

Lancaster Farming

OPINION

Perception Is Everything?

It's an increasingly crowded world.

In February this year I spoke to a traveler from California (original from Pennsylvania) who attended the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association dinner. The visitor spoke about trying to feel at home in the "crowded Northeast."

In this crowded part of the country, with an increasing population of nonfarmers, more than ever the general public is setting all the rules.

Last week I attended a meeting about land use and nearby property values sponsored by Penn State at Berks Heim near Leesport. About three dozen real estate agents, township and borough planners, and planning commission staff attended.

They heard the results of a June 2003 Penn State study (funded by the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development and Citizens For Pennsylvania's Future) on the impact of open space and potential local "disamenities" on residential property values.

To make a long story short, "disamenities" refers to those facilities that, in the public house-buying perspective, actually can decrease the value of a residential unit if they are located close by.

For instance, the study pointed out that a house within two miles of a landfill can have a substantial "disruption" to the quality of life of people living in houses. The same holds true if a large-scale animal facility is located within a mile.

Dr. Charles Abdalla, associate professor, ag and environmental economics at Penn State, noted that a location near a landfill decreases the value of a home property by 12.4 percent.

A real stunner, according to Abdalla: a house located within a mile of a large-scale animal facility, at 200 animal equivalent units, decreases the value of the property by 6.4 percent! Fortunately for the homeowners and producers, large-scale animal units aren't as bad as landfills. The study looked at 3,342 houses within a two-mile radius of a landfill, and the average decrease in property value was 2.6 percent, or about \$2,442, with a total impact of \$8.1 million. Still, that's significant!

(Types of large-scale animal houses effect prices differently. Abdalla pointed out that poultry was worse than swine, worse than cows, but the actual difference was not "statistically significant.")

More work needs to be done to look at the mechanics of these relationships. Analyses must be done on measuring why the differences in house values take place, especially since there weren't any major statistical differences in those who live near a sewage sludge treatment facility.

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◆ FARM CALENDAR ◆

- Saturday, August 23**
- Franklin County Holstein Show, Fairgrounds, Chambersburg, 9:30 a.m.
 - Gardeners Selects Open House, Lancaster Farm and Home Center, Lancaster, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., (717) 394-6851.
 - Game of Logging I, Training Course, Bucks County, (814) 867-9299.
 - Berks County Grange Auction, Leesport Farmers' Market.
- Sunday, August 24**
- West End Fair, thru Aug. 30.
 - Central Susquehanna Woodland Growers' Association Annual

- Picnic and Business Meeting, Fred and Kathy Fries, (570) 784-8490.
- Monday, August 25**
- Soil Hydrology and Liquid Manure Workshop, Clinton County, NRC5 Field Office, Mill Hall, thru Aug. 26, Mon. 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. and Tues. 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m.
 - New York State Fair Dairy Day, Manure Injection in Wheat Stubble Demonstration, Robert Stone farm, Williamsburg, 10 a.m.-noon, (814) 695-1881, ext. 3.
- Tuesday, August 26**
- Iowa Farm and Field Fest, Ames, Boone, Iowa, thru Aug. 28, (800) 827-8007.
 - Allentown Fair, thru Sept. 1, (610) 433-7541.
 - Big Knob Grange Fair, thru Aug. 30, Rochester, Beaver County, (724) 774-7093.
 - Centre County Holstein Show, Centre Hall, noon.
 - Ohio Manure Science Review, Lima, Ohio, 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m., (419) 738-2219.
 - Manure Application and Injection Field Demonstration, Schrack's Dairy Farm, Logantown, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., (814) 355-4897.
- Wednesday, August 27**
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How To Reach Us

To address a letter to the editor:

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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.

Now Is The Time
By Leon Ressler
Lancaster County Extension Director

To Lighten Your Load
Farming has always been a demanding profession with many challenges. The last two years, however, have been more difficult than many because of weather extremes combined with low commodity prices. The ongoing strain of unpaid bills piling up and the frustration of uncooperative weather can really drain a person's resolve.

On Sept. 4-5 the Lancaster County extension office will conduct several meetings to give some guidance in dealing with creditors and the accumulated stress of recent months. These half-day sessions will be repeated in four locations in Lancaster County to make it convenient to attend.

The first meeting is scheduled at the Hoffman Building in Quarryville from 9:30 a.m.-noon on Thursday, Sept. 4. That afternoon the same program will be conducted from 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m. at the Salisbury Township office located at the east end of the village of White Horse. On Friday morning, Sept. 5, the meeting will be conducted in Manheim at the Lancaster DHIA lab. The final repeat of the program will be held at the Mar-

tindale Fire Company from 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m. that day.

Since these challenges create a burden for all members of a farm family, both husbands and wives are encouraged to attend. The topics will include "Farm Stress and Family Safety," which will be presented by Jane Boyd, an agricultural nurse from the University of Rochester. Boyd has presented programs on farm safety in Lancaster County schools and is familiar with our farms. The topic "Talking With Your Creditors" will be presented by a representative from our Lancaster County lending institutions. This will be very valuable information as the ag economy continues to work through the recent downturn.

It will be especially valuable for both husbands and wives to attend because the last session will be offered separately for men and women and will deal with the different issues they face. The women's session is entitled "Dealing With Family and Children During Tough Times" and will be presented by Janneke Van Buskem of Life Management Associates of Lancaster. The men's session is entitled "Farm Stress and How To Lighten the Burden" and will be presented by Dan Hess also of Life Management Associates.

