

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Do The Right Things Right

Guest Editorial
David White
Executive Director
Ohio Livestock Coalition (OLC)

Pretend for a moment that you are a young farmer, your wife is 8½ months pregnant, you're thinking about building two new hog (1,960 head) finishing units with a lagoon system, and the local newspaper calls to get your reaction to being named defendants in a \$10 million class action lawsuit.

Quick — wake up! Is this a nightmare? No, unfortunately, it was all too real for a Darke County, Ohio, livestock farm family.

Tony and Anita Knapke were the targets of a \$10 million lawsuit filed by three neighbors in 1998. The neighbors claimed the proposed operation would impact their property values, quality of life, and create a potential nuisance. A couple of years later, the judge hearing the case denied an injunction request sought by the neighbors.

In mid-March of this year, the same judge awarded the Knapkes \$144,450 to compensate them for lost income and legal fees as Tony and Anita delayed the construction of the hog finishing until 2001 because of the lawsuit. Under Ohio law, plaintiffs who seek an injunction against a defendant are liable for damages if the injunction is not granted.

The Knapkes prevailed for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, their case was built upon scientific evidence and rational thought. Testimony was presented by engineers, soil scientists, odor experts, and water quality specialists. Perhaps most influential was their previous track record of managing a hog farm with no environmental problems or neighbor complaints. Their reputation and past performance did have an impact — in a very positive manner.

This is indeed a tremendous victory and favorable precedent-setting case for family livestock, dairy, and poultry farmers throughout the Buckeye State, maybe even the nation. When the case first began, it frightened many farmers who planned to either expand or create a new livestock, dairy or poultry farming enterprise. Such a ruling should now instill confidence in family farmers' plans to expand or develop new operations, and demonstrates that local courts are not going to tolerate lawsuits — particularly frivolous ones — that interrupt farm business unless there is a good reason.

Furthermore — and definitely more important — it sends a clear message to people who might file a lawsuit just to intimidate or stop a newly proposed or expanding livestock operation that they better have a case should it make it all the way to the courtroom.

The Ohio Livestock Coalition (OLC) was less than two years old when the Knapkes were sued. Within less than a year, other legal cases came about that the OLC viewed as precedent-setting issues for family livestock, dairy, and poultry farmers. For this very reason, the OLC formed the Family Farm Support Fund, which still exists for the very same purpose.

The ruling doesn't make livestock, dairy or poultry farmers sue-proof. It does, however, show how important it is for farmers to implement and develop best management practices, take advantage of best available technology, follow an approved manure management plan, and do "the right things right." All of these recommendations, and more, should be thought of as a very economical insurance plan.

The risk posed to the bottom line, the environment, and your very existence as a family livestock, dairy or poultry farmer is much too costly if you don't.



**Now Is
The Time**
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County
Extension Director

To Protect Your Farm's Groundwater Supply When Filling Your Sprayer

Corn planting is well under way on many Pennsylvania farms. This means that a large percentage of the pesticides that will be applied this year will be used in the next two weeks as farmers apply their corn herbicides. Protecting our farms' groundwater supply from contamination is a high priority.

Research has shown that where groundwater has been found to be contaminated with pesticides, most often the source of contamination is spills from filling the sprayer near the wellhead. Following a few common-sense guidelines when using pesticides will go a long way toward preventing that problem.

First, never fill your sprayer near a well. Choose the water faucet located the farthest from the well for your water supply. If that is not practical, purchase enough hose to be able to fill your sprayer at a safe distance from your well. Avoid spills when mixing and move the location you are mixing periodically. When cleaning the sprayer, rinse it at least

three times and spray the rinse water on the field where the product was used. Triple-rinse empty spray containers and add the rinse water to the spray tank.

After properly rinsing the containers, punch holes in them and dispose of them at approved disposal sites. Always read and follow label directions when using pesticides.

To Choose The Proper Time To Apply Glyphosate

John Rowehl, serving with the Capitol Region Agronomy Team, shares the following thoughts on the proper timing of glyphosate products on RoundupReady™ crops.

For soybeans, the range of application timing from the crop perspective is quite wide, from emergence to flowering. From a weed stage or crop competition standpoint, it's more complicated.

Begin with a clean field at planting time, which means that either tillage or a burndown herbicide has killed all the existing weeds. Weed competition should not begin before the crop is even up. For a single application of glyphosate, studies have demonstrated that the odds of avoiding yield loss are best if weeds are controlled by the time they are three to six inches tall.

Obviously this assumes the weeds are ones that glyphosate can control at that height. Certain weeds, such as Eastern black nightshade and annual morning glory, are hard to control if they get too big. Then, a tank mix partner may be called for. Addition of AMS can help in hard water situations.

Generally, if you began with a clean field, a spray application will probably have to be made four to five weeks after planting. With narrow-row beans, this is usually sufficient since the rows are closing up and block out light to later emerging weeds. In dry springs, sometimes the growth of the soybeans is reduced and weeds come up through the crop canopy. Wider rows increase the odds of needing a second application.

In some corn fields, where weed pressure is low, a single application of glyphosate can work. In many fields, this could be risky. Three strategies are suggested to deal with this situation.

The first is applying an early post-emergence spray of glyphosate tank mixed with a residual herbicide. This fits in fields with primarily annual weeds. Corn is considered to be just a little less tolerant of early season weed competition than soybeans, so application timing in a total post-emergence control strategy is recommended at three to four weeks after planting rather than four to five weeks. This earlier timing increases the odds that a residual herbicide will be necessary to control later, emerging weeds.

