

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Watch The Processors, Retailers

We agree with Ken Bailey in this week's Weekly Dairy Market Outlook column on page A16: this is a capitalist economy. You can't regulate profit. You can't regulate bottom lines. If you would try, the results would be interesting, if not disastrous, and would impinge on all sorts of freedoms.

Bailey, in his weekly dairy market column, is trying to find some logic to the extremely low prices milk producers are suffering right now — with actual decreases in store-bought dairy products. (Though we haven't seen any.) We draw your attention to the paragraph where Bailey writes:

"Whole milk prices for major urban markets in the U.S. have actually gone down 5.7 percent during the months June-August of this year when compared to the same months a year ago. On the other hand, lower federal order prices (regulated by the federal government) meant fluid processors paid farmers 30 percent less for their milk. *Someone is keeping this difference.*" (Emphasis ours.)

What happened when other commodities went through similar strange times? Why is almost nothing being written about the profit-taking by the retail food industry, placing pressure on the processor-suppliers, which in turn is placing additional pressure on our producers?

The farmer is beset by all sorts of regulations. You wonder what types of regulation retailers are going through.

We could easily advocate the use of "maximum allowable margins" — but how would that work? How could you dictate, by law, that only so much could be made in profit by a retailer from ice cream or chocolate milk? Or how much the retailer would be "allowed" to charge the processor for prime rib? Or a minimum guaranteed payment, by law, from the pork processor to the producer?

One solution: farmers need to be the retailers. Direct marketing has worked in Pennsylvania and surrounding states. Get the price you deserve for the product you produce. Direct marketing is a true "farmer" economy.

In the meantime, see what the processor does with your product and find out, exactly, what *their* margins are.

❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Saturday, October 19

Family Farm and Home Safety Camp, York County 4-H Center, 8:45 a.m.-3 p.m., (717) 840-7408.

Atlantic City Holiday Art, Antique, and Collectible Show, Atlantic City Convention Center, thru Oct. 20, (800) 526-2724.

Dillsburg Farmers' Fair and Antique Tractor Show, 8 a.m.-2:15 p.m., (717) 432-4782.

National Organic Standards Board meeting, Radisson Barcelo Hotel, Washington, D.C., thru Oct. 20, (202) 205-7806.

Northwest Ohio Cooperative Kitchen Unveiling, Agriculture Incubator, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., (419) 535-6000.

"Putting the Garden to Rest," Bradford County Extension Demo Garden, 9 a.m., (570) 265-2896.

Sunday, October 20

Zone II Hunter Finals Horse Show, (610) 395-1913.

How To Reach Us

To address a letter to the editor:

- By fax: (717) 733-6058
- By regular mail: Editor, Lancaster Farming P.O. Box 609, 1 E. Main St. Ephrata, PA 17522
- By e-mail: farming@lannews.infi.net

Please note: Include your full name, return address, and phone number on the letter. Lancaster Farming reserves the right to edit the letter to fit and is not responsible for returning unsolicited mail.

National Forest Products Week, thru Oct. 26.

Monday, October 21

Berks County Centennial Celebration, Berks County Ag Center, 6:30 p.m., (610) 378-1327.

Extension Coordinators' Meeting, 504 Ag Sciences and Industries Building, 3 p.m.-5 p.m., (814) 863-6095.

Tuesday, October 22

Lancaster County Poultry Association Banquet, Willow Valley.

Vinexpo, Jacob Javits Convention Center, New York City, thru Oct. 24, (800) 284-6976.

MAAC Annual Conference, Clarion Hotel Convention Center, Carlisle, thru Oct. 23.

Chester County Annual Holstein Meeting, West Fallowfield Christian School, Atglen, 7 p.m.

Lycoming County Extension Annual Dinner Meeting, Eldred Fire Hall, Warrensville, 7 p.m.

Manure Application Demonstration, Jeff Frey's Future View Farm, 13 Ratcliff Road, Willow Street, (717) 237-2220, thru Oct. 23.

Maryland: Private Applicator Pesticide Exam, Allegany County Extension Office, Cumberland, Md., 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Maryland and Virginia Cooperative District Meeting, Ernie's Restaurant, South Boston, Va., noon.

