

36 Report of the Committee

37 On

38 FARMING QUESTIONS

39 to the

40 1967 Ministerial Conference

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50 The Letter Answering Department has about 175 pages
51 of written material in answers to questions of all kinds related
52 to farming. J. W. Robinson has prepared a seventy-page report
53 on all, or practically all, of the scriptures relating to
54 agriculture. David Hunsberger has prepared an article on "How
55 Should a Christian Farm?" Answers to most questions have al-
56 ready been given in previous Ministerial Conferences, and
57 these answers are being handed down to members not only by
58 the Letter Answering Department, but in many cases by local
59 ministers as well.

We do not wish to minimize the importance of our
previous understanding, nor of the work done by J. W. Robinson
and others on the basic principles of natural farming versus
chemical farming; however, we believe the real breakthrough
has been provided by the agricultural program at Ambassador
College, Big Sandy. We are now very positive that we can
provide farmer members of God's Church with positive teaching
of what they can do to improve their soil, their crops and
their profits in a very short time.

In the past, we have assumed the process of soil
building through natural methods would require several years
to bring the soil to a productive and fertile state. Results
at Big Sandy show that a manifold increase in soil fertility
can be achieved in one or two years' time. Let us hasten to
give credit to God for sending two or three much needed
thunderstorms to the Big Sandy area this past summer which
permitted the crops to develop and mature. This points up
the fact that farmers must have faith and trust God to pro-
vide them with rain in due season whether their neighbors
receive rain or not. We intend to, and we must, stress faith
in God, and we believe faith for proper weather conditions
will be increased by obedience to the natural laws of farming.

As was pointed out in our preliminary conference
of the Agricultural Committee, Satan has upset society until
the farmer is considered the "low man on the totem pole."
Satan wants man's mind completely removed from the natural
laws of agriculture because the agriculture seasons are
very much tied in with the Holy Days and with God's plan.

We hope that we can begin to emphasize the importance of agriculture and make farming members of God's Church feel that their station in life is just as important as any. As I Corinthians 12 tells us, even if we think farmers are less honorable, we should bestow more abundant honor upon them; therefore, we hope we can begin to glorify farming. At least, we should glorify it to the point that the farmer feels he is a respected member of God's Church-- that is, of course, depending upon his obedience to God's natural laws.

It is our suspicion that natural methods of farming as practiced by members of God's Church and the distribution of these food products to other members of the Church will be the method through which God's people are spared from coming disease epidemics and plagues in order that they may finish His work. Drought, famine and pestilences are prophesied; and it is our conjecture that God is revealing knowledge to the farmers of His Church that will at least enable them to provide life-sustaining crops in the coming time of drought. Probably, as our farmers develop more faith, God will begin to cause drought to come to areas around them at the same time providing them with sufficient moisture to produce foodstuffs.

Natural farming practices will put organic matter into the soil. This organic matter will utilize the available water and conserve it. Open pollinated seeds grown on healthy soil will be relatively free from insect plagues. These crops will be free from disease and also they will have sufficient vitamins, minerals, etc. to produce health in the human beings that eat them and in the animals that eat them. This high quality food produced on healthy soil will prevent plagues from striking the people who eat this type of food. On the other hand, chemical farming does not produce humus in the soil; the chemicals destroy the soil bacteria; the earthworms, soil microorganisms, needed minerals are not available to the plants; the plant is a deficient product, lacking in vitamins and minerals; human beings and animals that eat this deficient product are not being properly nourished; they will be susceptible to all types of disease and epidemics.

Another factor of chemical farming is the insect problem. God created insects to destroy deficient plants. Man attempts to deny insects their God-given right by poisoning them. In the process he is creating super-insects that soon will be able to stand more poison than man himself can tolerate. As of today there is only one more step or strength of insect poisoning that can be used, and the next step after that will kill more men than insects, at least proportionately speaking.

I am sure it has not been the thought of any member on the committee or of anyone connecting with the farming program at Big Sandy, at least in an administrative capacity, that we are getting our mind on "physical" things or that we are going to save ourselves by natural farming. On the other hand, we have an earnest desire to obey God's natural laws. We know that He stresses the importance of agriculture in the Millennium, and we also know that His Holy Days and His plan were tied in with the agricultural seasons. We also know that we must have food to eat in the few remaining years if we are going to carry out God's Work. I sincerely hope that this program will not be placed in that category of "saving yourself," and I would rather suspect that God can easily deal with any individual farmer who gets in that attitude. If the program and recommendations as presented are approved, we hope to begin to educate the farmers in simple terms upon basic agricultural principles.

If approved, we can provide copies for all of the ministers of the basic information by the end of the Conference, and it can later be developed into a booklet complete with pictures of some of our results at Big Sandy. In addition to the booklet, we would suggest the preparation of leaflet-type supplements giving detailed information upon portions of the booklet. These supplements would apply to particular aspects of farming.

