



On Being a Farm Wife
(and other hazards)
Joyce Bupp

It can't possibly be. Another year gone by. Another year of economic flatness, incredible drought and water shortages, followed by almost record catch-up rainfall, early and extreme cold at least in our area of the country, depressed prices for farm crops. Another year of blessings most of us casually take for granted: families and friends, plenty of food, cozy houses, warm clothes, and the freedom to take for granted our abundance of these basic things of life. Another year of observing what has become something of an annual office transition from the holiday rites to organizing for that gift of each new year, tax rites. Another year of attacking the pile of miscellaneous information that has piled up on the desk and to make space for the next batch. And in the process, we found:

- Recently reported scientific research that our brains have an "eraser," an enzyme of forgetting called protein phosphatase 1, shortened to PPI. What PPI does, researchers suggest, is keep our brains from getting overloaded with useless trivial data. Which means our brains are per-

haps cleaner than this messy desk, cluttered with information like the above. (Some days, I wonder if brain erasers can work overtime, and if mine is headed there?)

- A clipping relating the tale of an exuberant pup which shot its master in the foot. Seems a Minnesota hunter placed his loaded 12-gauge shotgun on the ground while he lined up a display of pheasants to photograph. Meanwhile, his young, and excited, English setter was frisking about and 'pawed' the trigger. Fortunately, the hunter was not seriously injured. (And how would you like to go home and explain that to your spouse?)
- Then there's a rather morbid piece, suggesting ordinary things can affect a person's length of life. Tomato paste in your diet several times weekly can earn you nearly an extra year of life, while flossing your teeth regularly can subtract several years, because of some gum bacteria it disturbs that can supposedly trigger the likes of strokes or heart problems. Run that by your dentist. Eat lots of pizza, but hold the floss?
- An e-mail printout from a forgotten source (but definitely

female) listing suggested training courses for men. Titles include such topics as "Directions — It's OK To Ask," "Adventures In Housekeeping — Let's Clean The Closet," "Strange But True! — She May Not Care What Fourth Down and Ten Means," and "The Gas Gauge — Sometimes Empty Means Empty."

- A five-year-old newspaper article on the subject of "UFOs — they could be there." If they haven't shown up in five years, guess we don't need to worry.
- Another e-mail printout called Holy Humor, noting such gems as "Forbidden fruit causes many jams," and "How will you spend eternity — Smoking or Non-Smoking?"
- Yet another health-related clipping detailing how the herb rosemary — known for remembrance — contains compounds to help prevent the kind of brain breakdowns that result in debilitating memory losses. I can't remember why I've saved so many of these pieces dealing with memory....?
- Ah, finally something I have actually been hunting: directions on how to sign up on the state's anti-telemarketer, "no-call" list. If your brain eraser was working overtime, like mine, and you originally misplaced the number, here it is: (888) 777-3406 or log onto www.nocallsplease.com. Our number is now on the list unfortunately, it take six months of lead time to be included. Maybe by then the new, national anti-marketing program will be in place.

There. A cleaner desk and a promised reduction in irritant phone calls — a positive start for 2003. Have a blessed and happy New Year!

Two Mifflinburg H.S. Graduates Receive American FFA Degree

MIFFLINBURG (Snyder Co.) — Two Mifflinburg Area High School graduates recently received the American FFA Degree, the highest degree awarded by the National FFA Organization. Denae Johnson and Valerie Spangler, both 2000 graduates, received the award at the recent 75th National FFA Convention in Louisville, Ky. Johnson, daughter of Alanson and Bonnie Johnson, Lewisburg, served as Mifflinburg FFA assistant vice president and SUN Area reporter. She has also served as chairman of the citrus and FFA activities week committees, as well as a member of the banquet and exhibit and demonstration committees. Her supervised agriculture experience projects included dairy herd, corn production and swine finishing. Johnson has received chapter proficiency in diversified livestock and small grain production, a gold award for her dairy herd and corn production record books, and a bronze award for her swine finishing record book. She also received the regional and county Northeastern Farm Credit ACA Award for excellence in record-keeping. She placed first in the state FFA agronomy contest and competed in the National Invitational Crops Contest at Purdue University. Johnson earned the Greenhand, Chapter and SUN Area degrees and was named Union County Star Farmer in 1998. She received the Keystone degree, the highest degree granted by the Pennsylvania Association of the FFA in 2000. Johnson attends Penn State University where she is a member of the National Agri-Marketing Association and expects to graduate in May 2004 with a bachelor of science degree in agri-business management. Spangler, daughter of Lee and Kathy Spangler, Mifflinburg, served as Mifflinburg FFA vice president and SUN Area Union County vice president. Her supervised agriculture experience projects involved dairy production, on-



Denae Johnson



Valerie Spangler

farm work experience and fresh market produce. Spangler placed first in the 1998 Pennsylvania State Agronomy Contest. She chaired the banquet committee in 2000 and participated in many FFA conferences and leadership workshops. At Penn State University, where she majors in agriculture and extension education, Spangler is an active member of the Penn State Collegiate FFA, is the corresponding secretary for the Block and Bridle Club, serves as the secretary/treasurer of the Poultry Science Club and is an Agriculture Advocate for the College of Agricultural Sciences. She is also a member of the honorary Agriculture Education society, Alpha Tau Alpha. Out of approximately 460,000 FFA members nationwide, Johnson and Spangler were two of 2,556 to be recognized for this honor this year.

Caffeine, Carbs Work Differently In Body

COLUMBUS, Ohio — My sister-in-law told me she heard that apples have more caffeine than coffee. I'm suspicious — can that be true? Um, no. I hope this doesn't cause one of those never-ending in-law squabbles, but you (and everyone else) should know that there's no caffeine in apples. Maybe your sister-in-law heard that apples can give you a pretty good energy boost. A medium-sized apple averages 20 grams of carbohydrates — not nearly as much as in a sugary snack, but the apple would certainly be a more nutritious choice than, say, a candy bar. And this year, you could get even a bigger boost from locally grown apples: The Midwest's dry summer decreased apples' moisture content, which concentrates the sugars in each fruit, making them delightfully sweet. Who wouldn't feel refreshed munching on a crisp, sweet apple? Still, that's not the same kind of boost people get from caffeine. They work in totally different ways. Simply put, food boosts your energy by helping form ATP (adenosine triphosphate). Cells use ATP whenever they need energy, whether it's chemical energy to store for later use; mechanical energy used in muscle movement; electrical energy for nerve transmissions; or osmotic energy to balance sodium, potassium and other ions within the cell. When ATP is tapped for use, it breaks down. It's in that breakdown that energy is released, from the bonds that hold ATP together. ATP continually is broken down and reformed in the body. Coincidentally, adenosine (the "A" in ATP) also shows up in the explanation for how caffeine works. Again, simply put: When adenosine binds to receptors in the brain — as cyclic adenosine monophosphate, or cAMP, it calms nerve cell activity and makes us drowsy. Caffeine happens to be structured very much like cAMP and can bind to those receptors. When it does, it blocks cAMP and keeps us from getting tired.

Other factors also play a role, but already you can see that caffeine and carbs play very different roles in energy balances in the body. Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1044, or filipic.3@osu.edu.



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