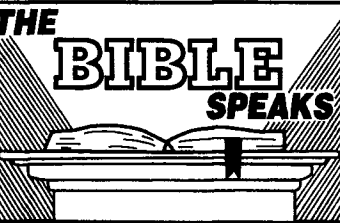
Another strategy is to use a pre-emergence herbicide at reduced rate followed by glyphosate postemergence. This may be better if perennial weeds are a big factor in a field. Spraying glyphosate when it's the best time for annual weeds may be too early to do a good job on the perennials, depending on the species. Since we generally see more effective control as perennials get closer to bud and bloom stage, you would use a low rate (½-¾ rate) of a pre-emergence herbicide at planting to keep annual weeds down while giving time for the perennial weeds to grow to a more susceptible stage. This same strategy could be used in soybeans.

A third strategy is to use an early post application of glyphosate followed by a second post application. This provides the option of passing up the second application if it has been dry since the first, and there is little or no second flush of weeds. Weeds coming up five or six weeks after planting generally do not compete with the crop and yields are not reduced. But you can control the second flush if necessary or take another shot at perennial weeds. Size limit on corn with glyphosate is 30 inches or growth stage V8. Consider tank mixing with dicamba to discourage weed resistance.

Quote Of The Week:

"I've yet to find the man, however exalted his station, who did not do better work and put forth greater effort under a spirit of approval than under the spirit of criticism."

— Charles Schwab



THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

ALL IN THE FAMILY

Background Scripture:
Galatians 3 through 4.
Devotional Reading:
Galatians 4:17-22.

Thomas Carlyle tells of an impoverished widow who appealed to her neighbors for help when she became ill. But they turned deaf ears to her entreaties: what happened to her, they reasoned, was no affair of theirs.

But they were wrong, because the widow was the victim of typhus, which eventually infected the whole village, and 17 of them died along with her. Carlyle comments: "She proved her sisterhood. Her typhus fever killed them. They were brothers even though they denied it."

Some years ago I was reading a book about Egypt and was dismayed to learn that the reason Islam almost totally displaced Christianity there was that the Christianity practiced by the Greeks who had brought it there was afflicted with race and class barriers. Islam, by contrast, offered a brotherhood. Just think how often Christianity has been presented as a faith that keeps many as outsiders.

This is a time of great turmoil in Galatia. There are terrible disputes

between the Jewish Christians and the Greek Christians. Instead of a fellowship, the situation was similar to that of the "Hatfields and McCoys." Down through Christian history, there is a sad and embarrassing stream of enmity between Christians of various persuasions.

Once, while taking a group through Romania, we stopped at an Orthodox Church and watched a wedding in progress. We were followers of the same Christ, but none of us felt or exhibited any sense of family relationship. I reminded our group: "Their ways of worship are so unlike our own, but we need to remember that their Christian ritual and way of life are a lot closer to original Christianity than ours is."

Paul says: "For as many of you were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (3:28). Today, Paul would add that there is neither Roman Catholic nor Protestant, Fundamentalists nor Liberals. It may appear that there are many different families of Christian faith, but that is an illusion. There is only one family and there is no use denying it.

The original family started with Abraham. In his time there were no Hebrew people, no Israelite tribes. Those whom we think of as the early Hebrews came together from many different sources and cultures. Because Abraham believed in God, he became the founder of a family that later became a nation and eventually a mighty movement. It was the covenant of God that made them one people. Through Christ, this family of faith was opened to the Gentiles, the non-Jews.

As different as we may worship, live out our lives, and verbalize our beliefs, there is one thing that we all have in common: something leads each of us to recognize God as our

Father. "... God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts crying, 'Abba, Father!'" (4:6). It is this recognition that we are his children that leads us to acknowledge that we are brothers and sisters to all of his children, not just some. Ethnic, cultural, social, economic, and gender differences do not obscure that we all have one Father.

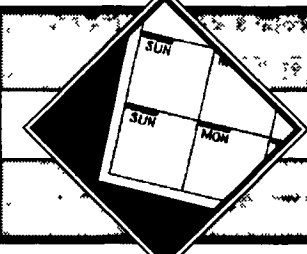
Family Quarrels

Paul has great concern for what has happened to their Christian unity since his departure. They are quarreling over the role of Jewish law in the lives of Christians. Christ has set them free to live above and beyond the law, but many of them are slipping back into legalism. The problem is not so much that some Christians are living by the Jewish law, but that they are insisting that all Gentile Christians do the same.

Paul is trying to remind them of the gospel that he preached, but apparently that is stirring opposition. "Have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (4:16). That is not so strange, because lots of people react to the truth that way — it makes them angry.

There was a recent TV drama about a young man who discovered that many years previously his father had a child by a woman who was not his mother. Neither child had known of the existence of the other. Then, through the need for a tissue donation by someone with similar DNA, the secret was told and they discovered that they had the same father. This discovery led each to acknowledge that they were not an "only child."

Neither are we.



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, May 11

Western Pa. Sheep and Lamb Club Sale, Mercer County 4-H Park, Mercer, 6:30 p.m.

Gardening in Pa. Conference at Penn State, Downtown Conference Center, Altoona, 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., (814) 940-5989.

Pasture Management and No-Till Conservation Field Day, Wild Rose farm, Greene Twp., Beaver County, (724) 774-3003.

Sunday, May 12

Arabian Farms Open Barns:
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FARM FORUM

Editor:

By the time this editorial is published, we anticipate the U.S. Senate will have given its approval to the new Farm Bill. The Senate was scheduled to vote on the bill on Wednesday or Thursday. Almost everyone anticipates the Senate to approve the bill by a comfortable margin.

However, we are reminded of

the Presidential election of 1948 when several papers, including the prestigious Chicago Tribune, declared Gov. Tom Dewey to be elected the President, only to find out the next morning that Harry Truman was still the President.

There is little question in our mind that the Senate will pass

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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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