



Lancaster Farming

OPINION

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.

The Dangers Of Summer

Guest Editorial
By Thomas M. Butzler
Clinton County Cooperative Extension

I have always been a big fan of summer weather, but I never realized some of the potential hazards that came along with summer-type conditions, excessive sun exposure, and heat exhaustion. These are conditions many farmers and workers face during the summer months.

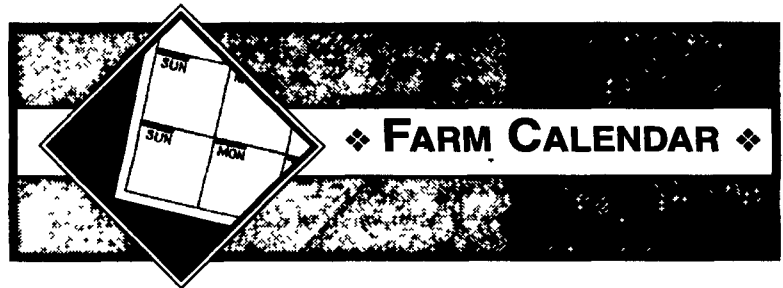
As with many youth, I felt infallible. Two experiences when I was a young adult brought me back to reality.

During the summer of 1989, I worked two jobs. One was a groundskeeper on a golf course, from 6 a.m.-2 p.m., followed by a lifeguarding job from 4 p.m.-10 p.m. Many people, including me, thought a deep tan looked good. Sunscreen was used sparingly and I tried to soak up as much sun as possible during those two jobs. Too much sun over several days led to blisters forming on my shoulders. No big deal, I thought.

Until some folks told me about skin cancer. According to the Pennsylvania Department of Health, excessive sun exposure during the first 10 to 20 years of life greatly increases the risk of skin cancer. Blistering sunburns in youth result in an increased risk for developing melanoma.

Medical horror stories always spur me into action and I changed my ways. Be sun-smart and wear loose-fitting, long-sleeved shirts and pants (when practical). Use sunscreen with an SPF rating of 15 or

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◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

Saturday, July 26

- Lebanon Area Fair, Fairgrounds, thru Aug. 2.
- S.W. Pa. Holstein Championship Show, Uniontown Fairgrounds, Uniontown, 10 a.m.
- Carroll County 4-H Fair, Fairgrounds, thru Aug. 2, (717) 273-3795.
- National Farm Transition Network meeting and conference, Inn at Essex, Essex, Vt., thru

- July 30, (802) 656-0233.
- Frederick Montgomery Holstein Field Day, Frederick County Fairgrounds.
- Master Gardener Field Day and Advanced Training, Southeast Research and Extension Center, Landisville, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m., (717) 921-8803.
- Northwest Pa. Cattleman's Picnic Beef, Forage, Grazing

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◆ FARM FORUM ◆

Editor:

It happened with little fanfare, but once again life got a little tougher for the American farmer. The U.S. House recently voted

for repeal of Country of Origin Labels for meat.

Our farmers have a wonderful reputation worldwide for producing the world's best beef. Our government responds by diminishing the competitive advantage of letting consumers know where their beef is coming from. Now with the great wisdom of our congressional leaders, inferior imported beef that isn't as fresh can be passed off as fresh American beef.

I am for free trade, but the end consumer should always have all the knowledge to make his or her own decision. This vote helps keep information from the consumer.

This hits home because we have numerous meat packing fa-

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Now Is The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County Extension Director

To Monitor Your Dairy Herd For Heat Stress

During these hot and humid days of summer it is important to monitor your dairy herd to evaluate if they need relief from heat stress.

David Bray, dairy specialist at The University of Florida, suggests the following methods. First count the respiration rate of 10 cows. If 8 out of 10 respire at 80 or more breaths per minute, they need additional help with heat stress.

A second method involves taking the rectal temperatures of 10 cows. If 8 out of 10 are 102.5 or greater, they need cooling. Finally if dry matter intake or milk production drops 10 percent or more, they need heat stress abatement.

To Be Aware Of National Trends In Soil Erosion Control

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) recently released results from its new annual National Resources Inventory (NRI).

The NRI provides comprehensive and statistically reliable information on various natural resource conditions and trends on nonfederal lands.

Results from the 2001 Annual NRI on cropland soil erosion show some positive trends.

Conservation efforts have reduced soil erosion substantially, from 3.1 billion tons per year in 1982 to 1.8 billion tons per year in 2001. Between 1982 and 2001, sheet and rill erosion (the removal of layers of soil from the land surface by the action of rainfall and runoff) dropped from 4.0 tons per acre per year to 2.7 tons per acre per year. Wind erosion dropped from 3.3 tons per acre per year to 2.1 tons per acre per year during the same period.

Additional results and information on the 2001 Annual NRI are available on the Web at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/news/>.

Results from the 2002 Annual NRI will be released in early 2004 and will include additional national level results and some regional estimates. The spectrum of results will continue to increase as the annual NRI process becomes fully established over the next several years. Future NRIs will look at new topics, including conservation benefits, grazing land condition and soil quality.

To Understand Pennsylvania's New Antlerless Deer License Application Process

Beginning Aug. 4, Pennsylvania hunters will have an opportunity to apply for antlerless deer licenses that will permit them to hunt more territory than before. This marks the first time the Pennsylvania Game Commission will issue antlerless licenses using a system that isn't based on the state's 67 counties since it began selling them 80 years ago.

