

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

A Sense Of History

Some time ago, Harlan Ellison, a major American short fiction author and multiple award-winning film and television scriptwriter, noted how appalled he is sometimes when he speaks to groups of teen-agers.

While speaking to the group of young people, Ellison mentioned various historical figures from the 1960s and 1970s. Afterward, there were audience questions that literally left him dumbfounded. Ellison was amazed at how little the group knew about American history, even something as omnipresent as American TV.

The writer commented about how most teen-agers know what happened about two weeks ago, but that was about the extent of their historical recollection. Two weeks, that's about it — the attention of the American public on any given subject.

That follows a recent conclusion drawn up from the National Assessment of Educational Progress history scores for the nation's seniors and fourth and eighth graders. Nearly six of 10 high school seniors lack a basic knowledge of U.S. history. Only two-thirds of fourth and eighth graders demonstrate a basic understanding of the subject.

Already, some say, the events of Sept. 11 have disappeared into the post-two-week endless slough of despond called forgetfulness, washed from many people's minds.

Worse yet is the evidence that college "studies" are now turning up. Those studies point out what most farmers around here have gathered over simple day-to-day common-sense practices on the farm since time immemorial.

For instance, we read in the winter/spring 2002 issue of Sustainable Agriculture newsletter, published by the University of California Cooperative Extension, that dairy farmers have "experimented with manure as a commercial fertilizer alternative." (We kid you not). The information comes by way of an abstract from the 2001 California Alfalfa and Forage Symposium in Modesto, Calif., last December. The report, "Happy Cows, Happy Environment: It's The Manure," by Stuart Pettygrove, soil specialist, University of California, Davis, and Alison Eagle, dairy Biologically Integrated Farming Systems (BIFS) project coordinator, also from UC Davis, noted that "some dairies are targeting manure application for each irrigation based on crop N needs, viewing the manure pond as a fertilizer tank" (emphasis ours).

They write: "California dairy producers are faced with a number of challenges that limit the implementation of improved manure management and are not directly addressed by the BIFS project. These include 1) insufficient storage capacity, resulting in manure application based on pond capacity instead of crop needs, 2) insufficient fresh water supply, in winter or year-round, for dilution of manure water, so application rates end up being higher than crop needs, and 3) fresh water coming from different sources, such as wells, making appropriate mixing of manure and fresh water difficult, and requiring some significant pipeline changes. Attitudes and values of dairy producers, their crop consultants, farm managers, and farm workers may require some changes in order to adapt to the new perspective on dairy manure as a resource rather than a waste in need of disposal."

Yes, dairy manure water, according to Sustainable Agriculture, can effectively replace synthetic fertilizer.

They needed a "study" for this? Why not just give your best land stewards, the family dairy farm operators, a call and ask for their expertise?

You can see the whole report on the Internet at <http://alfalfa.ucdavis.edu/SUBPAGES/2001Symposium/Proceedings/CAS01HappyCowsPETTYGROVE-5.PDF>

What are they going to tell us next? That milk actually comes from cows, and not from the local minimarket?

❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Saturday, May 25
 Delaware Antique Tractor Pull and Auction, Wilson's Auction Sales, Lincoln, Del., 11 a.m., (302) 349-5633.
 Antique Tractor Pull (1959 and Older), Volunteer Fire Dept., Mt. Jackson, Va., (540) 477-3633.
 Manheim Farm and Home Days,

Farm Show Building, Manheim, thru May 27.
 Sunday, May 26
 Handicapped Riders Division of Devon Horse Show, Malvern. Identify Trees Walk, World's End State Park, Bradford County Extension, 2 p.m.,
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❖ FARM FORUM ❖

Editor.
 Thanks for a very timely editorial regarding the wise use of land. Certainly the present trend is only beneficial to the developer and to those who have land for sale.
 There are many who are beating their drums for ag land pres-

ervation, but I see little action taken. Certainly large lot sizes is not the answer. What is needed is high-density development with state-of-the-art effluent disposal systems.
 What needs to be done on a
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Now Is The Time
 By Leon Ressler
 Lancaster County Extension Director

To Continue To Conserve Water
 Recent rains have caused lawns to be lush and green and have provided good levels of moisture in the surface soil in southeastern Pennsylvania. However, this region continues to be under a drought emergency and this has caused confusion for some people.

