, South Mountain Fairgrounds, 12:30 p.m.

Monday, August 6

Butler Farm Show, thru Aug. 11

(Turn to Page A45)



◆ FARM FORUM ◆

Editor:

Nutrient Management Deadlines And You: An Open Letter To Maryland Farmers

The Water Quality Improvement Act of 1998 mandated nutrient management for nearly all farms in Maryland, and the deadlines for acquiring such plans are fast approaching. The first set of deadlines requires development of a nutrient management plan by December 31 of this year, followed by implementation of that plan by December 31, 2002.

Maryland Cooperative Extension has been a consistent and valuable source of nutrient management advice for many years, with 30 county-based nutrient management adviser positions allotted for Maryland's 23 counties. These positions are appro-

priated through a contract arrangement with the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA). Extension makes every effort to keep all 30 positions filled at all times, although competitive salaries elsewhere make this a challenging task.

As the deadlines for developing and implementing nutrient management plans draw near, Extension nutrient management advisers are likely to encounter difficulties in meeting the educational needs of all who require assistance. But let me assure each and every one of you that the Maryland Cooperative Extension is committed to providing quality education in a timely fashion to as many producers as possible.

And, remember, the law stipulates that an operation would still be in compliance with the deadline requirements to obtain a nutrient management plan so

(Turn to Page A11)

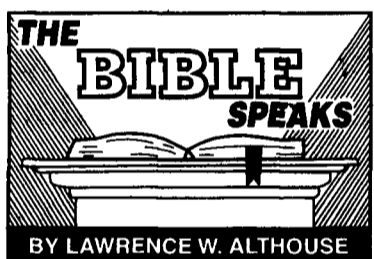


Now Is The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County Extension Director

To Plan To Take Your Whole Family To Ag Progress Days

Ag Progress Days (APD) is coming up Aug. 14-16, and will be an event you don't want to miss. This year's theme is "From the Ground Up: Building a Better Environment." APD will feature exhibits and programs for farmers and families of all types as well as the newest technology and equipment.

This year the College Exhibits Building will feature research and educational programs that improve agricultural profitability while protecting the environment. Displays will feature protecting and restoring wetlands for both wildlife habitat and as a buffer zone to protect water quality, converting agricultural waste to energy, developing niche markets to support small farm enterprises, farm quality assurance programs, and water issues



WHO'S CALLING?

Background Scripture:

Isaiah 6.

Devotional Reading:

Acts 26:12-20.

Why did Isaiah get a Technician, large-screen, wraparound sound vision, and all many of us ever get is a still, small voice or a nagging conscience?

That's a good question, isn't it? An Isaiah-type vision is hard to ignore (although not if you really try), but it's easy to ignore the still, small voice and rationalize the nagging conscience.

I don't have — nor anyone else I know — a full, complete answer. But I suspect that one factor is that God matches the nature of his call to the person whom he is calling and the specific task as well.

In the Bible we read many of the more dramatic calls which God makes — the burning bush experience of Moses (Ex. 3:2-4), Isaiah in the temple, and Jacob by the River Jabbok (Gen.32:22-30). But the Bible also tells us of the still, small voice that spoke to Elijah (1 Kings 19:12) and the tender night voice that disturbed Samuel's sleep (1 Sam. 3:9,10).

There are "burning bush" people and "still, small voice" people, but

for both the farm and surrounding communities.

Other topics to be addressed at the College Exhibit Building and Theatre include foot-and-mouth disease and biosecurity challenges that will be discussed on Tuesday and Wednesday. A regional update on the West Nile Virus, including the spread of the disease as well as proactive preventive measures, will be offered Tuesday morning. On Wednesday at 6 p.m., a public forum on hot topics in agricultural sciences will be held where three Penn State experts will address questions from the audience.

For the first time this year, visitors to APD can drop off plastic containers used for hazardous pesticides for easy recycling. This program is being offered in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Also for the first time, visitors can learn tree climbing by safely climbing 40-foot-tall trees with ropes and harness, just like professionals.

As in the past, field machinery demonstrations will be conducted daily. These include mowing and chopping alfalfa, rakes and tedders, high moisture hay baling, and bale handling. A skid-steer rodeo will be conducted Wednesday and skid-steer safety demonstrations will be offered Tuesday and Thursday.