"Although a lot has changed, much of the application process remains the same," noted Vern Ross, game commission executive director. "Hunters just need to follow directions and mail their applications to the Game Commission using the pro-

vided mailing labels. It's really not going to be that difficult."

Some of the changes in the application process include: hunters are applying to hunt in Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) now, not a specific county; applications are mailed to the Game Commission, not county treasurers; pre-printed mailing labels are provided to affix to the application envelope; and the application envelope is now yellow, not pink.

The Game Commission has developed an "Antlerless License Update" page on its website (www.pgc.state.pa.us) to provide hunters additional information about the changes in the antlerless license application process and updates on available antlerless licenses once sales begin. Information on the website will be updated weekly beginning August 7; sell-outs for wildlife management units will be posted immediately. Look under "Hot Topics" on the agency's homepage.

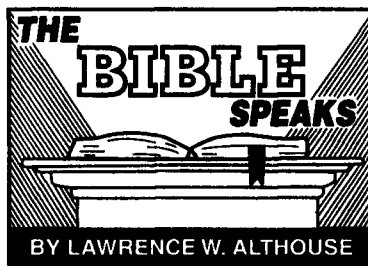
"With the new WMUs in place for this year's deer seasons, hunters will no longer be restricted to unmarked, political county boundaries when hunting antlerless deer," Ross said. "Antlerless licenses will be issued for WMUs, which are defined by easy-to-recognize geographical boundaries — such as major roads and rivers — rather than political lines on a map that can't be seen in the field."

The Game Commission will begin accepting antlerless license applications through the mail from residents on Monday, Aug. 4; nonresident applications will be accepted through the mail starting Monday, Aug. 18. The Game Commission will begin accepting resident and nonresident hunter applications through the mail for the first round of unsold licenses on Monday, Aug. 25; and the second round will be accepted through the mail beginning Monday, Sept. 8.

Quote Of The Week:

"A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be."

Rosalyn Carter



THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

WRITE IT DOWN! SPELL IT OUT!

Background Scripture: Nehemiah 10:28-39.8.
Devotional Reading: Psalms 66:8-20.

In the 1960s, The Church of the Savior in Washington, D.C. devised a unique approach to church membership. When people joined, their vows were for only one year. Annually, members were asked to renew their vows and those who did not wish to do so were released from membership. Furthermore, their vows were not just the standard one-size-fits-all promises to follow Jesus Christ and support the church, but to do specific things: special training, accept a particular leadership roll, serve as a teacher, and so forth.

This strategy did wonders for the church. Perhaps Nehemiah 10:28-39 gave them the idea, for, in this passage, the people under Nehemiah, having heard the law read to them, make a very specific written covenant which some affirmed and others did not. They promised not to intermarry with the pagan peoples and not buy merchandise on the Sabbath or other holy days, to honor the sabbatical year, to make a yearly pay-

ment for the service of the house of God, and to bring the first fruits of all they had to the house of God. His priorities for us today are probably quite different, but "covenanting" together is still valid for Christian fellowship.

Teachers know that learning is faster and more certain when we write down important data. When we write it down it forces us to make concrete and specific what verbally might be quite obscure. If you say, "I promise to follow Jesus Christ," not spelling it out may make the vow quite meaningless. Writing it down helps us to explore what it means to "follow Jesus Christ."

But follow him where? How? When?

Our Commitments

Writing down our resolutions is also important because it gives us the opportunity to remind ourselves of our commitments. If we want to know what we promised to do and be, we need only go back to the written record itself. We may find that we made a promise that we cannot — or will not — keep. So, better to adjust or even withdraw that promise than to forget it and fail to keep it by sheer neglect.

I have long been a strong advocate of a financial pledge to the church. It helps the church anticipate what it will have to work with. But more importantly, it sets a goal for us.

However, a church pledge is not like a business contract — it can be adjusted upward or downward. Early in my ministry, I was involved in stewardship work. I was taught that a church seeking pledges ought also to form a group that will visit members when they are falling far behind on their pledge. After a pledge is made, the person's situation may change so that keeping up the pledge is not possible. People who

don't keep up on their pledge feel guilty and that guilt creates a barrier between themselves and the congregation.

Visiting them in a compassionate manner very often saves their participation in the church, for it demonstrates that the church understands their plight. There is no more practical and impressive demonstration of the grace of God.

A Curse And An Oath

This grace is startlingly different from the approach of the covenant in Nehemiah 10, for we read, "... all who have knowledge and understanding, join with their brethren, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law..." (28,29). The "curse" of which they speak here is the curse they pronounce on themselves if they fail to keep their promises. Love and thanksgiving are much better motives than fear and guilt.

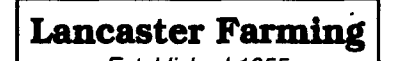
A man in one of my parishes was very active and regular in the church. But he refused to "join" the church because he was not sure he could live up to the vows. So, it was only on paper that he was not a member. No one in the church ever regarded him as a "non-member." We agreed to disagree, for I believed and still believe it better to make a commitment I will strive to meet than to fail to make it for fear I may fail to keep it. A commitment makes me try much harder. It probably has the same effect on you.

We all promise to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and we probably do a better job of it if we write it down and spell it out.



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

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