

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Decisions That Affect Agriculture And You

Editor's note for all Guest Editorials: Please keep in mind that the opinions of the writers don't necessarily agree with the editor's. For the benefit of our diverse readership, we strive to provide a balance of opinion in Lancaster Farming.

Marc Tosiano
 Pennsylvania State Statistician
 National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA

You have probably heard the phrase "information is power." I believe that growers and their organizations and representatives should all have access to basic information that creates a level playing field for our industry.

Your agricultural service-providers use ag statistics when making decisions such as justifying funding for extension and university research, grower groups lobbying in Harrisburg or Washington D.C. on your behalf, locating farm supply outlets, evaluating farm loan applications, re-registering pesticides, developing and implementing disaster or Farm Bill programs, land preservation, etc.

You can affect these decisions by taking the time to complete and return the Census of Agriculture. We need your help so that decisions made that affect you and your farm are based on accurate information.

To put it another way, consider the following questions: Do you use information, advice, or educational services from the extension service? Have you ever used agricultural advances developed by state universities and extension?

Do you buy supplies such as farm equipment, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.? Do you belong to a cooperative, commodity, trade, or farmer association?

Have you ever borrowed money to finance your agricultural operation? Do you buy crop insurance? Have you received financial help because of market losses, drought, or other natural disasters? Do you take advantage of farm programs in the current or past Farm Bills?

If you have answered "yes" to any of these questions, then you have been the beneficiary of agricultural statistics generated by the Census of Agriculture and other surveys conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Service (NASS).

(Turn to Page A29)

❖ FARM CALENDAR ❖

Saturday, January 25
 Pa. Holstein Clarion/Venango Annual meeting, Wolf's Den Restaurant, Knox, 7:30 p.m.
 Central Susquehanna Counties Farm Managers' Workshop, Session 5, Watson Inn, Wat-
 sontown.

Bradford County Holstein Association meeting, Troy Fire Hall, Troy, 11:30 a.m.
 Forest Landowners' Conference, Penn State Behrend College, Erie, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., (814)

(Turn to Page A26)

❖ FARM FORUM ❖

Editor:

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend the 87th Annual Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg.

How To Reach Us

To address a letter to the editor:

- By tax: (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.

In addition to witnessing the sights and sounds all met under a continuous 16-acre roof, it is always valuable for me to meet with members of the farming community and to hear their perspectives on the commonwealth's agricultural issues.

Though the Farm Show is a seasonal highlight for the state capital, 2003 is a banner year for this event. This past December, (Former) Gov. Schweiker opened a 360,000-square-foot annex to the Farm Show Complex. With the new facilities, the show is undeniably the largest indoor agricultural affair in all of America.

Harrisburg's complex attracts more than 200 events and exhibitions each year, but with an esti-

(Turn to Page A25)

Now Is The Time
 By Leon Ressler
 Lancaster County Extension Director

To Keep Calves Healthy During Cold Winter Weather

We have had a chilly winter this year and it looks like we will be facing more of the same in the weeks ahead.

Beth Grove, extension dairy/environment agent in Lancaster, points out when temperatures reach down below 30 degrees Fahrenheit (F), most dairy calves need extra energy for warmth. Low temperatures and wind chills can cause a baby calf to use energy stores and burn body fat if it does not receive enough energy and dry matter. Weight loss and hypothermia are the result, and the calf may consequently become weak and less aggressive at feeding. Their immune systems may also be compromised, making them more susceptible to illness.

Here are some thoughts on ways to keep your calves healthier and growing during the cold winter months to come.

When new calves are born in the winter, the first step is to provide a clean and dry calving pen. New bedding should be used for each cow before calving, mostly to help prevent the spread of disease. During extra cold weather, deeper bedding provides warmth and insulation for the calf.

Calves should not be allowed to

nurse directly from the cow, particularly if your herd is fighting Johne's Disease. It has been shown that Johne's can be spread through fecal matter and/or colostrum from cows in later stages of Johne's Disease.

Feed 3-4 quarts of colostrum as soon as possible after birth, using an esophageal feeder if necessary. Consider using a colostrometer to ensure that the IgG (immunoglobulin concentration) is adequate for providing disease resistance for the calf, and colostrum from Johne's negative cows when possible.

It is a good idea to feed a high fat (greater than 20 percent) milk replacer during winter months, at 12-14 percent of body weight. Researchers at Penn State estimated that the energy requirement of maintenance alone for calves fed milk replacers was increased by as much as 32 percent when they were housed at 25 degrees F compared with calves housed at 50 degrees F.

A simple way of adding energy to the milk replacer is to add a small volume of whole bulk tank milk to the liquid, but this is not highly recommended because of the possibility of disease transmission. According to Dr. Jud Heinrich at Penn State, waste milk from cows with known infections of Johne's, E. coli, leukosis, or salmonella should not be fed to calves unless it has been pasteurized first.

A better way to increase the energy concentration of the replacer may be to add more powder to the water before mixing, but you may want to check with your supplier or veterinarian for recommendations. There are also commercial fat supplements available to add to replacers for winter feeding, usually added to replacers at 1/4 to 1/2 pound per day to provide extra energy.

We feed dairy calves twice daily for our convenience, not theirs! It has been shown that, given a choice, most young calves would consume about 20-25 percent of their body weight daily in 6-8 feedings for rapid growth and optimum health. If we fed this much twice daily, health problems would result, so in severe weather, consider feeding three times daily, where you could feed a higher percentage of body weight in replacer.

