

HOW GOD LOOKS AT AGRICULTURE

What is wrong with agriculture? Why does seemingly everyone look down on the farmer? With God, agriculture is a favored occupation. What has put the farmer where he is in society? What does it all mean to you and your eternity?

by Dale L. Schurter

IN THE BEGINNING God created the world geared to an *agricultural society*.

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth *grass*, the *herb* yielding seed and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. . . . Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: . . . Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so" (Gen. 1:11, 14, 24).

"And the Lord God planted a *garden* eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food. . . ." (Gen. 2:8-9).

The man (Adam) was given a home in this fantastically beautiful garden setting. His responsibilities were challenging and exciting. They entailed the naming of all cattle, fowl, and every beast of the field, to dress and keep the garden spot of the world and to have rulership over it. This was Adam's job, his profession, his way of life — honorable before God in every way. He spent many hours and days with the Creator, walking over the grounds, discussing and receiving instruction in the proper ways and methods to keep the garden healthy, productive and beautiful. Adam was the world's first agriculturalist.

God created the world in such a way that man's life would be fashioned

around life in a natural environment. He did it for a definite purpose and reason, though few realize or understand it.

An Honorable Profession

In the days of the Patriarchs the occupation of a herdsman, a husbandman, "agriculturalist," was highly respected. "And *Noah* began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard" (Gen. 9:20). "And *Abram* was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold" (Gen. 13:2). "Then *Isaac* sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him. And the man [Isaac] waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great: For he had possession of flocks and possession of herds. . . ." (Gen. 26:12-14).

These are men who walked and talked with God. They did not run great long and extended test-tube experiments to receive "knowledge" about their work. They asked their Boss and Leader for guidance. Notice the detailed instruction: "Give ye ear, and hear my voice; hearken, and hear my speech. Doth the plowman [farmer] plow all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain [smooth and level] the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in [plant] the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place? FOR HIS GOD DOTH INSTRUCT HIM TO DISCRETION, AND DOTH TEACH HIM. For the fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument neither is a cart wheel turned about upon the cummin; but the fitches are

beaten out with a staff, and the cummin with a rod. . . . THIS ALSO COMETH FORTH FROM THE LORD OF HOSTS, WHICH IS WONDERFUL IN COUNSEL AND EXCELLENT IN WORKING" (Isa. 28:23-27, 29).

A man's life was built around seasons, seedtime and harvest, weekly Sabbaths, and laws which pointed to and revealed God's plan of salvation — as pictured by God's annual Festivals and Holy Days. This was the way of life your Creator intended men should live.

Man's Backward Approach to Agriculture

People of today are living products of a deceived society. Satan, the devil, is the master-mind who is hard at work deceiving the whole world (Rev. 12:9). He has turned God's guidelines for a right society completely upside down and backward, deceiving the masses into believing his error is truth.

The field of agriculture is no exception. It is receiving a great and potentially fatal dose of perversion. Satan has brainwashed society. Doctors, lawyers, actors, and astronauts are listed as being in top-level occupations. Agriculturalists are called "ole dirt farmers" and looked down on as being at the bottom of the success ladder — low man on the totem pole. The purpose behind this deception is to point man *away* from the Kingdom of God. Sadly enough, many rural people accept this position society has bequeathed to them. Being convinced that agriculture is of no consequence, they overlook the importance of the agricultural cycle in every person's life. The Deceiver planned it this way. Satan wants man's mind completely re-

moved from the *natural* laws of agriculture which would guarantee farmers greater success. If farmers were looked up to as symbols of success, people would take more notice of the agricultural seasons which are very much tied in with the Holy Days and with God's Plan.

We in God's Church are striving to come out of the world and overcome its pulls. Sad to say, because of wrong education and influence, some tend to look at "position" in today's society much like the world does. We need to understand truth and adjust our thinking accordingly.

By *no* means is agriculture the *only* proper occupation! Stress here is being placed on agriculture to emphasize its importance and to make farming members of God's Church realize their station in life is as important as any and should be respected as such.

It Is Important to You

We come from all walks of life and from varying occupations, yet ALL should be interested in the right basic principles of agriculture.

Here's why!

