

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

A Way Out

Lou Moore, well-known and respected Penn State economist, noted that the "best efforts" were under way to avoid a recession.

As of Oct. 2, there were six interest rate cuts (an eight-year low), consumer prices were low (only up 2.7 percent), unemployment stood at 4.9 percent (good historically), oil prices were stabilized and falling, the consumers kept the economy afloat, and gross domestic product was up 0.2 percent.

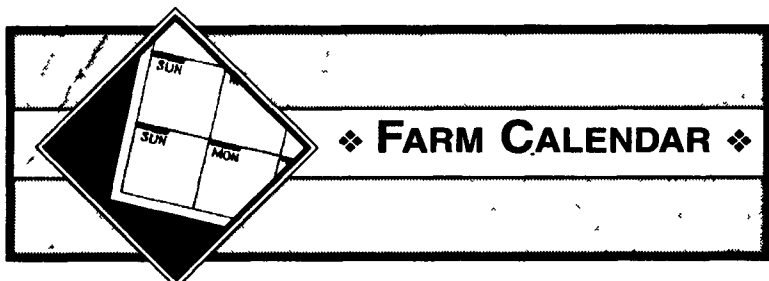
"We had actually avoided a recession until the events of Sept. 11," Moore noted. "Now I believe a recession is a certainty."

With the interest rate cut of Oct. 2, "the rates are the lowest in 40 years," Moore noted. "This will help spur the economy, but it will take a while. Probably not until next year will we see any growth."

With all the events since that horrifying date of 9-11, the chaotic nature of the stock market, layoffs and "ripple effect," Moore noted, even ag is affected.

For the ag economy, there has been too much grain production, keeping prices down. Though the general ag economy still seems "unmoved" by the Sept. 11 event, Moore noted, exports still remain sluggish, government supports are in question, and overall "farm income suffering," for some, continues.

Is there a way out for agriculture? Perhaps the headway being made in establishing a Mid-Atlantic ethanol facility, or groups of facilities, could spur better corn prices. But for our increasing dependence on ag exports — this may be on hold until the war is resolved. And the resolution of this war is unclear, though it seems certain, unfortunately, more innocent lives will be lost.



❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Saturday, October 13

Harvest Craft Fair, Leesport, thru Oct. 14.

Fall Antique Tractor Pull, Mason-Dixon Fairgrounds, Delta.

Pumpkin Chunkin and Fall Festival, York Expo Center, Farm and Natural Land Trust, York County, (717) 843-4411.

Beef and Forage Day, Eastern Ohio Resource Development Center, Caldwell, Ohio, (740) 732-2682.

Pa. Planning Association Conference, Genetti's Best Western Hotel.

Wyoming County Sheep and Wool Producers Association Annual Meeting, United Methodist Church, 6:30 p.m.

Ohio State Tree Farm Program Tour, Lawhorn Tree Farm, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Angus Association Fall Mountain Classic Sale, Previous Mill Trail Farms, show 10:30 a.m., sale 1 p.m., (304) 472-6828.

Hedgeapple Farm Field Day, Buckeystown, Md.

Pa. Guild of Craftsmen's Fall State Craft Fest, and eval and certified appraiser, Oct. 13-14, Tyler State Park, Richboro, noon-4 p.m.

Northwest Pa. Sheep and Wool Growers' Meeting, Woodcock Township Building, Meadville, 10 a.m., (724) 662-3141.

Sunday, October 14

Jan Harding Retirement Gathering, Ag Progress Days Special Events Building, Rockspring, 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

Equine Infectious Disease Symposium For Veterinarians and Horse Owners, Loudoun Hospital Center, Leesburg, Va., thru Oct. 15.

Monday, October 15

Management Essentials For Dairy Success (MEDS) Workshop, consecutive Mondays,

Altoona, (888) 373-PADA. Berks County Extension Open House and Annual Meeting, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 3:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m., (610) 378-1327.

Tuesday, October 16

Ohio Beef and Forage Day, Eastern Ohio Resources Development Center, Caldwell, Ohio, (740) 732-2682.

