

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Allow Hunters?

We received information via e-mail the other day about a new income and stewardship opportunity via a Website, www.permissiontohunt.com.

As a hunter, you could simply log onto the Website, input what you'd like to hunt, in a location you'd like to hunt, and farmers would simply be listed for those who'd allow you to do so. With their permission, of course.

We went to the Website and we quote a fair warning they give those who are looking for such a service:

Hunting private land should be regarded as a privilege, not a "right." To earn this privilege, it is best to approach the landowner prior to season's opening day to ask for your Permission To Hunt. Considerate hunters need to help maintain our proud heritage and hunter ethics.

Show the landowner that you:

- Have respect for the land.
- Exhibit good hunter ethics.
- Appreciate the use of their land by saying "thank you."

In an ideal world, this would all be well and good. But farmers would be wise to understand the pitfalls of such an idea.

You could, for instance, talk to Carl W. Grub of Sunset Hollow Farm in Hanover. Grub, who owns a 175-acre farm in York County, would be the first to caution farmers: don't do it. If you allow hunters on your land, you could be begging for potential problems.

Grub claims to be struggling with an incident involving hunters on his land.

While we don't want to proffer any kind of detail, suffice it to say that farmers really need to think long and hard about allowing people to hunt their lands, especially in this litigation-happy society. There are legal concerns, too, and dealing with agencies can be a real headache.



Now Is The Time

By Leon Ressler

Lancaster County Extension Director

To Market Products Via The Internet

USDA has produced a publication designed to assist agricultural producers in marketing their products via the Internet. "How To Direct Market Farm Products On the Internet" provides basic information to farm direct marketers who are interested in selling their products online or using a Website to publicize their farm or products.

"For agricultural producers, the Internet can help solve problems of time, distance, and location in marketing their products," said A.J. Yates, administrator of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service. "We are working to provide the tools to help level the playing field for agriculture and rural communities by providing technological solutions and technological support."

Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman also recently announced that USDA will expand efforts to bring farmers, rural residents, and businesses greater access to improved telecommunication technology through the financing of more than \$1.4 billion in loan and loan guarantees to rural telecommunications providers.

The number of Internet users shopping online has skyrocketed in

recent years. Of the estimated 168 million Internet users 16 years of age and older in the U.S., approximately half say they shop online. Because of this rapidly growing trend, many farm direct marketers are turning to online marketing to increase their customer base.

The publication addresses issues to be considered before adopting the Web as a marketing tool, as well as tips on how to research the Internet market, set up a Website, and market products on the Web. References, largely from the Internet itself, are cited to enable producers to undertake additional research.

"How To Direct Market Farm Products On the Internet" is available in print and on the Internet at www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/SB_sb.htm. For more information or to obtain a copy of the publication, contact Errol Bragg, USDA AMS TMP MSB, Room 2646 S, Stop 0269, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250, (202) 720 8317, fax (202) 690 0031, or e-mail Errol.Bragg@usda.gov.

To Sign Up For The Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Agriculture Secretary Designee Dennis C Wolff has announced to Pennsylvania growers that sign up for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program is under way.

"The Farmers Market Nutrition Program is a great partnership between those who grow Pennsylvania fruits and vegetables and those who need them," said Wolff. "This is a great direct marketing opportunity for Pennsylvania farmers. Since the introduction of this program, many farmers have launched or expanded their retail operations, providing additional income to their farm operation."

The Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides coupons to eligible recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from approved growers at one of Pennsylvania's farmers markets or roadside stands. Growers interested in participating in the 2003 program must own or lease farmland in Pennsylvania where they produce and sell more than \$1,000 of agricultural products.

Growers who participated in the

2002 program received notices from the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Food Distribution. For any other farmer interested in participating in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program, contact the Bureau of Food Distribution at (800) 468-2433. The program will begin on June 1, 2003 and continue until Nov. 30, 2003.

The Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides coupons to eligible Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) recipients and qualified seniors to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from more than 625 approved vendors in Pennsylvania. In 2002, more than \$5 million in state and federal funds were available for the WIC and seniors programs.

WIC mothers and children ages 2 to 5 can receive \$20 in coupons. The Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program was launched in 1998 for older Pennsylvanians. In 2002, the Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program was offered statewide. Last year, qualifying seniors received \$20 in coupons. More than 96,000 seniors redeemed more than \$2.2 million in coupons in 2002.

To Attend The

Lancaster County Dairy Day

The Lancaster County Dairy Day postponed in February because of the Presidents' Day snowstorm has been rescheduled for Monday, March 10 at the Farm and Home Center in Lancaster.

The theme is "Strategies for Success" and the displays open at 9 a.m. Topics include "Nutrition Strategies to Increase Profits," "How Is Your Dairy Business Performing?" and "Biosecurity On Farms."

Other topics include "Strategies for Using Your Farm Resources," "Emerging Dairy Farm Technologies," "Building Your Plan For the Transfer of the Farm Business," and "Crop Insurance — Strategy for Survival." Also, an optional program for spouses will be offered on "What's New In Home Canning" and there will be pressure canner testing for those who bring their dial gauge pressure canner lid.

Quote Of The Week.

