

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

A Tradition (Although With Some Big Changes) Continues

Today we kick off the annual Pennsylvania Farm Show. We may get upward of 400,000 people at the country's largest indoor agricultural event.

The economic impact of the Farm Show Complex activities is significant to the Harrisburg region: about \$480 million annually.

That's big dollars. And they're hoping you spend it.

The work should be far from over, however. The Farm Show still needs a major hotel nearby. The closest hotel is far from walking distance. Who wants to rely on shuttle service through Farm Show weather for a place to sleep?

Also, an aboveground, multistory parking garage would make parking a lot more ideal on sight.

Those should be the next additions to the complex.

Some old-timers to this year's big event at the complex should be aware of some major changes in the schedule. The dairy shows are on Friday instead of Tuesday. The sale of champions is Tuesday morning instead of Thursday.

Also, the big FFA Mid-Winter Convention, normally on Monday afternoon in the Large Arena, is now in the Banquet Hall (where the old Family Living exhibits were in the old part of the Northeast Upper Floor) on Monday. The Family Living exhibits are now in the old main hall.

These changes are going to take some getting used to! This will be a learning curve for all of us.

Despite these major changes and renovations, we sincerely believe the fun times and friendships of Farm Show will continue. We hope you make Farm Show a part of your visit — if simply out of curiosity — if not to see old friends.

Stop by and see us at booth 359 in the Expo Hall.

We hope you have some fun!



- Saturday, January 11**
- Pennsylvania Farm Show, Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, thru Jan. 18.
 - Long Island Agricultural Forum, Suffolk Community College, Riverhead, N.Y., Viticultural Session, 8:30 a.m., (631) 727-7850.
 - New York Low Input Sustainable Farming Conference, Jordan Hall, Geneva Experiment Station.
 - Dauphin County Holstein Association annual meeting, Geo's Family Restaurant, Harrisburg, 11 a.m.
 - Community Supported Agriculture and Farmers' Market gathering, Royalton Academy Building, Royalton, Vt., (802) 434-4122.
- Sunday, January 12**
- Pennsylvania Angus Association Annual Membership Banquet, Holiday Inn Grantville, 5:30 p.m., (717) 469-0661.
- Monday, January 13**

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@lancnews.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.

- New York Grazing Conference Series Jan. 13-18; Jan. 13, Delhi; Jan. 14, Cobleskill; Jan. 15, Cortland; Jan. 16, Belfast; Jan. 17, Carthage; and Jan. 18, Clinton County, (607) 753-5213.
- Annual Meeting Pa. Ag Republicans, Meeting Room B, Pa. Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, 3:30 p.m.
- Pa. State Grange Annual Farm Show meeting, Room B, Farm Show Complex, 1 p.m., (717) 234-5001.

Tuesday, January 14

- New Jersey Vegetable Growers Association Annual Meeting and Trade Show, Taj Mahal Atlantic City, thru Jan. 16.
- Capitol Region/Penn State Extension Introduction to Spreadsheets, Cumberland County Extension office, Carlisle, thru Jan. 15.
- Vineyard Technical meeting, Naylor Wine Cellars, Stewartstown, 1 p.m.-4 p.m., (717) 642-5148.
- Ohio Regional Agronomy meeting, Community Building, Huron County Fairgrounds, Norwalk, Ohio, (419) 627-7631.
- Farm Managers Workshop, central Susquehanna counties session of 5-week courses, Watson Inn, Watsonstown, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., (570) 837-4252, also Jan. 16, 21, 23, 28.
- Farm Bill Update meetings, New Hanover Twp. Building, 7 p.m.-9 p.m. Also Monday, Jan. 27, at Franconia Township Building, 7 p.m.-9 p.m., and Wednesday, Jan. 29 at

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To Participate In 2002 Census Of Agriculture
In late December, the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) mailed out census forms to all farmers and ranchers across the country to collect data on the 2002 year. From 1840 to 1920, the Census of Agriculture was taken every 10 years. Since 1925 the census has been taken about every 5 years.

The 2002 Census of Agriculture is the Nation's 26th census. For the census, a farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

The census is very important since it is the only source of uniform data on agricultural production and operator characteristics for each county, state, and the U.S. It is a measurement of where farmers stand, their production costs and cropping systems, their farm supply needs, and how trends are changing. Because of the importance of this information, Congress requires NASS to conduct the Census of Agriculture every five years.

Farmers are guaranteed by law that their individual information will be kept confidential. NASS uses the information only for statistical purposes and publishes data only in tab-

ulated totals. Your report cannot be used for purposes of taxation, investigation, or regulation. The law also provided that copies retained in your files are immune from legal process. The privacy of individual census records is also protected from disclosure through the Freedom of Information Act. Under this same law, NASS employees are subject to severe penalties if they release data on individual operations. NASS safeguards the privacy of operators' responses and will not disclose any data about an individual farm operation.

Many different groups use the information gleaned from the census. Farm organizations use the census data to evaluate and propose policies and programs that help the agricultural producer. Farm cooperatives, commodity and trade associations, and agribusinesses use the data to develop market strategies and to determine locations of facilities that will serve agricultural producers.

Federal Government policymakers use the Census of Agriculture data in drafting legislation to help resolve agricultural problems. State and local governments use the data for planning rural development, agricultural research, and extension programs. For planners and economists, the Census of Agriculture provides benchmark data for current statistical series such as the Gross Domestic Product, Producer Price Index, and Farm Income Accounts that are produced by the USDA and other organizations, such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics and Bureau of Economic Analysis.