Dillsburg Community Fair, thru Oct. 20.

Lancaster 4-H Recognition Night, Four Seasons, Landisville, 6:30 p.m.

World Food Day Teleconference, aired from Penn State Lycoming County, Montoursville, noon-3 p.m.

Public Briefing From PMMB, Majority Caucus Room 156 CB, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers 9th Grade Mentoring Meeting, Ephrata High School, 7:30 p.m., (717) 721-9274.

Wednesday, October 17

Pasture Walk, Canyon Livestock Company, Jim and Beth Weaver.

ADA District Meeting, Chateaugay American Legion, Chateaugay, N.Y., 7:30 p.m.

Penn State Animal Science Prospective Students Open house, thru Oct. 18, (814) 863-4198.

Team Building Workshop, Cambria County extension office, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Thursday, October 18

Pa. Community Forestry Conference, Atherton Hotel, State College, thru Oct. 19.

Maryland State Grange Session, thru Oct. 20.

York County Agricultural Land Preservation Board information meeting, County Annex Building, York, 7 p.m., (717) 840-7400.

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Now Is The Time

By Leon Ressler

Lancaster County Extension Director

To Participate In The National Pesticide Initiative Survey

A survey of corn and apple growers is being conducted in Pennsylvania in October and November by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, in cooperation with Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences. The 2001 Fruit Chemical Use Survey and 2001 Agricultural Resources Management Study will survey pesticide use and pest management tactics.

According to Bill Hoffman, senior extension associate in Penn State's Pest Management Information Center, "It's important that growers cooperate because this information could help protect the tools the state's growers depend on."

Approximately 200 apple growers and 200 corn growers will receive letters telling them they have been selected for the survey. Survey personnel will call to set up a time to visit the farm or residence to conduct the interview.

"Typically, the interview lasts an hour," Hoffman said. "Producers

should have their seed, fertilizer, and/or pesticide records near at hand so the interview goes quickly and smoothly." He emphasizes that all information from individual growers will remain confidential. "Also, for the first time, growers will receive one core pesticide credit for responding to the survey," he said.

The USDA and the Environmental Protection Agency will include survey data in a national database of information on how agricultural chemicals are used, as well as the quantities used for specific crops.

"The Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 instituted much higher food safety standards related to pesticide residue," Hoffman said. "Without good data, the EPA may assume farmers use more pesticides than they actually do. This could lead to pesticides being banned or restricted unnecessarily." Hoffman also points out that information on usage patterns often influences manufacturers' decisions to submit a product for re-registration and approval with regulatory agencies.

State and national estimates of agricultural chemical use by the surveyed groups will be published in mid-2002.

To Harvest Frost-Damaged Corn And Soybeans

With the hard freeze this week, you may have some immature corn or soybeans that were damaged.

According to Bob Anderson, Lancaster County agronomy agent, corn reaches maturity when the black layer is formed at the base of the kernel. In soybeans, maturity is reached when the bean pods are no longer green. At maturity, corn is roughly 35 percent moisture and beans are between 18 and 20 percent moisture. At maturity, neither crop will accumulate any more dry matter. Frost before maturity will reduce both quality and yields.

Frost-damaged corn will have small and misshapen soft kernels. The incomplete development of the starch structure will cause a pithy kernel resulting in a high percent of kernel break during handling

and low-test weight (below 45 pounds per bushel). It will also result in low protein levels and low digestibility amino acid levels will be very variable.

Managing frosted corn appropriately can help reduce yield losses and maintain the feeding value. But if the grain has already dried to or below 35 percent moisture, losses will be negligible even following a severe frost. If any green leaves remain after a frost, even leaves that are below the ear, the corn plant will continue live and mature and will increase in dry matter content. A good rule of thumb to remember — let frosted corn stand as long as there are green leaves and the ear has not formed the black layer.