Maryland and Virginia Cooperative District Meeting, Ryan's Steakhouse, Christianburg,

(Turn to Page A29)



Now Is
The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County
Extension Director

To Apply

Strawberry Weed Control

Kathy Demchak in Penn State's Horticulture Department reports a Section 18 emergency exemption was approved in June 2002 for the use of Spartan 4F (sulfentrazone, from FMC) on strawberries in Pennsylvania. This exemption is for the control of common groundsel, a problem in a number of growers' fields. This material is similar to Goal in that, while it inhibits establishment of new weeds, it will also burn foliage that it contacts.

The second window for its use during this year is when the plants are dormant in the fall, Oct. 15-Dec. 15. Copies of the notification were sent to each county extension office along with a recordkeeping form that should be filled out and sent in to The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture as listed on the form.

Four to eight fluid ounces of Spartan 4F can be used per acre per application (an application could have been applied at renovation), with a yearly maximum of 12 ounces used. Applications can be made to the entire field as a broadcast spray or as a treatment to only those areas where targeted weeds are present or expected. For the material to be effective as a preemergent herbicide, rainfall or irrigation is required for activation. If 0.5 to 1 inch of rainfall or irrigation is not received within 7 to 10 days after application, a shal-

low cultivation should be used to lightly incorporate the herbicide. The material should not be used if the soil is saturated or if heavy rainfall is predicted to occur within the next 24 hours. A 105-day preharvest interval must be observed. Because this material can leach to groundwater under certain conditions, this material cannot be applied on soils classified as sand, which have less than 1 percent organic matter.

To Recognize Benefits Of Using Integrated Pest Management (IPM) In Sweet Corn

Ed Rajotte, Pennsylvania IPM coordinator and Penn State professor of entomology, reports that in just one year, Pennsylvania vegetable growers realized more than \$13 million in economic and environmental benefits by using IPM tactics in their sweet corn crops.

Integrated pest management, or IPM, aims to manage pests — such as insects, diseases, weeds, and animals — by combining physical, biological, and chemical tactics that are safe, profitable, and environmentally compatible.

A recent study conducted by Jason Beddow, graduate student at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, found that IPM in Pennsylvania sweet corn crops produced economic benefits of about \$6.7 million and environmental benefits valued at about \$6.8 million in one growing season. "This research makes it clear that IPM provides significant economic and environmental benefits to the state," said Rajotte, who served on Beddow's advisory committee.

Pennsylvania growers plant more than 20,000 acres of sweet corn annually, ranking the state among the top 10 nationally in sweet corn production. But this \$25 million crop is at risk to such devastating pests as the corn earworm, fall armyworm, and European corn borer. As part of the project, Beddow surveyed sweet corn growers to collect data on the growers' use of selected production practices, with an emphasis on pesticide use.

Respondents included both large and small farms, ranging in size from 2.5 to 2,500 acres. The results of the survey indicate that the majority of respondents use several IPM tactics in their sweet corn operation. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported rotating at least some of their sweet corn with other crops, and 77 percent

and 91 percent, respectively, said they scouted for insects and weeds before deciding to apply insecticides and postemergent herbicides.

More than 60 percent of the growers cultivated sweet corn fields to control weeds. When the practice was used, it was employed on an average of 51 percent of sweet corn acreage. Overall, the technique was used on 26 percent of acreage.

An important component of the Pennsylvania sweet corn IPM program is a telephone hotline (800-PENN-IPM) and related Web-site (<http://pestwatch.cas.psu.edu>) that provide statewide scouting information for important sweet corn insect pests. Exactly half of the respondents reported calling the hotline. Users of the service made an average of 4.7 calls to the toll-free number over the course of the growing season.

According to Beddow, the adoption of IPM practices may result in a combination of cost increases and decreases. For example, IPM adoption is expected to decrease the cost of chemical pesticides as nonchemical controls are substituted for pesticides. However, implementation of IPM practices will increase some information-gathering costs, such as labor costs for scouting.