An individual producer can use the information to determine which products are limited and which ones are heavily produced in his area. This can be very valuable, especially in evaluating new niche market opportunities. Individuals can also be guided by the data when making decisions on competitive market pricing, farming trends, and new technologies.

You can find Census of Agriculture data on the Internet at www.usda.gov/nass/ by clicking on "Census of Agriculture." You can also find Census of Agriculture data through local NASS State offices, many depository libraries, universities, and other state government offices.

For more information on the Census of Agriculture or any NASS surveys, call the NASS hotline at (800) 727-9540.

United States law requires all those who receive a census report form to respond even if they did not operate a farm or ranch in 2002. Completed report forms are due Feb. 3, 2003. Take some time on one of these cold winter days to sit in the warm and fill out the survey and send it back. A response from everyone is needed to make the census valuable.

To Attend The Lancaster Chamber's Farm Business Symposium

To succeed in today's economy, farmers and agribusiness managers must be equipped with practical business knowledge in many areas, including human resources, accounting, and strategic business planning.

The Lancaster Chamber will offer a daylong program for farmers and agribusiness managers covering these many areas, presented by experts from a diverse cross section of industries during The Farm Business Symposium, "Strategies for a Thriving Farm Business." The event will be Feb. 11 at Willow Valley Resort, 2416 Willow Street Pike, Lancaster.

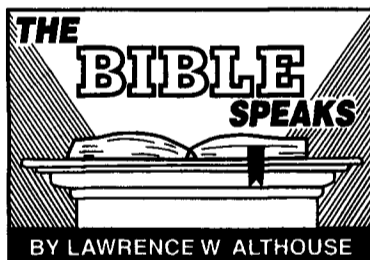
At the conference, you will hear directly from some of the area's most respected professionals in their fields. Topics include "Financial Analysis Tools," "Business Succession and Farm Estate Planning," and "Strategic Planning for a Successful Farm Business." An additional topic to be covered is "The Link Between People and Profits" which includes "Attracting the Right People," "Retaining Your Key Employees," and "Tools to Effectively Manage Your Employees."

For more information or to register online, go to www.lancaster-chamber.com or call the Chamber's Ag Services Manager Brent Landis at (717)-397-3531.

Quote Of The Week:

"We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms. The first is freedom of speech and expression. The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way. The third is freedom from want. The fourth is freedom from fear."

— Franklin D. Roosevelt



EVERYONE NEEDS A 'BETHANY'

Background Scripture:

Luke 10:38-42; John 11:20-32.

Devotional Reading:

John 15:12-17.

In one of my former parishes there was a warm and receptive home where I received as much or more help than I gave there. It was not that there weren't many other homes in my parish that were "warm" and "receptive," but this one was for me a special place. In a sense, it was my "Bethany."

Mary, Martha, and Lazarus are mentioned only in two of the gospels. Luke 10:38-42 tells us of an incident during which Jesus was received in the home of Mary and Martha. It is in John 11:20-32 that we learn that they live in Bethany, a small town just two miles outside Jerusalem, and John adds a brother, Lazarus.

Obviously, their home was a very special place for Jesus and they were friends as well as followers. But that

doesn't mean they were perfect. In Luke we see a clash of temperaments that are probably quite familiar to most of us. We all know someone like Martha who becomes so involved in her hospitality that she misses the opportunity to learn more from the Master.

Also, like many people who want to do "something for us," resentment may creep: "Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone?" (Lk. 10:39), a rebuke of her sister, but it also a muted one to Jesus, for he was keeping Mary from doing her share of the work! But Jesus replies with deep understanding of Martha (and us!): "Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things; one thing is needful. Mary has chosen the good portion. . . ." (10:41).

Feeding Our Own Egos

When Jesus says, "one thing is needful," he is probably not saying that Martha's preparations are not worthwhile, but that she is overdoing it. A simple meal would be more appropriate. While he appreciates her efforts, he knows that she may also be unconsciously feeding her own ego.

Look at what I'm doing, Jesus, and I'm not even getting any help from my lazy sister! So are we, like Martha, also "distracted from much serving," so "anxious and troubled about many things" that we miss out in our relationships with spouses, children, and others? We need a balance between sheer busyness for Christ and quiet receptivity of Christ,

for John assures us that Jesus loved both Mary and Martha (Jn. 11:5).

If we can identify with Luke 10, I think we can also find ourselves in John 11. When Lazarus becomes seriously ill, Martha and Mary send word to Jesus, "Lord, he whom you love is ill" (11:3). But, after assuring us that he loved this family, John tells us: "So, when he had heard that he was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place that he was" (11:6). Questioned by his disciples at this unconscionable delay, Jesus implies that a greater purpose is to be served than if he would leave for Bethany immediately.

If You Had Come!

By the time he arrives there, Lazarus has already been in the tomb four days.

Martha greets Jesus with an exclamation of both faith and reproach. "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (11:21). Yes, I have faith in you, Jesus, but why didn't you come? Can you not hear your own voice speaking those words: Yes, Lord, I know this will all be resolved in the kingdom of heaven, but I want help now!

When Martha replies, her assurance is not in the knowledge of what Jesus will do, but in what he is — "Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God. . . ." (11:28). She trusts Jesus even though she does not understand why he has seemed to fail them. She doesn't realize that during those two days he was responding to her prayer. In all likelihood, he was praying for, standing at the tomb of Lazarus, although he had not been seen to pray, Jesus says, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. . . ."

Even though God does not seem to respond to our prayers, and when he responds it may be in some way different from what we asked, he does not delay and he will be with us in our own Bethany.

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