It is important to remember a number of factors are considered when a drought emergency is declared. One of the criteria is the level of groundwater supplies. While groundwater levels are improving, they are still at drought emergency levels or worse for most of the southeastern counties.

As of May 22, a number of counties had 30-day average groundwater levels at record lows. These counties are Berks, Chester, Delaware, Lebanon, and Lehigh. With the summer months upon us, when water demands are the highest, it is imperative that we continue to conserve water as much as possible.

To Be Aware Of The Cancellation Of Poultry Shows At This Year's Fairs
 The threat of avian influenza continues to be very high in the northeastern U.S.

In order to protect Pennsylvania growers from the disease, Dr. John Enck, state veterinarian and director of the Bureau of Animal Health with

the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, has canceled all poultry shows in Pennsylvania until further notice. Many fairs typically offer a number of poultry exhibits, but this year there will be no feathers, no dressed poultry, and no egg classes offered. Since avian influenza cannot be transmitted to humans through the ingestion of poultry, eggs, or meat, food stands are permitted to serve poultry products.

Ron Miller, administrator of the Pennsylvania Fair Program, points out that all fairs must meet the 12-department minimum and five exhibitors per department to qualify for reimbursement from the Pennsylvania Fair Fund. With the cancellation of poultry shows at fairs, changes must be made to offer other departments to be in compliance with the Fair Fund Act. If you have a question about department requirements, contact Ron Miller at (717) 787-5342.

To Understand The Increased Threat Of Lyme Disease In Pennsylvania

Blacklegged ticks are on the move in Pennsylvania. And their spread has coincided with an increase in reported cases of Lyme disease in the past few years, said an expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"We're seeing blacklegged ticks from areas where previously none had been reported," said Steven Jacobs, extension entomologist, who oversees the entomology department's Insect Identification Laboratory.

"Fifteen years ago, these ticks were mostly limited to the southeast corner of the state, the north central region around the Allegheny National Forest, and the Presque Isle peninsula in Erie," Jacobs said. "Now they seem to be established in more areas of central, western, and southeastern Pennsylvania. In fact, the vast majority of counties have at least a small, localized population of ticks."

Blacklegged ticks for several years were known as deer ticks in the northern United States, until scientific studies confirmed that deer ticks were in fact smaller versions of the blacklegged ticks common in the South, and not a separate species.

The apparent increase in the tick's range is a concern because of the role it plays in spreading the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, a neurological disorder that can cause a variety of symptoms, including a bullseye-like rash, fever, stiff neck, muscle aches, and headaches. Left untreated, vic-

tims can suffer facial palsy, arthritis, and even paralysis. The disease normally is treated with antibiotics, but if not caught early, recovery can be slow and difficult.

Lyme disease accounts for more than 90 percent of vector-borne disease cases in the U.S., according to Jacobs. "In 1990, there were fewer than 700 new cases of Lyme disease in Pennsylvania," he said. "In 2000, the number of cases was more than 2,300, an increase of more than 300 percent. Pennsylvania now ranks third in the nation in the number of new cases per year.

"It's unclear whether there's a direct relationship between the tick's spread and the increase in disease," Jacobs said. "The increase could be partially due to increased public awareness and better diagnosis. But I suspect that because the ticks are found in more places, more people are coming into contact with them and contracting the disease."

To survive and thrive, blacklegged ticks need appropriate hosts. The adult ticks often are found on white-tailed deer, and nymphal stages will attach to mice, chipmunks, birds, and other small animals. While awaiting a suitable host, the ticks usually are found on leaf litter or low branches in brushy, wooded areas. Regions such as southeastern Pennsylvania with deer populations that are concentrated but have limited mobility because of surrounding development — provide prime tick habitat.

