

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Plan Should Unify Farmers

Last week, our page 1 story on a township's plan to drill a well on a dairy farm near Ephrata raises troubling questions about the future of agriculture in Pennsylvania — and not just on large-scale operations.

Paul B. and Lena Zimmerman's third-generation family farm is home to about 65 Holsteins and 50 acres of cropland. The Zimmermans' son, Paul Jr., manages the dairy herd.

East Cocalico Township is set on taking over a site near the center of the Zimmermans' cropland. A working municipal well there would prohibit normal ag production methods on 10 to 12 acres surrounding the wellhead, including any fertilizer or chemical applications. That would "just demolish the value of the farm," Paul B. Zimmerman said.

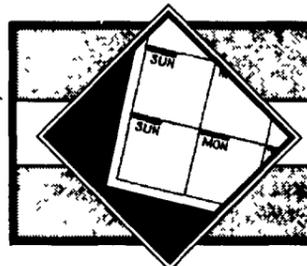
Township officials seem to be ignoring an application filed two and a half years ago for ag security protection on 500 acres of prime limestone farmland in the township. The Zimmermans were one of eight families who signed the application.

According to John Bell, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau's counsel of governmental affairs, and Zimmerman's attorney, Paula Leicht, the Ag Security Area was automatically approved by law six months after it was submitted to the township in September of 2000. That makes the well-drilling plan illegal.

We believe the township has done a questionable job explaining what gives it the right to claim eminent domain on the Zimmerman farm.

The chairman of the Water and Sewer Authority board spoke to *Lancaster Farming* about the sophisticated geological technology

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FARM CALENDAR

Saturday, May 17

Keystone Stud Ram and Ewe Sale, Keystone Classic at Penn State Ag Arena, thru May 18.

Evaluating Your Forest Resource Workshop for Landowners, Laurel Haven Conservation Education Center, 9 a.m.-noon.

Penn State Master Gardeners of Wayne County and Penn State Extension Spring Garden Expo, Lakeside Elementary, Honesdale, (570) 253-5970, ext. 239.

District VII 4-H Horse Camp,

Bedford County Fairgrounds, Bedford, thru May 18, (814) 623-4800.

Sunday, May 18

Clarion County Pasture Walk, John Allen Farm, Saxony, 2 p.m., (814) 782-0033.

Monday, May 19

National Egg Quality School, Hilton, San Antonio, Texas Airport, thru May 22, (765) 494-8510.

Cooperatives Working Together

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FARM FORUM

Editor:

Thank you for running the Vector Tobacco article in last week's *Lancaster Farming*. I share your concerns.

Attached is a letter from Mr. LeBow, chief executive officer of Vector, in response to my request to

continue growing tobacco in Pennsylvania in 2003. I believe it would be helpful to share this letter with your readers. While it is not a commitment letter for 2004, it is a strong statement about Vector's positive relationship with Pennsylvania growers.

— Dennis C. Wolff
Pa. Secretary of Agriculture
Harrisburg

It was with regret that I had to inform you in our recent telephone conference that Vector Tobacco would not be growing tobacco during the 2003 crop season.

We have come to greatly value the relationship that we have with the Pennsylvania farmers as well as with your office, and we recognize the importance that our crops have been to the local farming community. Therefore, you should be assured that we have explored all possible options before making this difficult decision.

As we explained, from our perspective, the launch of Quest is going

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Now Is The Time

By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County Extension Director

To Control Caterpillars In Greenhouse Vegetable Production

Caterpillar pests are not usually considered to be a major pest in greenhouse vegetables. However, Cathy Thomas, with the Integrated Pest Management Program of the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, reminds us they can be a problem in warmer months of the growing season.

During warmer weather, the adult stage (moth or butterfly, order Lepidoptera) migrates into the greenhouse to lay eggs. One of the most common species found in tomatoes is the tomato hornworm. However, tomato fruitworm, armyworm, and loopers can also infest tomatoes and peppers. If you are introducing natural enemies to control other pests, caterpillars must also be controlled with natural enemies or compatible pesticides.

There are many enemies of caterpillars found in natural populations that will attack caterpillars if you are not using a broad-spectrum insecticide program. Examples of these include predators such as assassin bugs, damsel bugs, minute pirate bugs, and parasitic flies and wasps. If populations are not kept in check with indigenous natural enemies, consider supplementing with biological

controls that can be purchased through a biological control distributor.

Caterpillars and moths undergo complete metamorphosis consisting of four stages: egg, caterpillar (larva), pupa, and adult. Eggs are laid in groups on leaves. Eggs hatch into larvae that have well-developed chewing mouthparts. Larvae eat continuously and can cause damage to foliage and fruit in a short period of time. After several developmental larval stages, the insect transforms into a stage called the pupa or the resting stage. This stage does not feed and is usually inactive.

Pupae are often covered by a cocoon or some other kind of protective material. The final stage occurs when the adult butterfly or moth emerges from the cocoon to begin the egg-laying process again. Damage symptoms from larvae appear as holes chewed in leaves and/or fruit and large amounts of excrement may be observed on the foliage.

One of the most popular and effective controls for caterpillars is the egg parasitoid, *Trichogramma*. These tiny wasps (.9 millimeter in length) work by laying eggs (parasitizing) in the eggs of many destructive caterpillar pests. A new wasp will emerge from the parasitized egg. If you are going to use this biocontrol, inspect the crop for the presence of eggs, since this is the life stage that is attacked. *Trichogramma* is not effective against the larval stages.

Grain moth eggs parasitized by *Trichogramma* are glued to small cards and shipped to the grower. The cards are then placed throughout the crop where the wasps will emerge to search the plants. Protect the cards from ants since they will feed on the eggs.

