

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

A Message To The Governor

State Election Day is this coming Tuesday, Nov. 5. In our Oct. 5 issue, the candidates for Republican and Democrat both had a chance to air their views.

So we'll air ours in this editorial. We've set this as an open letter to the governor.

Dear Governor:

We just wanted to let you know: this year the only "profit" some farms saw was from drought disaster relief, off-farm income, Farm Bill direct payments, crop insurance, or preservation money. We think that is horribly sad.

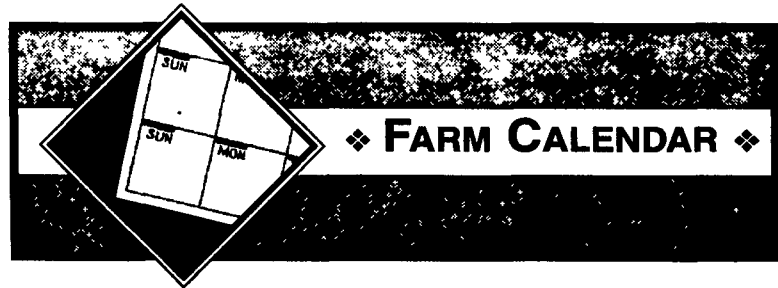
Don't you think times are desperate when 60 percent of all farm income nationwide is subsidized by taxpayers?

Without farms, we don't have an economy. The last time we had no economy, we had people out of work lining up at soup kitchens — but farmers were a lot stronger in the 1930s, supplying their time and food to feed the unemployed, keeping them from starving. Can you imagine how desperate this world would be with a growing recession and a bad farm economy? Not even soup kitchens.

Let's use what little taxpayer money will exist after education reforms to promote the welfare of the family farm. This country is nothing without strong family farms.

We wish you the best in your new position.

And we remind our readers: don't complain about the state of the economy or farming in general if you don't vote. Voting is your voice. It's time to be heard.



Saturday, November 2

Mid-Atlantic Forest Stewardship Seminar, Frederick Community College, Frederick, Md., 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Maryland State Poultry Show, thru Nov. 3, (301) 473-7511.
Thorncroft Clinic, Horse Conformation and Movement, Malvern, thru Nov. 3, (610) 644-1963.

Sunday, November 3

PAWS Extravaganza, Ag Arena, (814) 237-8722.
American Water Resources Association Annual Conference, Philadelphia Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel, (540) 687-8390.

Monday, November 4

Maryland-Virginia Producers' Cooperative District Meeting, Friendly Farm Restaurant, Upperco, Md., 7 p.m.
Pa. Milk Marketing Board Hearings at Room 202 PDA Bldg., area 5, 9 a.m.; area 6 at 11 a.m., (717) 787-4194.
Wayne County Cooperative Extension Annual Meeting, Central United Methodist Church, Honesdale, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (570) 253-5970, ext. 239.
Forest Landowner Association Formation meeting, Dauphin County Ag Center, Dauphin, 6:30 p.m., (717) 921-8803.

How To Reach Us

To address a letter to the editor:

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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.

Tuesday, November 5

State Election Day.
Penn State Dairy Nutrition Conference, Holiday Inn, Grantville, thru Nov. 6, (814) 863-2883.
Berks Extension Holiday Program, Community Recovery Center, Hilltop, Leesport, 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m., thru Nov. 6, (610) 378-1327.
Delmarva Mastitis meeting, Hartly Fire Hall, Hartly, Del., (410) 778-1661.
Vineyard Technical Meeting, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
"Planning Strategically for Milk Price Management," Session I, Morrison's Cove, Martinsburg. Also Dec. 3, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. both days. (814) 865-4682.