I would like to have Mr. Schurter present an outline of the recommended course of action to expedite the change from chemical to natural farming. He has a few slides to show to illustrate some of the crops at the Big Sandy campus.

The question arises many times, "Should I leave the farm?" Of course it is always an individual situation and should be dealt with as such, but we believe that that question will not arise as much in the future if this information is disseminated and if our farmers begin to have more faith.

Again, in closing, let me stress that we do not believe that this is an attempt to save ourselves. On the other hand, if we are spiritually obedient and are carrying out God's Work, He has promised to bless us. There is no reason one of these blessings should not be that of good nourishing food. We hope to present the material in a way that does not condemn farmers but in a way that will encourage them and show them that they can receive a blessing. We think they will see the results very quickly. If they don't think so and wish to use chemical fertilizers, that perhaps is their privilege; but this will bring a lack of blessings.

We hope to educate and encourage our farmers to have their heart in this way, and we don't want them to feel condemned if they are not able fully to develop it on their own

farms in the few remaining years. As in all things, however, they should be striving towards perfection, and they should be working towards God's natural methods of farming which will be established in the Millennium.

(For the text of the Conference discussion and slide presentation, please refer to the appendix at the end of this manual.)

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OUTLINE OF PROCEDURE TO CHANGE FROM
CHEMICAL TO NATURAL FARMING

I. Vision (Point out the goal). Pro. 28:19

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- A. Bible examples of agriculture showing it to be an honorable profession.
- B. Bible examples revolve around farming seasons, Feasts. Gen. 2:8, Gen. 4: Cain + Abel, Gen. 9:20, Abraham, Isaac, + Jacob.
- C. Point out the big scope will be the 1000- and 100-year periods, not just 3 or 4 years.

Josephus- Cain
Placed the ground

II. Faith and Obedience to God.

- A. Blessing and cursing. Deut 28:1-
- B. Obedience to God's agricultural laws is a binding factor to success.
1. Obedience brings blessings--disobedience brings the curse of lack of the blessings.

III. Education (Could be covered in Bible Study--physical and spiritual attitude go hand in hand).

- A. The soil and its basic principles.
1. Inorganic and organic constituents.
2. Life in the soil, soil balance.
- a. Availability of soil bacteria.
1. Compost
2. Barnyard manure
3. Bacteria culture
- b. Earthworms
- B. Fertilizers
1. Natural
2. Artificial
- C. Insecticides
1. K.M.P.

D. Seeds

1. Hybrids--will not reproduce own kind (Gen. 1:11).
2. Natural open-pollinated.

IV. Steps to follow. (Note: When the switch is made from chemical to natural methods, we recommend the change be made after harvest. This allows time for newly added material to effect a soil change. In some cases where the soil is already in a near balance condition the change can be made at anytime. But, be sure you double check.)

A. Have a soil test made immediately after taking off the existing crop. (The Texas College is set up to run these tests if the individual wishes. Test results will be returned with recommendations of types of action to be taken for improvement, including types and quantity of material. Soil samples should be taken at a 2" depth. The number of samples can be determined by different soil types in a field which are distinguished by color, texture, etc. One sample per spot. If the whole field (or garden) seems to be about the same quality two or three samples will be plenty. The soil may be sent by mail in a small box, can or bag. Each sample should contain about one half cup of material. Be sure you number the samples and mark the field from which they came so there will be no mix-up when the recommendation sheets are received back from the College. A donation of \$1.25 per sample will help cover expenses.)

B. Upon receipt of these recommendations, application of suggested material should be made as soon as possible.

1. Correct the PH. Correcting the PH will unlock and make available a storehouse of minerals and elements already in the soil. This would be done by applying the recommended rock fertilizers and bacteria. (The College is also growing bacteria culture that can be sent out by mail in one-pound packages with full instructions how individuals can reproduce their own.)

2. Practice proper tillage methods.

C. Add as much humus as available in the form of cover crops, crop residue, compost and soil condition. Mix this humus into the soil.

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- D. Soil tests should be repeated at approximately two month intervals. (It is essential to educate the brethren to the necessity of "being-in-the-know" as to the condition and progress of their soil. A wrong application would only throw the soil into a greater unbalanced condition.)
- E. Test soil again just prior to planting.
- F. Once the soil is balanced, continue the practices that made it that way. Usually little to no rock fertilizers will need to be added after one application unless the soil is extremely bad. The building of humus, however, will be a continual and enjoyable process.
- G. Sabbath Land Rest--Faith and obedience to God are a must and an assumed practice! (The Oklahoma State University ran a series of tests on the rate and speed of plant decay that proved very interesting. The tests revealed a variety of plants (weeds included) decompose at varying rates, but finally and completely in six years. The Sabbatical (land rest) year falls one in seven. This works out perfectly to produce a new storehouse of material to help feed soil life (rejuvenate the soil) for another six years.)

NOTE: Details to expand outline are given in following material.

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