



Lancaster Farming

OPINION

What's Really Going On

Paul Slayton
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Beef Council

After reading the Opinion column in last week's *Lancaster Farming*, I would like to take this opportunity to share some factual information about what's really going on in the cattle industry leadership organizations.

To begin to understand today's beef checkoff program, it's important to first explain the relationships between the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB), the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), State Beef Councils (SBC), and State Cattlemen's Associations.

The CBB collects and administers beef checkoff funds, in cooperation with every SBC. The \$1 checkoff per head is shared — 50 cents goes to the state of origin and 50 cents is remitted to the national CBB. The Pennsylvania Beef Council, a qualified SBC, is made up of 21 members representing the various sectors of the industry — dairy, beef and veal producers, auction markets, and packers.

Various trade organizations in Pennsylvania nominate members to the board, who are ultimately elected by current producer members. The CBB is made up of 110 cattle producers, men and women, who represent every region in the country. Those producers are nominated by state organizations and then selected by the U.S. secretary of agriculture. Two Pennsylvania seats on this board are available for appointment.

The Federal Act and Order places restrictions on checkoff funds, while the USDA provides oversight. As mandated by the Federal Act and Order, producer dollars only can be invested in beef promotion, education, research, and export development. Producer dollars cannot be used in the litigation process to defend the checkoff program. Litigation expenses to protect the checkoff are channeled from the budget of the U.S. Department of Justice, since one of the defendants in the pending case is the USDA. Interveners such as the Nebraska Cattlemen's Association also are financially supporting the checkoff case with membership dues.

Yes, the beef checkoff program has been very popular by a majority of producers for nearly 14 years. While the referendum was supported by 79 percent of cattlemen in 1988, surveys continue to indicate that support is repeatedly in the 65-70 percent range. Beef, dairy, and veal producers, small and large, have continued to feel that this is the best self-help program available to them. It has provided them with their own research departments, a channel to promote their product, and a way to reach consumers with the beef nutrition message through education and marketing.

Recent research conducted by Dr. Jeff Ward, Florida State University, indicated that for every \$1 invested in these programs, producers have seen a \$5.67 return on investment. At last week's NCBA Conference, producers learned that since its inception in 1988, the checkoff program has contributed \$6.46 billion of income to producers, nationally.

The NCBA acts as a contractor of checkoff dollars for the CBB and provides some of the programs to promote, educate, research, and to develop export markets for the industry. In response to the questions about \$27 million being devoted to promotion, and \$5.8 million to consumer information, it's important to remember that producers, representing the checkoff and also cattlemen's membership dues, together rank programs by priority. Those rankings will ultimately lead to a program dollar amount for the fiscal year.

Industry leadership, two or more times a year, travel to meeting destinations such as Reno, Nev., on competitively priced airline tickets to meet in motels that offer competitively priced rooms. Often, producers do not leave the motel — a packed meeting schedule requires their attendance to listen to program results, allocate producer dollar expenditures, and strategize about future industry direction.

If a checkoff paying producer thinks that his or her dollars are not going for a worthwhile cause, or are not accountable, he or she should just ask to see the numbers. Those reports are available from the CBB, NCBA, and the Pennsylvania Beef Council anytime.

It's easy to forget that these programs are being implemented by producers for producers. With the majority of program dollars focused on consumers, producers sometimes don't see how the dollars are invested unless they ask. Those of us at the Beef Council enjoy telling producers how we are promoting their product and, we hope, making a difference.

One of the more pointed comments made by last week's editorial was criticism of checkoff program administrative costs of \$2.25 million. The Federal Act and Order specifically states that the CBB must hold administrative costs to less than five percent of the revenue collected. Currently, administrative costs are 4.41 percent. How many other businesses today can say their cost of program administration is less than five percent overhead?

On the membership side of the equation, dues income goes towards lobbying efforts and public relations endeavors. Without this legislative/policy front, our industry would be without support or voice to cope with issues such as the Mad Cow Disease, Foot and Mouth Disease, animal rights groups, endangered species acts, death taxes, property right issues, government drought relief, country of origin labeling, captive supply, etc. Membership funds have decreased over the last few years to the point where this policy representation is in dire jeopardy. If the beef industry loses this critical support arm of the NCBA or state organizations, there will be no one to battle our adversaries.

