

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Where Is Pa.'s Poultry Industry Youth Convention?

We would be wise to follow in the footsteps of the Virginia Poultry Federation.

Through a cooperative effort with extension service and industry, the Virginia Poultry Federation began, some time ago, an Industry Youth Convention in early May.

The purpose: bring about 150-180 kids together to learn about the careers and lifestyles of the poultry industry.

Pennsylvania doesn't have a program like that. But it should. At the same time, more job opportunities for graduates of poultry science are available. And according to Phillip Clauer, Penn State senior extension associate, 4-H youth and specialty programs, getting youth involved in poultry is critical because "we don't have the students we need to fill those positions," he said.

Clauer spoke last week during the annual Penn State-sponsored Poultry Sales and Service Conference at the Nittany Lion Inn.

Clauer noted the many ways 4-H projects and FFA career development programs help educate youth from K-12.

The convention in Virginia brings together youth for judging events and other activities. A critical component is the "job shadow," a person with college education representing a company that takes about 2-6 teen-agers for a few hours a day to show them what the company representative actually does for a living. That could include processing plants or feed mills or visits to a poultry farm. "Make it a fun activity," Clauer said. "It would be exciting and an excellent public relations thing for the whole industry."

Young people have an excuse to leave school because the event has an educational component. The visits to the company are conducted on a Thursday, normally when most businesses are in full operation.

Each county 4-H club is permitted to place two teams with 4-5 extra individuals.

Those "job shadows" worked well, "because everybody had a job, and we just did it, and it was fun," said Clauer.

Clauer noted that for Pennsylvania to do something similar, they would need contributions in terms of supplies and time from industry.

We think it's a great idea. Any takers? If so, call Clauer at (814) 863-8960 or e-mail him at pclauer@psu.edu.



Now Is The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County Extension Director

To Continue To Conserve Water

Recent rains have improved the moisture conditions in the soil, making our lawns green and making it seem like the drought is over. However, we are still in the midst of a drought emergency.

The Susquehanna River at Safe Harbor on April 17 had a flow of 51,500 cfs (cubic feet per second) compared to normal flow for April of 79,300 cfs. On April 16 the Conestoga River at Lancaster had a flow of 283,000 cfs compared to the April normal of 765,000 cfs. So while our stream flows have improved a bit, they are still dangerously low for this time of year.

The groundwater level in the USGS observation well in Lancaster County did rise by 12 inches in the last week. Again, however, the levels are still well below where they normally should be. While the last 30 days did produce normal rainfall, we still have a deficit of 15 inches since April 2001. So we still have a long way to go and conservation is still critical as we head into the summer months.

To Apply Fungicides To Strawberries

Gray mold for Botrytis blight is

the most serious disease affecting strawberries. The causal organism, *Botrytis cinerea*, can live both as a parasite and as a saprophyte on decaying plant debris.

Botrytis blight usually starts as a blossom blight, which then later invades the fruit, causing them to rot. Rot may first appear at the base of the fruit or when the berry is in contact with the soil, other damp surfaces, or other rotten fruit. The rot can destroy the berry within 48 hours.

As ripening increases and the humidity remains high, a characteristic gray, fuzzy coating or web produced by the fruiting fungus covers the strawberry fruit. As the disease progresses, spores are produced and are easily blown or splashed onto healthy foliage. Once the fungus gets established in a field it can produce spores continuously throughout the season.

Moisture is necessary for the spores to germinate and infect plants. Therefore the disease is favored by humidity and cool conditions. If you need to irrigate and you are using overhead irrigation, it is important to irrigate during the sunny part of the day and shut down the irrigation while there is still enough afternoon sunshine to dry off the plants and fruit before nightfall. This will limit the ability of the Botrytis spores to germinate and infect the fruit or blossoms.

Because most Botrytis infections begin in the blossom, it is essential to apply fungicides during the bloom period. Research has shown that if the blossom sprays are applied in a timely manner, spraying during harvest does little to improve control and may not be needed. However if the blossom sprays are missed, sprays at harvest time alone will not be very effective because the infections started during the blossom period.

Apply the first spray at 10 percent bloom; apply again at full bloom and late bloom. There are a number of products labeled for Botrytis control in strawberries, including Elevate, Captan, Thiram, and Topsin M. Read and follow the label directions, especially the days to harvest restrictions.

To Monitor Your Asparagus Field For Asparagus Beetles

The recent surge of unusually hot

weather has jump-started asparagus production. Unfortunately it has also spurred the emergence of asparagus pests.

Two types of asparagus beetles could be found at this time in your field and can do significant damage to your crop. Both the asparagus beetle and the spotted asparagus beetle overwinter as adults and begin feeding immediately following emergence. The asparagus beetle emerges before the spotted asparagus beetle.

The adult asparagus beetle has a black body with a metallic blue head. On each wing cover are three rectangular metallic yellow spots that often have red markings along the margin. The spotted asparagus beetle adults are orange with six black spots on each wing cover. The adults of both species range in length from 1/4 to 4/10 of an inch in length.