"It's OK to lend a helping hand. The challenge is getting people to let go of it."

— Unknown

FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, March 8

Farm Family Appreciation Celebration, Hamburg Field House, Hamburg, (610) 378-1327.

Professional Shearing School, Cornell Sheep Farm, Harford, N.Y., 8 a.m.-5 p.m., thru March 9, (320) 587-6094.

York Garden Wise, York Suburban High School, York, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., (717) 840-7908.

Pa. Forestry Association annual dinner, Genetti Hotel and Convention Center, Williamsport, (717) 766-5371.

Beekeeping Workshop, Wayne County Visitors Center, Honesdale, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.

Pruning Hardwood Trees Workshop, Western Maryland Research and Education Center, Keedysville, Md., 1 p.m.-3 p.m., (301) 972-0848.

"On the Farm" Exhibition, Chandler Gallery, Randolph, Vt., thru March 9, 10 a.m.-noon, (802) 728-9878.

Building Your Own Greenhouse, Merck Forest and Farmland Center, Rupert, Vt., 10 a.m.-1

p.m., (802) 394-7836. Organic Biodynamic Orchard Management Workshop Series, Threshold Farm, Claverack, N.Y., 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Also Saturday, May 24 and Saturday, Oct. 4.

Sunday, March 9

FFA State Legislative Leadership Conference, Harrisburg, thru March 11.

Monday, March 10

Franklin County Pesticide Update, extension office, 1 p.m.-3 p.m. and 7 p.m.-9 p.m., (717) 263-9226.

Pa. Farm Link Passing On the Farm Workshop, Lewistown, 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m., (717) 664-7077.

Arbor Care Workshops, Lock Haven University, Lock Haven, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., thru March 14.

Regional Corn and Soybean Day, Clark Mills United Methodist Church, Clark Mills, (814) 333-7460.

Hardwood Lumber Grading, Penn State's Ag Arena, thru March 13, (814) 863-1113.

Lancaster County Family Dairy Day, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., (717) 394-6851.

Act 6 Nutrient Management Certification and Plan Writing Seminars for Farmers, Berks County Ag Center, Leesport, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Also March 12, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m. and March 18, 9 a.m.-noon.

Tuesday, March 11

Workshop on Insect Monitoring, Adams County Extension office.

Spreadsheets II class, Franklin

(Turn to Page A30)

THE BIBLE SPEAKS

BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

RAISING THE ROOF!

Background Scripture:

Mark 2:1 through 3:6.

Devotional Reading:

Luke 15:1-7.

Two groups of people stand out in these early chapters of Mark, one of them negatively. These were the Pharisees, a religious party dedicated to applying the law to daily life. It was a worthy goal, but they went off in the wrong direction. Applying the law superlegalistically, they missed its purpose — to enrich human life under God.

For example, when Jesus was healing the paralytic (2:3-12), instead of praising God for this wonderful work, they called it "blasphemy" when he said, "My son, your sins are forgiven." "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" they protest, caring more for their interpretation of the law than they did for the paralyzed man. Whenever you care more about your theology than a good work done in the name of God, you, not others, are likely to be the blasphemer!

Another example is their reaction when Jesus was seen "eating with sinners and tax collectors." Because

the tax collectors worked for the Romans, they were considered the worst kind of sinners. But they forgot that all of us are "sinners," not just those who violate our religious rules. If they didn't like the sinful company Jesus kept, they really didn't like the company God keeps.

Compassion Or Legalism?

They criticized Jesus because he didn't fast. They criticized him because on the Sabbath day he and his disciples had plucked grain to feed themselves. The attacked him because he dared on the Sabbath to heal a man with a withered hand. Their devotion to the law was taking the place of compassion for the needs of fellow human beings.

We do not often see Jesus angry, but here we do: "And he looked around them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart..." (v. 3:5). Notice, he is angry, not with their poor theology, but their lack of compassion. How plainly he puts it: "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" Even this failed to reach these hardened hearts, for they "went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him."

There is a second, much more admirable group. We don't know their names and they were not part of any organized faction. We only know that there were four of them. Perhaps the only thing they had in common was their concern for a paralyzed man. They might not know much about Jesus, but they believed he could help their friend.

Four Intercessors

This is a fine example of intercessory prayer. The man couldn't come to Jesus, so they took him to the Master. Picking up his pallet, they brought him to the house where Jesus was healing. When they arrived, the crush of the crowd prevented them from getting the paralytic in the door.

Like true intercessors, they were not put off by the obstacles that confronted them. Carrying the man to the roof of the house, they removed some of the sticks and packed earth that comprised the roof and, making a hole large enough for his pallet, they lowered him down into the midst of Jesus and the crowd.

Note that it was their faith to which Jesus was responding. We don't know what expectations the paralytic had, whether there was anything in him that could be called "faith," but, "when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'My son, your sins are forgiven.'" Would the critics of Jesus have been just as angry if he had said, "God forgives your sins"? I think so, for they were bound to what they were against, not what they were for. In that, they were not too unlike some of us.

Their invasion of this house where Jesus was healing is a case of sanctified housebreaking. The four nameless but compassionate men literally raised the roof to bring this man to the healing touch of Jesus Christ. How can we do less?

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