"Blacklegged ticks can be found on many bird species," Jacobs said. "Because of their migratory paths, birds may transport ticks to new areas along or east of the state's mountain ranges. Ticks also can hitch rides with travelers and their pets, particularly on 'working' dogs that are taken into the field for hunting or show field trials."

With blacklegged ticks spreading into many areas of the state, Jacobs urges continued caution. "It's more important than ever that people take steps to avoid coming into contact with ticks, especially if they plan to be in high-risk areas," he said. "Also, know the signs of Lyme disease and see your doctor if symptoms develop."

Quote Of The Week:
"The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good men to do what he wants done, and self-restraint enough to keep from meddling with them while they do it."

— Theodore Roosevelt

THE BIBLE SPEAKS
 BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE
THE MARKS OF JESUS

Background Scripture:
 Galatians 5:16 through 6:18.
Devotional Reading:
 Colossians 3:5-17.

Some years ago, when we visited the shrine of San Giovanni Rotondo in Italy, one of the monks there placed in my hands two of the gloves with which Padre Pio had tried to hide the wounds of Christ that marked his hands.

Padre Pio, a remarkable and mystical monk of the 20th century, is in the process of canonization as a Roman Catholic saint. Pio was one of a number of Christians who have borne the stigmata or wounds of Christ on their bodies. St. Francis of Assisi, I believe, was the first bearer of the mystical yet physiologically evident stigmata.

The term "stigmata" has come to indicate this spiritual/physical phenomenon. But, at the very end of his letter to the Galatians, Paul uses the word "stigmata" when he says: "Henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus" (6:17).

Translated into English, the term "stigmata" is rendered as "marks." In the Old Testament, the word "mark" was used to indicate a physical sign. So the "mark of Cain"

(Gen. 4:15) was a physical mark that was to brand Cain as both a murderer and a repentant sinner. Circumcision was regarded as the mark of an Israelite (Gen. 17:13). Hebrew prophets sometimes were marked by a distinctive scar (1 Kings 20:35-43). In Paul's world, slaves were branded with a stigmata that indicated the master who owned them and soldiers bore a mark signifying the leader whom they served.

Stigmata, Anyone?

When Paul speaks of the "marks of Jesus" to the Galatians, he is implying a rich meaning for these stigmata. In one sense, these "marks" are probably scars from the various beatings and stonings Paul has had to suffer as an apostle. Also, I believe Paul is intending these scars as the physical evidence that he serves as a slave to Christ and, like the soldier, acknowledges that he is one of Christ's men. If he were to be challenged as to the authenticity of his apostleship, Paul could point to his scars as the marks of it.

You and I are not likely to be beaten or stoned as disciples of Jesus, but Paul gives us some impressive "marks." Christians do not wear distinctive clothing, but there are definite marks that should identify us: "... the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" and I love when he adds, "against such there is no law" (5:23b). The Spirit does not live in and through us just because we say so, but because our lives bear fruit of the Spirit's presence in us.

Paul also suggests some other "marks" of Christian discipleship: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another" (5:25,26). Paul is not finished: "And let us not grow weary in well-

doing... So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (16:9,10). Note that Paul doesn't say that we are to "do good unto" just those who do good unto us, but even to those outside the household of faith.

Walking With Jesus

Note also that Paul's "marks" here are not which church we attend, what denomination we follow, or whether when baptizing we dip, sprinkle, or pour. It has nothing to do with whether we use grape juice or sacramental wine for communion, whether we recite the Apostles' or Korean Creed, or call our clergy "Father," "Pastor," or "Preacher." The marks of Jesus that Paul bore on his body are the signs that he has met and walks with Jesus in his life, the same ones we are to bear in our lives, too.

Think for a moment what we could do for the cause of Christ right now if, in the next week before us, all of us, the writer and readers of this piece, were to pledge that we would bear in our lives each of the marks that Paul enumerates: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" — just for starters!

I'm willing. Are you?

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