Wednesday, November 6

Ohio: Crop Trees, Zaleskie State Forest, Zaleskie, Ohio, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Lebanon Extension Holiday Program, Lebanon Expo, 8:45 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 6:20 p.m.-9 p.m., thru Nov. 7, (717) 270-4391.
ADADC Meeting, District 18, Yoder's Restaurant, New Holland, (717) 776-5741.
Corry Dairy Producers Group, Marlene's Corry, 10 a.m., (814) 563-9388.
Dauphin County 4-H Achievement Night, Dauphin County Ag Center, 6:30 p.m.
Pa. Milk Marketing Board Public Hearing, Room 2 of Commonwealth Technology Center, Harrisburg, 9 a.m.
Northeast Pa. Quality Forage Conference, Mansfield Fire Hall, Mansfield, Nov. 6, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Nov. 7, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and Lackawanna Heritage Valley Center, Mayfield, (570) 724-9120.
Cambria County Extension Annual meeting and dinner, United Church of Christ Educational Building, Ebensburg,

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Now Is
The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County
Extension Director

To Sell Your Products Directly To Consumers

Selling farm products directly from the farm to consumers is growing as a viable option both in Pennsylvania and across the nation. The USDA recently reported the number of farmers' markets in the nation has increased nearly 80 percent since 1994. That's according to data published in the "National Directory of Farmers' Markets 2002."

The directory is published every two years by USDA and shows 3,137 farmers' markets operating in the U.S. This compares to 1,755 farmers' markets operating in 1994, 2,410 in 1996, 2,746 in 1998, and 2,863 in 2000.

"The increasing popularity of farmers' markets may be attributed to the fact that they provide an integral linkage between farms and urban communities," said Agricul-

ture Secretary Ann M. Veneman. "Direct marketing enables farmers to supplement their incomes while giving consumers access to locally grown, farm-fresh products. Farmers' markets also help educate consumers about the important role agriculture plays in our daily lives."

An up-to-date listing of farmers' markets and related facts can be found at USDA's Farmers' Markets Website: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/farmersmarkets>. A print edition of the directory will be available in December and can be requested from the Website.

To Learn To Manage A Multicultural Workforce

Farm operations are increasingly hiring employees who have a varied cultural background.

Penn State and Cornell University will present a conference for farm managers who employ, or are considering employing, a Hispanic or multicultural workforce. The Hispanic Workforce Management Conference will be Jan. 28-29 at the Grantville-Hershey Holiday Inn in Grantville.

"Building on the success of the 2001 conference, the 2003 conference features a dynamic program and nationally prominent speakers," said Tammy Perkins, Penn State Dairy Alliance program manager. "They will offer useful insight into practices and attitudes that will help ensure success with a multicultural workforce."

Featured topics include "Examining Your Business Culture and Exploring Cultural Characteristics," "Four Factors For Success With Your Hispanic Employees," "Developing Supervisors From Within," "Cultural Issues and Promoting From Within," "Blending Cultures In the Workplace," "Expanding Employee Skill Sets,"

"Overcoming the Language Barrier," "Gaining Multicultural Acceptance In the Community," and "Hiring A Legal Workforce."

"In addition to meeting and talking with speakers, conference participants will have the opportunity to meet and compare management strategies with other successful farm business managers," said Perkins.

The conference also will be in Canandagui, N.Y. Jan. 30-31. For more information, call Perkins at (888) 373-7232.

To Learn About Risk Management In Cattle Feeding

Chet Hughes, Lancaster County livestock agent, encourages cattle feeders looking to shore up the financial side of their farming enterprise to attend a risk management seminar Monday, Nov. 25 at Yoder's Restaurant in New Holland.

The workshop begins at 10 a.m. and features Jonah J. Bowles III, Virginia Farm Bureau Federation's ag risk management coordinator. Bowles conducted a swine risk management seminar in the county earlier this year and producers were impressed with his practical, easy-to-understand approach to commodity marketing.