Yes, I do concur with the *Lancaster Farming* editor. Producers everywhere need to be involved in their industries by becoming a member, if not a director, of trade organizations. The industry needs you, and it's truly the best way to find out what's really going on.

If *Lancaster Farming* readers have additional questions about the beef checkoff and the state and national programs it funds, I encourage them to call the Beef Council office at (717) 939-7000.



Now Is
The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County
Extension Director

To Scout Vegetable Crops For White Flies

Dr. Tim Elkner, Lancaster County horticulture agent, reports whiteflies have begun to appear on vegetable crops in the area.

Normally, these pests appear a little later in the growing season. Growers need to carefully monitor their crops for damaging populations of this pest. Tomatoes most commonly suffer from damaging populations of whiteflies but other susceptible crops include pepper, eggplant, cucurbits, and brassicas (broccoli, cauliflower, etc.). Damage is both direct from feeding as well as indirect from the honeydew these insects secrete after feeding.

Several materials are available to control this pest on vegetable crops. However, not all materials are labeled for all crops — be sure to check the label before applying to any crop!

There are two important points to remember. First, control improves with higher volumes of water used per acre. Second, be sure to rotate materials used to prevent the buildup of resistant populations of whiteflies

in your fields. Provado, Actara, and Assail are all chemically similar materials and should be alternated with Thiodan, Capture, or Danitol as labeled for your vegetable crop. In addition, Provado, Actara, and Assail should only be used one time if you had previously used Admire or Platinum on your crop at planting.

To Maintain Biosecurity On Poultry Farms

Dr. Gregory Martin, capitol region poultry agent, reports no new cases of avian influenza (A.I.) have been discovered in Virginia in the last two weeks. The bad news is that there has been a lull in number of new cases of low-path A.I. in Virginia in the past month or so, only to have it resurface again. Because of this, the USDA in Virginia is maintaining their staffing of observers in the area for the time being to maintain observation within the area to see if the disease pops up again.

Because of the efforts of the diagnostic labs at the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Penn State University, and the New Bolton Center-University of Pennsylvania, along with the poultry industry in the commonwealth, we have been fortunate this year in limiting the number and severity of A.I. outbreaks in the commonwealth. At this time no new outbreaks of A.I. have been found in Pennsylvania for several months.

Those who work within the industry need to keep up the good work in maintaining good biosecurity wherever we work. These efforts are inexpensive insurance that goes a long way to protect the industry as a whole.

Martin suggests biosecurity involves both physical and chemical barriers to block disease from taking hold within a flock. Physical barriers on site include the use of hair coverings, boots and coveralls for all who enter while locking poultry housing and creating other obstacles to prevent unauthorized entry onto a farm. Chemical barriers include clearing, washing, and then sanitizing all washable surfaces, using baits and

sprays to control flies and to prevent other vermin from entering the poultry house.

Dip pans that are well maintained can also contribute to the control of cross-contamination between houses because several trips could be made between houses in a single day. An attempt (especially from servicemen/visitors to the farm) should be made to visit the youngest to oldest birds on the farm. Keep your farm picked up and clean, because any pile or refuse can be a harbor for mice and other disease-carrying vermin. This would include spilled feed surrounding feed tanks that would draw flies as well as mice.

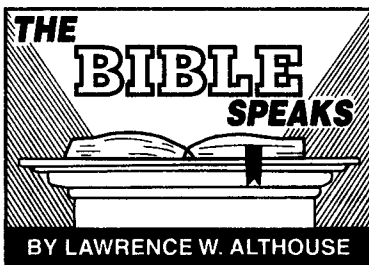
General security is part and parcel to a sound biosecurity program. Limit all vehicular traffic to the poultry houses as much as possible. Cable and chain gates a safe distance from the houses help in this effort. Have a brightly painted mailbox with a visitor's log available near this entry gate to track traffic on the farm. Keep your houses locked (if possible) to keep unapproved visitors to a minimum in your absence, or at least try to plan so visitors will be on site when you are. This mailbox is a good collector for feed tags and other delivery slips from your vendors.