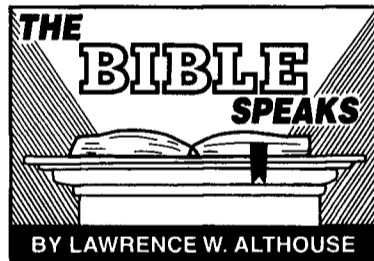
IPM adoption may influence returns via price premiums or changes in yields. "Adopters spent less on chemicals and chemical applications and spent more on scouting and trapping when compared with nonadopters," Beddow said. "Overall, adopters in the sample spent \$100 less than non-adopters per acre of sweet corn. Assuming a constant price of \$2.25 per dozen ears, per-acre total revenue for adopters in the sample was \$279 greater than that of nonadopters. The difference in net revenue between adopters and nonadopters was \$295."

Beddow's research can be viewed on the Web at <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/available/etd-09272000-14340016/>. The Pennsylvania IPM program is a collaboration between Penn State and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture aimed at promoting integrated pest management in both agricultural and nonagricultural situations. For more information, call (814) 865-2839, or visit the Web at <http://paipm.cas.psu.edu>.

Quote Of The Week:

"If one desires a change, one must be that change before that change can take place."

— Gita Bellin



A NEW COVENANT

Background Scripture: Jeremiah 30 through 31.
Devotional Reading: Hebrews 10:11-18.

"Covenant" is a term hardly used today. If we hear or read it, it is usually a fleeting reference in a sermon, worship service, or religious literature. We are also likely to refer to the act of Christian marriage as the making of a covenant. If the state regards a church wedding as a legal contract, why do we use the word covenant instead?

In my dictionary, "contract" and "covenant" are defined in almost identical terms. But as Christians use "covenant," it has a rather different connotation. While both "covenant" and "contract" indicate an agreement between two or more parties, "covenant" usually signifies the presence of God as a party to this agreement. Furthermore, while a contract indicates value given for value received, a covenant suggests that each of the parties will go much beyond simple quid pro quo.

This was certainly true of the covenant between God and Abraham. The people constantly failed to hold up their end of the agreement, and the covenant continued only because of the grace of God that always goes infinitely beyond the letter of the law. Whereas a contract is based upon the letter of the law, a covenant is always based upon a relationship in which we get far more than we deserve.

Not Our Invention

Christians often make the mistake of thinking that the New Covenant is an invention of the New Testament. The first chronological mention of it is in Jeremiah 31. This is one of the most important passages of the Old Testament and Jeremiah's single most important contribution to the Jewish and Christian religions. Some have called it "the high-water mark of the Old Testament."

As almost all of Jeremiah's prophecies are dark and gloomy, Jeremiah 30 and 31 are sometimes called "the little Book of Comfort," because Jeremiah promises that God will eventually restore Israel and Judah to their lands and homes. Even more important, the covenant which the people so thoroughly violated will be replaced by a new covenant that goes far beyond the original one. Instead of being inscribed in stone, it will be written upon their hearts as an inward and individual covenant: "And no longer shall each man teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest..." (v. 34).

What's Essential?

As Stanley Brite Frost puts it, "Circumcision, the ark, the temple,

the city, the state, prophet, priest, king can all go... since they are not essential."

So what is essential? People will do what is right, not by external compulsion but by inner conviction and desire. Thus, some 600 years before the birth of Christ, we find a new direction, an immediate and direct relationship between the individual and God.

Later, although he didn't use the term "New Covenant," the prophet Ezekiel made a similar promise to the people in exile: "A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take out of your flesh the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezek. 36:26). And on the night of his Last Supper with his disciples, Jesus gave his disciples the cup, saying, "Drink of it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt. 26:27).

Forgiveness is the key to the New Covenant. The fellowship with God that was broken by Israel's repeated rebellion is restored by the complete forgiveness of sins. So the New Covenant will be based, not upon sinlessness, but the grace of God: "... for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (v. 34b).

The slate is now wiped clean, and this is grace, because the people have certainly not earned it. They never could and neither can we.

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

Copyright 2002 by Lancaster Farming

Lancaster Farming

An Award-Winning Farm Newspaper

- Keystone Awards 1993, 1995
- PACD Media Award 1996
- Recognized for photo excellence throughout the years by the Northeast Farm Communicators
- PennAg Industries 1992
- Berks Ag-Business Council 2000