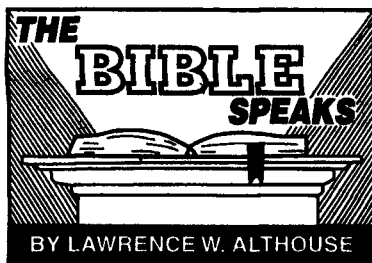
The workshop will be well worth your time investment. The Pennsylvania Beef Council will provide a complimentary buffet lunch for participants and the program concludes at 2 p.m.

This program effort is part of Pennsylvania's "Blueprint for Success" initiative for cattle feeders. To make a reservation for this workshop, call Chet at (717) 394-6851 or e-mail him at cdh1@psu.edu.

Quote Of The Week:

"Life must be understood backward, but it must be lived forward."

— Soren Kierkegaard



WORSHIPPING THE GODS OF OUR ENEMIES

Background Scripture:
Psalms 75.

Devotional Reading:
2 Chronicles 36:9-21; 2 Kings 24:8-25.

Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick once preached a sermon entitled "On Worshipping The Gods of our Enemies." Dr. Fosdick said that the people of Judah had a destructive habit of opposing their enemies and then adopting the gods and morals of the vanquished.

They never formally declared that they would no longer follow the Lord. Nor did they announce that they would now adopt the ways of their enemies. But, consciously or unconsciously, they did it just the same. They continued to worship God, but they also took on some of the pagan practices of their enemies and became very much like them.

Actually, these people might well have been regarded as patriotic. When Nebuchadnezzar deposed Jehoiachin and put on the throne his brother, Zedekiah, the people gave him their support. Certainly, they did not support or even respond favorably to the prophet Jeremiah: "... they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his

words, and scoffing at his prophets... (2 Chron. 36:16). They supported their king and their nation, but they were wrong.

Giving Up The High Road

In the midst of World War II, Dr. Fosdick was warning his congregation not to become like the Axis powers we were fighting. Some believed that, because the Nazis and Japanese had committed terrible atrocities, we should not shrink from doing the same. We were fighting for our freedom and democracy. True, said Fosdick, but let us not then give up the very things that make us and our nation morally and politically superior.

The concern of Dr. Fosdick is very timely today. Last night, on "60 Minutes," there was a discussion of whether, despite its historic and constitutional stand against the use of torture, the USA should use it because of the new threat under which we live today. I was surprised when a prominent attorney said he thought torture should be acceptable in order to protect ourselves from terrorists.

Our government is also proposing that American citizens be encouraged and helped to inform on others for the sake of national defense. During the Third Reich the Nazis encouraged the German people to do just that. The Soviet Union also encouraged relatives, neighbors, and friends to inform on each other for the sake of national security. Shall we, too, worship this pagan God of expediency and become like our enemies?

Different Kinds Of 'Messengers'

Those who, like Jeremiah, call us to not become like our enemies, are often ridiculed and mocked. They are dismissed as "unpatriotic"

or "un-American."

Am I suggesting that these voices of dissent are prophetic? Not necessarily. But we must remember that God often brings his message and judgment through those who are not worshippers of the Lord.

He uses a lot of crooked sticks to strike some mighty blows: King Nebuchadnezzar of Chaldea. Later he would use King Cyrus of Persia to accomplish his purpose. These men had no idea that they were being used by God.

If the covenant between God and his peoples was administered by human beings instead of God, at the first violation it would have called it null and void. But God is unfailing in his grace toward us: "The Lord, the God of their fathers, sent persistently to them by his messengers, because he had compassion on his people..." (36:15). Unfortunately, the people of Judah were also persistent: "... but they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising his words, and scoffing at his prophets..." (36:16)

It appears that the people have outlasted God. They persisted "... till the wrath of the Lord rose against his people, till there was no remedy." But, although the people refused to heed the message of his prophets, through Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, the message would eventually be heard, understood, and responded to by the people. Unfortunately, they would suffer greatly until then, a suffering they could have avoided had they listened to the Lord and his messengers. Instead, they hardened their hearts and paid a terrible price.

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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Lancaster Farming

An Award-Winning Farm Newspaper

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