The species available from most biocontrol suppliers include *T. brassicae*, *T. minutum*, and *T. pretiosum*. Consult suppliers for applications rates and appropriate species needed for the crop and pest.

A microbial insecticide such as *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt) has a selective mode of action that will target caterpillars but not harm other beneficial organisms. Various subspecies (strains) are commercially available for controlling many common foliage-feeding caterpillars. The most widely used Bt insecticides are formulated from the bacteria *Bacillus thuringiensis* var. *kurstaki* (Dipel,

Javelin). This isolate is toxic only to the larvae of butterflies and moths.

When the Bt is ingested by an insect, the protein toxin paralyzes and destroys the cells of the gut wall. Insects may die quickly or may stop feeding within 2 to 3 days. Mortality varies with larval size, target species, and the dose consumed. Caterpillars must feed on treated leaves for it to be effective since it is not a contact poison.

Azadirachtin (Azatin XL, Neemix) is a botanical insect growth regulator derived from kernels of the neem tree. As an insect growth regulator, Azadirachtin blocks the insect's production of hormones and interrupts the molting process, preventing the insect from completing its life cycle. Azadirachtin may also serve as a feeding deterrent for some insects. This compound is compatible with beneficial insects and in addition to controlling caterpillars it will kill/repel a variety of greenhouse pests.

Microbial and biological insecticides are registered by the Environmental Protection Agency. Growers must read and follow the label to determine if the intended use has been approved. Always read the label before using.

To Remember To Vote On Tuesday

Tuesday May 20 is the Pennsylvania Primary Election. The ballot for the fall elections will be determined for many local offices, including township supervisor, school board director, and county commissioner. Officials in these positions make decisions which have a big impact on your ability to operate your business. The primary election is especially important in areas where one political party is dominant. In those areas the individuals who win the primary usually are elected in the fall.

Because we are having a late spring and some work is behind schedule, it will be tempting to skip voting this time. However, you should park your equipment or leave other tasks for a few minutes and get out and vote. Don't leave it to others to decide who will be on the ballot in the fall.

Quote Of The Week:
"An actor knows two important things — to be honest in what he is doing and to be in touch with his audience. That's not bad advice for a politician, either."
— Ronald Reagan

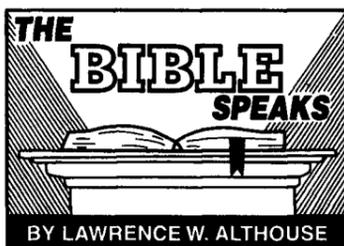
If You Can

The man from the crowd implores Jesus: "... but if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us." Jesus' reply must have shocked the man: "If you can!"

Jesus can, but can the man? Jesus has the power and all it takes to channel that power is this man's trust in Jesus. His reply might be made by any of us today: "I believe; help my unbelief." We know we believe, but it is not an automatic response on our part. We need help with our wavering trust in Christ. But, if we open the door with "I believe," he will come in even if we must confess, "help my unbelief."

Later, after Jesus has healed the epileptic boy and the crowds have gone, the disciples ask: "Why could we not cast it out?" (Mk. 9:28). Jesus answered: "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer." What he is saying here is that the power to heal and transform is not a matter of words which we say. The disciples knew the right words, but they did not have the power that Jesus had. And the reason they did not have that power is because they were not yet living lives of intimate communion with God.

The bad news was that they were not able. The good news is that they could be able if they lived a life as close to God as they could. So, those who would intercede with God for others and their hurts and needs will find access to that power. And so will we.



THE BIBLE SPEAKS

BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

DO YOU HAVE IT?

Background Scripture: Mark 9:14-37.

Devotional Reading: John 16:25-33.

Many years ago I climbed to the top of the mountain traditionally noted to be the Mount of Transfiguration. It was a true "mountaintop experience" for me, not just because there is a marvelous view of the Galilee plain below, but because the experience of Jesus, Peter, James, and John is made very real here.

Later, as I descended the mountain, I remembered that what happened next at its base was also very important. As Jesus came down, he saw "a great crowd about them, and scribes arguing with them. And immediately all the crowd, when they saw him, were greatly amazed" (Mk. 9:15). Note the striking difference between the scene at the top of the mount, an experience of God's glory, and that which greeted him below, controversy and argument.

Why was the crowd "amazed" when they saw Jesus? It may have

been because Jesus still shone with the luminous light of glory. They may not have known what he experienced up there, but they could see that he was transformed by it.

Discussing?

Jesus asked, "What are you (the disciples) discussing with them (the scribes)?" The term "discussing" sounds like a reproach. A man brought his son to be healed and the best that the disciples and scribes could do was to discuss it.

Sometimes in the church that is what we are best at — discussing urgent needs. Halford Luccock comments: "The sad plight of the epileptic boy called for more than arguments, debates, rebuttals — words, words, words. ... It called for adequate power."

A man in the crowd said to Jesus, "I brought my son to you ... and I asked your disciples to cast it out, and they were not able" (9:19). What a judgment upon the disciples: called upon to heal a tragic affliction, "they were not able." Millions look to the church expecting that we will somehow make a difference in our society, leading people to a deeper awareness of the human needs that cry out to us on all sides. But, like the man who brought his son to Jesus' disciples, they find that we, too, are not able.

For two thousand years we have been preaching the gospel of the Prince of Peace, but we still have not taught the world how to make peaceful diplomacy work. It is said that the wars of the 20th Century made it the bloodiest century of all time. What will our descendants say about the Christians in the 21st Century? They were not able?

Lancaster Farming

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- Recognized for photo excellence throughout the years by the Northeast Farm Communicators
- PennAg Industries 1992
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