

# Lancaster Farming OPINION

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or he can decide if he wants to raise fruits or vegetables, raise organic commodities, or start a new or expand an existing, animal/poultry operation in order to increase profits, stay in business, and pass the farm on to the next generation. *That is a choice that should be left to the farmer, not to local government.*

Should local government be allowed to break the law just because "there is a lot of heat in the kitchen" when local citizens descend on the township meeting and demand that they do something to stop the installation of a finishing floor for swine or stop someone who has plans to expand a dairy operation in the township?

You and I are expected to obey the laws of the land, and there are plenty of them. Agriculture and agribusiness are very heavily regulated too. There are requirements for nutrient management plans, con-

servation plans, erosion and sediment control plans, water quality permits, and on and on. It has been said that there are two million laws on the books to enforce the Ten Commandments. And if agriculture has to obey all of the laws, why should local government be exempt?

What Senate Bill 1413 does is restate the original purpose of the Right to Farm Act and then goes one step further. It states that if the local government ignores the statute and adopts a frivolous or onerous ordinance and is then taken to court by the agricultural community, and the agricultural community prevails, the court may award legal costs to the agricultural community.

But you know the legislation even goes further and provides that if the township prevails in court, that the court may award costs to the township. *And in that case the agricultural community would pay the local governments costs. Senate Bill 1413 cuts both ways.*

What is unfair about that? First of all, a local government is only vulnerable if it ignores the Right to Farm Act and someone is so aggrieved that they take them to court. There are a number of current instances where it is felt that local governments have adopted illegal ordinances, but the agricultural community can not afford to take them to court. I suspect that will continue to be the case.

Also, in what other situation would you be allowed to break a law on a regular basis and be left unchallenged? Or if you break the law and are taken to court, but the court determines that you are innocent and orders the police department to pay your legal and court costs?

Let me assure your readers that the solution offered in Senate Bill 1413 to the current dilemma facing agriculture is not an unfair one to local governments or their tax-paying citizens. To the contrary, it may be the best option available to them.

Agriculture is not the only industry that is having difficulty with the local governments. And if all of those industries — which have problems with local government — unite, the solutions, which are developed by such a coalition, could be unfair to local governments rather than the reasonable and fair approach offered in Senate Bill 1413.



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bear, coyote, raptors (hawks and owls), small wildcats (bob, lynx), turkey, crow, vulture and raven, fishers, whereas the grouse varies widely by season as do most species.

Pennsylvania seems to lead all other states in wildlife or free-roaming animal death by motor vehicle. Muskrats, pheasants, quail, woodcock, and mice seem in low numbers. Eagle, elk, Mountain Lions, bats, beaver are rarely killed.

Please drive carefully, defensively and be alert. Drivers must look forward always while moving forward.

Herbert C. Jordan  
Osceola Mills

## DairyCOP\$ Workshop Nov. 18

ADAMSTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Dairy producers can participate in a hands-on workshop to examine how to produce 100 pounds of milk.

Penn State Dairy Alliance and Nutrient Solutions in Agriculture have scheduled a DairyCOP\$ workshop Monday, Nov. 18, from 1 a.m. to 5 p.m., in conjunction with the upcoming Farming with Technology Conference at Weaver's Banquet Hall in Adamstown.


DairyCOP\$ (Dairy Cost of Production System) is a computer spreadsheet developed by Brad Hilty, information management specialist with Penn State Dairy Alliance program. The spreadsheet compiles finan-

cial and production data from a dairy farm and calculates the farm's accrual cost of producing 100 pounds of milk.

A grant from the Northeast Center for Risk Management Education will subsidize 50 percent of the cost, so producers will pay only \$35. There is a \$12 charge for additional people from the same farm. Producers interested in participating in this program should call the Dairy Alliance Office at (888) 373-PADA. For additional information, call the Dairy Alliance Office or e-mail bhilty@psu.edu.

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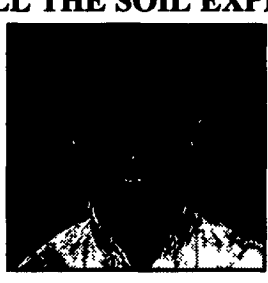


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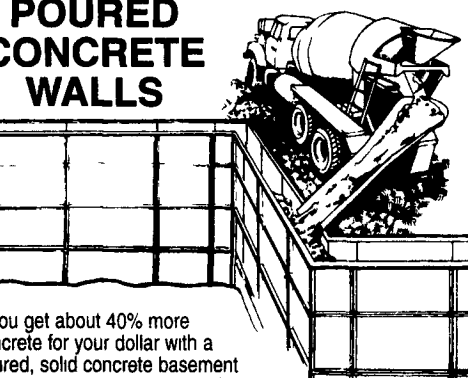
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