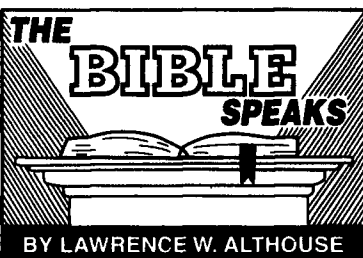
The best use of frosted corn is animal feed. However, it should be tested so that the feeding program can be supplemented with additional protein and amino acids. In addition, fungi can present a problem with frosted corn, so continue checking for fungi during storage. Expect storage time to be reduced by as much as 50 percent with frosted corn.

Frost-damaged soybeans will show green or elongated yellow beans that shrink to smaller than normal size after drying. Immature beans are difficult to extract oil from and the oil content is reduced.

The best use of frosted soybeans is also for livestock feed. Processors will discount for green soybeans because the green color must be refined out of the oil. Oil from immature beans often contains high levels of free fatty acids, which cause rancidity. Meal from immature beans will contain more residual oil than the normal 0.5 to 1.0 percent. Direct marketing from the field of frosted beans usually result in the highest discount for green beans. Cleaning and proper drying may improve the marketability of these beans.

Quote of the Week: "A wise old owl sat in an oak, The more he heard the less he spoke; The less he spoke the more he heard. Why aren't we all like that wise old Bird?"

— William Bennett



BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

THE LIMITS OF NEIGHBORLINESS

Background Scripture: Luke 10:25-37.

Devotional Reading: Deuteronomy 15:7-11.

"And behold, a lawyer stood up to question him . . ."

It is significant that this question was posed by someone who approached "eternal life" from a legalistic standpoint. "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" It is a straightforward question, and Jesus gives him a straightforward question in return: "What is written in the law? How do you read?"

The lawyer's answer should have been understood even by nonlegal minds: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind; and your neighbor as yourself." And Jesus answered: "You have answered right; do this, and you will live." That could have been the end of it, but it wasn't.

"But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus 'And who is my neighbor?'" Jesus could have replied, "What part of 'neighbor' don't you understand?," but the

problem was not that the lawyer didn't understand, but that he desired "to justify himself." "Justify" is a legal term and it helps us to realize that this man wanted to prove his right to eternal life. In order to do that, he set out to limit his responsibility by trying to get a narrow definition of "neighbor."

What's The Limit?

Setting narrow limits to our responsibilities as Christians is a normal human reaction. The disciples also asked Jesus to set limits on forgiveness: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" (Mt.18:21,22). A legalist would have interpreted Jesus' answer as setting a limit of 490 times or "seventy times seven." Jesus does not set a limit, but expands it indefinitely. In his parable, he similarly refuses to set limits. The grace of God, which we are called to emulate, sets no limits.

Think of some of the limits we may hold on to. A priest and a Levite passed by and they did not respond to the victim. Their compassion was limited to specific times and places and this was not one of them. Don't condemn them too quickly: their reaction was the popular one. Helping a victim is often taboo in our world today.

"Not getting involved" is a popular limit now, just as it was then.

Other limits are the ethnic and religious identity of the next person along on this road: a Samaritan. Just as the Jew disdained being in contact with Samaritans, so it was expected that a Samaritan would have nothing to do with a Jew. But, in this case, the man acted not like a Samaritan, but as a child of God, a neighbor. (If it would help,

instead of "Samaritan" read "atheist," "Moslem," "Hindu," or "Hari Krishna.")

A Couple Went Down To Waco

I have previously told this story here, but I will tell it again, because, like a parable, it has a timely point.

A couple — friends of ours — was driving from Dallas to Waco, and on the way their car had a blowout. The husband was physically incapacitated and the woman did not know how to change a tire. As they were pondering this, a car stopped just ahead of theirs. Their momentary relief dissolved when the occupants of the car, two bearded, unkempt young men, got out and started walking toward them. These men certainly were not within the limits wherein they would expect or even look for help.

To the couple's surprise, however, the two young men changed their tire and, when offered "something for your trouble," smiled and refused before driving away. "Would I have stopped and helped them?" the wife asked herself. The answer, she knew, was certainly "no, never."

After all, there are "reasonable" limits, aren't there?. But Jesus made it very clear, both for the lawyer and for us, that there are no limits to neighborliness, because God himself sends his rain upon our just and unjust neighbors (Mt. 5:45).

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