To Participate In A Research Tour At APD

A number of free tours are available featuring a variety of topics. The general research tour is available every day and gives an overview of research conducted in Penn State's departments of agronomy, entomology, horticulture, and plant pathology and the USDA Pasture Systems And Watershed Management Research Lab.

On Thursday a potato research tour will feature varieties, insect

and disease control, and innovative growth-enhancing technologies. A tour of high-tunnel vegetable production will be offered daily at 12:30 p.m. This will feature full-sized demonstration models. You will see how vegetables, small fruits, and cut flowers grown in clear plastic tunnels can be combined with other techniques to extend the state's growing season to almost 12 months. Other tours offered daily include farm composting, grazing, forest stewardship, wetlands and stream corridor management, and conservation.

To Participate In The Family Learning Hub At APD

The theme at the Family Room Building is "Character Counts for Kids," and here you will find a number of activities, exhibits, and demonstrations on family, health, safety, and nutrition issues.

There is a treasure hunt awaiting visitors here. Look for the kid's corner, where parents and children can relax together while doing art activities, reading stories, and with water play.

Food demonstrations will focus on "Healthy Food, Healthy Families."

The ImAGination Station features many unusual exhibits giving children an opportunity to have hands-on learning experiences. They will learn where chocolate comes from, how action and reaction can create motion with balloon races, and the importance of water conservation. The building is full of fun experiences, including experimentation, microscopes, computers, pictures, games, and much more.

Don't miss the opportunity for the whole family to experience Ag Progress Days.

Quote of the Week:

On speech-making: "Be sincere; be brief; be seated."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt

it is God who matches the form to the message and the person to whom the message is addressed.

Beg Your Pardon?

I have had a few calls from God that, although they weren't on the level of burning bush, certainly were several degrees more than the still, small voice.

But most of the calling that God does to me comes in the "Aha!" thought that springs to my mind, a nagging conscience and sometimes a subtle, muted voice that I eventually identify as that of my Creator. Sometimes, when someone says something to me, I have to reply, "I beg your pardon." But, even before they reply, the words spoken suddenly form in my mind, like a picture coming into focus. I presume all of us have this experience. So, often I think that God's voice is like that, too: at first we do not understand what has been said, but then, suddenly we see the message in its clarity.

There is another factor, too, and that is our receptivity. If we do not spend much time in prayer and meditation, if we rarely think about God, if our minds are cluttered with all kinds of cares and concerns, if our ears are tuned only to our own voices, then we may not hear and understand what God is trying to tell us.

In "The Lark," a play about Joan of Arc, the Dauphin, heir to the throne of France, wants to know why God's voice does not come to him, the heir apparent, instead of Joan, a lowly maid. Joan replies that God does come to the Dauphin, but the heir to the throne is not listening. Might that not be our problem, too?

We may not be receptive because, deep down in our hearts, we know that hearing God's call usually means repentance. That's

what happened to Isaiah. His first reaction to his vision was: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (6:5). We are scared of repentance, but that is only because we do not realize that what lies beyond it is forgiveness. "Behold, this (burning coal) has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin forgiven" (6:7).

After Forgiveness

Forgiven, we are usually called to a task. When God calls us it may be for either a small task or a large transformation. If it is a life-changing call, we are less likely to acknowledge that we hear it.

Isaac's life was transformed in his temple experience because he was responsive to the voice of God. The Lord had a really tough job for him to perform and his life would never be the same if he accepted it. The message God gave him was grim: "Go, and say to this people: 'Hear and hear, but do not understand; see and see, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed" (Is. 6:9,10).

Lately we have been getting so many calls of solicitation that we have gotten into the habit of listening to our answering machine and monitoring the call to determine if it is a call we want to take. I think that's what many of us do when God calls.

Lancaster Farming
Established 1955
Published Every Saturday
Ephrata Review Building
1 E. Main St.
Ephrata, PA 17522
—by—
Lancaster Farming, Inc.
A Steinman Enterprise
William J. Burgess General Manager
Andy Andrews, Editor
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Lancaster Farming
An Award-Winning Farm Newspaper

- Keystone Awards 1993, 1995
- PennAg Industries 1992
- PACD Media Award 1996
- Berks Ag-Business Council 2000
- Recognized for photo excellence throughout the years by the Northeast Farm Communicators