For more information, see the checklist Core Fundamentals for Poultry Biosecurity available from Dr. Gregory Martin at the Lancaster Extension Office, (717) 394-6851, or on the web at <http://www.personal.psu.edu/gpm10/Biosecurityfun402.pdf>.

Quote Of The Week:

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs and comes short again and again; who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement; and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly."

— Theodore Roosevelt



DO YOU KNOW THIS SONG?

Background Scripture:
Psalms 67; 96.
Devotional Reading:
Psalms 97:6-12.

Psalms 67 and 96 were written for worship on two different occasions. Psalm 67 was sung to celebrate the harvest at the close of the agricultural year, the Feast of the Tabernacles. Psalm 96, on the other hand, was part of the procession at the celebration of enthronement, the climax of the New Year Festival. Both are full of gladness, praise, thanksgiving, and exultation.

One of them, Psalm 67, looks back to an old song, Aaron's benediction in the time of Moses: "The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26). But both psalms look ahead to a new theme in the hymns of Israel. "O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth" (Ps. 96:1).

Scholars believe that these two hymns were written by different

psalmists. Yet there is a common perspective to this "new song," a day when, not only Israel, but all people throughout the earth will acknowledge God as Creator and King of the universe. "... that thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving power among all nations. Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee" (67:2-4) and "Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples" (96:3).

Not Only Israel

The "new song" is that of universality. God is to be recognized and acknowledged Lord, not only of Israel, but of all nations and all peoples. Other people in other lands may not know the Israelite historical experience, but the psalmist believes the all people everywhere can recognize the Lord as him who rules the people with equity and guides the nations upon the earth.

Even if they do not know him in the same way the Hebrews know him, all peoples can experience his glory and declare "his marvelous works among all the people" (96:3).

Actually, this wasn't an entirely new concept. When Abraham was 96 years old, God came to him and said: "... behold my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be the father of many nations... And I will make you exceeding fruitful and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come out of you" (Genesis 17:3,4,6). Yet, throughout much of its history, Israel tended to think of The Lord as exclusively the God of Israel.

So, at the very beginning there was an intimation of universality. But it was a theme that more or less was forgotten and had to be revived from time to time.

When we begin to feel that God

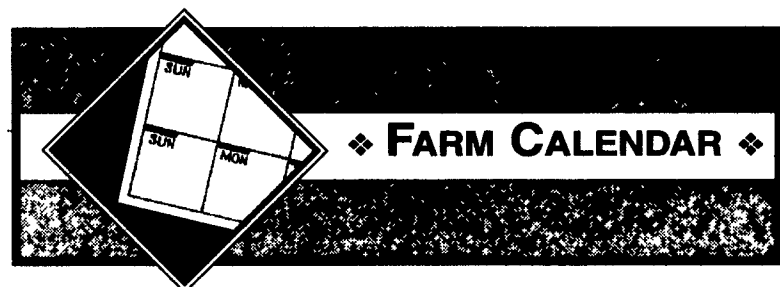
belongs to us, that he is our God, we tend to forget that he is the God of the whole universe and, as Creator, he creates all people everywhere. As Christians we do pretty much the same thing. We think of the Lord as the Christian god, perhaps the Protestant or Catholic god, or even the Presbyterian or Methodist god. (I use lower case "g" here, rather than capital "G," because any god so limited is not really God.)

The New Song

If we travel among Christian congregations around the world, we will find that that which we have in common is not history or culture, but the Christ who unites us to the one God. And, when we encounter people of other faiths — Buddhist, Hindu, Moslem — the one thing we have in common is that one God who creates all people and, recognized or not, rules the universe with his power and purpose. That give us a basis upon which we could all unite in a joyous act of praise.

No, I do not think that is about to happen today or in the near future. Today, we think of the various religions as competitors at best, or enemies at worst. But I join with the psalmists in believing that God has fashioned this universe for universal redemption and I look for that day when it will be fulfilled.

The world does not now know that song or has forgotten it. But you know it, don't you? So let us "Sing to the Lord... and declare his glory among the nations."



FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, July 27

Southwest Holstein Championship Show, Fayette County Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 10 a.m.
Lebanon Area Fair, Lebanon Area

Fairgrounds, thru Aug. 2.
North American Alfalfa Improvement Conference, Sacramento, Calif., thru July 31.

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