Both begin laying eggs within a week after emergence. The asparagus beetle deposits its dark brown, oval-shaped eggs on the spears in rows of 3-8 and the eggs are attached by one end to the spear. The spotted asparagus beetle lays its green eggs individually. In three to eight days, the eggs hatch and the larva feed for 10-14 days as they develop through four instars. The larvae of the asparagus beetle are dark gray with a black head. The larvae of the spotted asparagus beetle are cream colored with a light brown head. When fully developed, the larvae crawl to the ground where they burrow into the soil and spin a silken cocoon. Here they pupate for 5-10 days before emerging as adults to complete the life cycle. Typically there are two life cycles completed in Pennsylvania each year.

The asparagus beetles cause damage to the crop in several ways. Adults and larvae feeding on the spears and tips cause scarring. Frass from both of the stages can stain the spear and eggs on the spears are very unappealing. Any of these problems can make the spears unmarketable. The spotted asparagus beetle larva feed on asparagus berries. This damage has little economic significance in production fields. It would be a problem in seed production, however.

Quote of the Week:

"Character is power."
— Booker T. Washington

What's Going On In The Cattle And Hog Markets?

MILLIE BUNTING
Market Staff

Editor's Note: Here are one market analyst's opinions about what's going on with the volatile cattle markets.

EPHRATA (Lancaster Co.) — "What's the market?"

We can quickly find answers to that question today with a phone call or the Internet. But for the last two weeks on a daily basis, the answer resulted in cries of disbelief from beef and pork producers as well as market watchers.

The question now is why? On the surface, the beef trade was improving and pulling out of the fit-ascio in the futures trade from false foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) rumors that sent prices crashing over into the live cattle market. That is re-

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◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

- Saturday, April 20
- Space Day 2002 at Penn State, HUB-Robeson Center, Penn State University, 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
 - New Jersey Holstein-Friesian Association State Sale, Warren County Fairgrounds, 11 a.m.
 - Little International Livestock Show, Penn State Ag Arena, (814) 863-0569.
 - Penn State Dairy Expo, Ag Arena, State College, 8 a.m.
 - Cecil County Farm Museum Spring Antique Tractor Demonstration, Walnut Springs Farm, 9 a.m. registration, (410) 658-2121.
 - 4-H Centennial Celebration, Bradford County Library, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
 - Berks County Conservation Open House, Reading, noon-4 p.m.

Sunday, April 21

Monday, April 22

Grape Pest Management Workshop, Long Island Horticulture Research and Extension Center, Riverhead, N.Y., (631) 727-3595.

4-H Capitol Days, Harrisburg, thru April 23.

Better Process Control School, (Turn to Page A11)

How To Reach Us

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THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

OUTSIDE THE LINES

Background Scripture:
Romans 12.
Devotional Reading:
Romans 12:4-8.

"Coloring outside the lines" has become commonplace in recognizing independence and creativity. When it comes to the values and mores by which we live, however, staying within the lines remains the norm.

Children and youth want to dress and act as their peers do. Adults pretty much live by the norms of our society. Many assume that Christians are just like everybody else, except they go to church.

Paul, however, offers a different standard: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God..." (Ro. 12:2). Christians are not to live just like everybody else. We are to live by different values and standards, not for the sake of being different but so that God's will may be manifest in our lives.

Some of us may question whether

there is such a deep divide between Christianity and the world. But Paul goes on to count some of the ways in which Christians are called to color "outside the lines. For one thing, Christians are to use their God-given gifts and endowments for the sake of the body of Christ" (12:4-8).

How does that differ from the world? The world doesn't acknowledge God as the source of our gifts, nor does it call us to rise above the level of "look out for number one!"

Genuine Love

We are also called to be different in the quality of our love for one another: "Let love be genuine... love one another with brotherly affection; outdo one another in showing honor" (12:9).

Love in our society doesn't reach much beyond self-gratification. Christians are also called to embrace that which is good and refuse that which is evil (12:9b). That is in stark contrast to society's advice: "If it feels good, do it."

In the midst of a society that worships "letting the good times roll," we are called to a different level of enjoyment: "Never flag in zeal, be aglow with the Spirit... Rejoice in your hope" (12:11,12a). There is a big difference between "having a blast," a fleeting moment, and experiencing Christian joy, a transforming condition.

Another marked difference has to do with the way we regard those in need. Especially in our world today, those in need are often judged too slothful to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. Paul paints a different picture: "Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality... weep with those who weep... do not be haughty, but asso-

ciate with the lowly" (12:13,15b,16b). The real "losers" in this world are those who haughtily keep themselves unstained by those in need.

Whose Vengeance?

The most glaring difference between the world and Christianity is enmity, however, is in the way we are to react to those who have or might harm us. Two thousand years later and the Christian norm is still revolutionary: "Repay no one evil for evil... Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (12:17,19). The world adamantly disagrees, claiming the right to vengeance as if it were our birthright.

Not only are we called to abstain from vengeance, but as Christians we are called to embody Christlike love for our enemies: "... if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; (12:20). In sharing, "for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." Paul is indicating that Christian love is not so much feeling loving, but doing the loving thing regardless of how we might feel. Do you want to feel the pleasure of pouring burning coals on his head? Do something really loving!

The world loves the "eye-for-an-eye" standard, but you cannot overcome evil with more evil. You can hold it in check for a while, but coloring outside the lines, responding only with good, can truly defeat it.

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