There is no cost to attend the meetings because of the generous sponsorship of Lancaster County lenders. For more information, contact the Lancaster County extension office at (717) 394-6851. Registration is not required but would be appreciated to assist those who will be setting up for the meetings. Take a few hours out of your schedule to attend this helpful event before the busy fall harvest season starts in earnest.

To Continue Monitoring Tomatoes For Late Blight

Last week, late blight on tomatoes had been confirmed in Lancaster, Erie, and Crawford counties and in southwestern New Jersey and southeastern Michigan.

Lancaster horticulture agent Tim Elkner reports that since then, this potentially devastating disease has been confirmed in Centre County as

well as central New York and north-east Maryland.

Warm, dry weather will reduce the threat of this disease, but any return to a cool, wet weather pattern will again increase the risk of late blight spreading to tomato and potato fields. Continue to monitor your fields and adjust your spray schedule based on the weather conditions and the threat of the disease in your area.

Since last week, a special local needs label (Section 24c) has been obtained in Pennsylvania for Curzate 60 DF fungicide (DuPont) on tomatoes. Curzate fits into the group of fungicides that have some systemic activity and should be used in rotation with other systemic fungicides if you have late blight in your field or it is confirmed within 150 miles. You will need a copy of the special label in your possession at the time of application. This label can be obtained at the Lancaster extension office Website (<http://lancaster.extension.psu.edu/>) or from your chemical supplier.

If your field becomes heavily infected with late blight (more than 10 percent of the leaves killed and/or 5-10 percent of the green fruit are affected), it could be too late to save the crop and you should consider destroying it. However, if you have crop insurance, be sure to consult with your adjuster before destroying any fields/crops.

More information related to this disease and control options are posted at the Leola and Weaverland produce auctions. Control recommendations have also been posted at the Lancaster County Website. Go to <http://lancaster.extension.psu.edu/> and down in the left corner click on "Late Blight Alert" under the Current Issues section. You can also get more information by contacting your local extension office or by calling the Lancaster Extension Office at (717) 394-6851. Your extension office can also provide you with control information for potatoes.

Quote Of The Week:
"Failure can be divided into those who thought and never did and those who did and never thought."
— Reverend W. A. Nance

THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE

BY NO HUMAN HAND

Background Scripture: Daniel 2.
Devotional Reading: Revelation 21:1-7.
To appreciate the Book of Daniel, you need to understand it as a class of ancient literature known as "apocalyptic."

Two books of the Bible are apocalyptic, Daniel and Revelation, but there are also apocalyptic passages in Isaiah 6; Ezekiel 1,2 and 3; Joel 2 and 3; and Mark 13. These passages are ecstatic writings and use allegory — narrative with a symbolic rather than literal meaning.

Apocalyptic literature was popular in the ancient world and often presented a cosmic drama of two worlds, the seen and unseen, in conflict. It also made symbolic use of numbers and beasts. This literature usually appeared in times of crisis as a kind of code that would be understood by those who needed to understand.

The Book of Daniel has as its backdrop the four and a half centuries of history that followed the death of Alexander the Great and the breakup of his empire into smaller

kingdoms under his lieutenants, but particularly the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.), whose two ruling ambitions were to dominate Egypt and make the culture of the middle East Greek Hellenistic. The Jews stood in the way of his ambitions geographically and culturally. Many of the Jews bitterly resisted Hellenization. Those that did not resist were thrown into conflict with those who did.

To Encourage Faith

On Dec. 25, 168 B.C., Antiochus Epiphanes responded by desecrating the Jerusalem temple with Greek idols. Under the leadership of the Maccabees, the Jews revolted against him, defeated his forces and on Dec. 25, 165 B.C., the temple was cleansed and rededicated. As you can see, these were turbulent times and the book of Daniel was written to encourage the faith of the Jews.

However, the writer of Daniel did not use the actual historical situation of his times. Instead he set the conflict centuries earlier when the Jews were captives in Babylon. So, he is using the story of Daniel as an allegory of the situation in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. Thus the four beasts in the king's dream represent the Babylonians, Median, Persian and Greek empires in succession, and the great stone represents the kingdom of God that shall "break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever..." (v. 44,45).

So his readers are to take heart, first, in the promise that God would bring his judgment upon each kingdom in its turn. At any particular moment in world history we may be confronted by a powerful nation that threatens to sweep all before it. That is what the world thought about Na-

poleon, Hitler, Stalin, and many others. At the time it does seem as if nothing can stop them. But, as Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar, "there is a God in heaven" (v. 28). Actually, not only is there a God "in heaven," but also a God working in and through history. In his hands are the rise and fall of empires.

Intoxicated By Power

Nebuchadnezzar is an autocratic tyrant who followed and preceded other such tyrants. He is a brutal, uncaring man who can say to his advisors "... if you do not make known to me the dream and its interpretation, you shall be torn limb from limb, and you houses (homes and families) shall be laid in ruins" (v. 5). He is intoxicated with his power, but his own dream tells him that God in his own good time will pull down his kingdom: "... a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it smote the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces; then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors... But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth" (vs. 34,35).

The past, present, and future belong to this God, and "the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor shall its sovereignty be left to another people. It shall break in pieces all these kingdoms and bring them to an end, and it shall stand forever" (v. 44).

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