Keep fresh water available to calves at all times, even baby calves. Try using warmed water to keep it from freezing as fast, and replace the water often if you can. Water can aid in rumen devel-

opment and can increase grain consumption by young calves. Baby calves without easy access to water will take longer to wean.

Encourage grain starter at an early age, particularly in winter — calves with working rumens are less stressed by cold than those on milk diets.

As a final note, the person who cares for heifer calves on the dairy will need to take extra time in the winter months to care for each calf as an individual, rather than all baby calves as a group. Watch calves carefully for signs of depression, weakness, or unusually cold extremities, all signs of hypothermia, and treat calves accordingly.

To Jump-Start

Equipment The Correct Way

Vehicles and machinery that have been idle during winter may be difficult to start.

If you need to jump-start a piece of equipment that has a weak or discharged battery, be sure to follow these safety tips.

First, connect the positive cable marked with a "+" or red clamps to the positive terminal of the weakened battery. Then clamp the other end of the positive cable to the positive post of the charged battery.

Next, connect the negative cable to the negative post of the good battery. Finally, make the last connection of the negative cable to the engine block or frame of the nonstarting vehicle.

The engine block or frame acts like a negative terminal. By keeping the clamps of the weakened battery separated, one reduces the possibility of unwanted stray sparks causing an explosion or fire. When jump-starting a vehicle, remember to wear safety glasses to protect your eyes from acid or battery parts in the event of an explosion.

If battery acid does contact your skin, it should be flushed off immediately with clean, cool water. If your eyes should be splashed, flush them with water and seek medical help.

Once the vehicle is started, remove the cables in reverse order. Be careful not to allow the cables to contact each other when removing them. Store the jumper cables in a clean, dry location.

Quote Of The Week:

"Surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority, and don't interfere."

— President Ronald Reagan (1986)

THE BIBLE SPEAKS
 BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

GETTING RECYCLED

Background Scripture:
 Luke 22:31-34, 54-62; John 21:1-22.
 Devotional Reading:
 Acts 4:1-13.

Remember when we just threw trash away? Well, now we recycle much of it, because we know that it has some intrinsic value that can be renewed. Although we, as Americans, still have a long way to go in matters of ecology, the recycling movement is catching on across our nation.

If only we did as well with people. We live in a throwaway society and, as wasteful as we are with things, we are even more prodigal with our children.

Lisa Aversa Richette, once an assistant district attorney in Philadelphia and later a judge, wrote of her experiences in juvenile court in "The Throwaway Children."

"Established at the turn of the century," she writes, "the Juvenile Court was designed to reclaim America's lost youth by providing a second chance, a moment of hope, which the child and the adults in his world could seize upon to reconstruct his life."

But, "the American people have been content to regard juvenile courts as

sanitation departments whose job is to keep the community clean by picking these kids off the streets."

Instead of "recycling centers," our juvenile detention prisons rarely rise above the level of warehouses for "ruined" human beings.

This is no less true of our prison systems. In what is the most enlightened, privileged nation in the world, why? Because most people, including Christians, do not believe in rehabilitating our most precious national resource, human lives.

Sheep Vs. Goats

Many believe that, whether by choice or biological programming, some people are "good" and others are just "bad." Furthermore, they believe that there is little or no crossing that line. The latter must be warehoused so that they do not impinge upon the "good" people.

After 2,000 years of Christianity, it is incredible that so many of us who profess to be Christians still believe that people are rarely recyclable.

Just how "bad" can a person be and still be redeemed? Simon Peter's story gives us an answer. Because he is the leader of the Twelve, extreme loyalty to Christ was to be expected. But, in Jesus' greatest hour of need, Peter failed him, a failure that Jesus foresaw: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you..." But Jesus also foresaw his redemption: "... and when you have turned again, strengthen my people." Peter's failure does not mean that he is unredeemable. Jesus has a job for him to do.

Peter's failure was monumental. When Jesus was seized and led away to the high priest's house, "Peter followed at a distance" (22:54b). Three times that evening he had an opportunity to stand with Jesus, but each time he denied that he even knew Jesus. If you

and I had served on a "membership committee" for the Twelve, we would have decided right then and there that Peter was "out" and never again would be "in."

Peter And Us

Haven't there been times when we also have followed Jesus at a distance so that people would not recognize that we are with him? Have there not also been times when we have denied him — if not so bluntly as Peter, at least as surely? Yet did Peter's cowardly failure disqualify him from reclamation? Do ours?

Whenever in doubt, we need to remember how Jesus responded: "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" Three times, Jesus asks this question, because it is one that Peter and we might answer too quickly.

There is an interesting parallel between Peter's three denials of Christ and his three questions about Peter's loyalty. And three times Jesus emphasizes the importance of the question: "If you love me, he says to Simon — and us — 'Feed my lambs,' "... tend my sheep," "Feed my sheep" (Jn 21:15-17). Despite his terrible failure, Jesus found him worth redeeming and gave him a task.

If anyone must believe in the recycling of human beings, we, the followers of Jesus Christ, are those people. The gospel is the good news of redemption. The Church is a redeeming force in the world, or it is not the Church. And a Christian who is not into the recycling of society's moral "goats" is really not part of Jesus' flock.

Lancaster Farming
 An Award-Winning Farm Newspaper

- PDA Friend of Agriculture Award, 2003
- 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

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 2003 by Lancaster Farming