In addition to pointing you to Sal-

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Widows in the Big Sandy congregation help out in the garden — shown here cutting turnip greens.

vation, they are an invaluable part of expanding your education in "Recapturing True Values." God stresses the importance of agriculture in the Millennium. Micah was inspired to write of some of the very first changes to get under way when Christ begins to establish His Kingdom. "And he [God's Family] shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: FOR THE MOUTH OF THE LORD OF HOSTS HATH SPOKEN IT" (Micah 4:3-4).

Following the final battle of Arma-

geddon, God will begin bringing His people out of the north country and from other scattered places to Palestine. They will be taught how to take implementations of war and rework them into agricultural tools and equipment. Fields will need to be selected, cleared, cultivated, good and proper seed planted, then harvested so these new inhabitants can be nourished. One of *your* first Millennial responsibilities will be to *help educate* and show them the way. Essential basic principles of "that way" are beginning to be revealed, understood and put into practice in Ambassador College agriculture.

A few weeks prior to the Ministerial Conference last January Mr. Herbert Armstrong approved and appointed a committee headed by Mr. Norman Smith to look into and reevaluate the agriculture problems and questions of our

thinking and findings of all and present the material at the Ministerial Conference. By "putting our heads together" and comparing information we found God was revealing some beginning and basic steps to *proper, tangible* agriculture methods.

Excerpts from Mr. Smith's Report As Presented at the Conference

"We do not wish to minimize the importance of our previous understanding; however, we believe the real breakthrough has been provided. We are now 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



members — in particular, basic principles of natural farming versus chemical farming.

Much valuable study and research had already been done by our Letter Answering Department. Other study and experiments were being carried on by staff members of the Colleges and some by ministers and long-time Church members. The purpose of the committee was to meet, discuss and consolidate the

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 provide them with

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.

"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.

"I am sure it has not been the thought of any member on the committee or of anyone connected with the farming program in 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.

"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."

What's New?

An outline of procedure and an 89-page folder of material has been prepared and distributed to all ministers. The Letter Answering Department has long had printed material available in answer to the question of chemical farming. (Write for the article, "The Truth about Chemical Farming.") We feel a real breakthrough and help in

changing from chemical to natural methods of farming is that of being able to *shorten* the length of time required to economically make the switch.

The soil beneath your feet is a marvelous and miraculous creation. There are three basic constituents of soil which must be in balance if health-sustaining crops are to be produced. These are: minerals—dirt and rock particles which form the foundation or "skeleton"; organic matter, which is decomposed excretions and the dead remains of plants and animals; and a community of living organisms. The organisms convert both the minerals and the organic matter—or humus—into plant food.

and apply it to your fields, gardens, lawns or flower beds. Information and instructions on its uses and availability can be obtained from the Ambassador College Agricultural Department, Big Sandy, Texas, 75755.

Results at Big Sandy

Here are some results after six months of "restoration." At the time of the Ministerial Conference we had taken crops from two fields and the garden area with other crops still in process. The first crop harvested as a 27-acre field of silage sorghum. We had planted leftover seed of this same crop planted on the same field the preceding year (1965). The 1965 crop grew to ap-

Farmers interested in additional information should address correspondence to:

**AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT
BIG SANDY, TEXAS 75755**

When soil is out of balance through use of chemicals, soil life is killed and most of the minerals of the soil are "locked up" and unavailable for use of plants. The *object* of soil redevelopment is to *restore* this *natural soil life and balance* and thus release the potential productivity. The vast majority in the agriculture field are willingly ignorant of the fact a *healthy* balanced soil is a *LIVING* soil. This part of the soil has been savagely destroyed. Chemicals and poisons have been forced into our soils, resulting in *mass slaughter* of its living organisms.

God has made possible a way to begin restoring this living culture of soil organisms at a much speeded-up rate which will in turn help speed soil re-balancing. Let me hasten to say this is *not* a panacea to soil restoration. It is, however, an important aid in accelerating the process—especially for those who already have liquid-fertilizer equipment. Proper tillage methods, organic matter, land rest, proper use of natural rock fertilizers, good management, *faith* and *obedience to God* are as important as ever.

You can grow this "bacteria culture" yourself in whatever quantities needed

proximately three feet in height, turned a yellowish-red color and grew no more. This was baled for hay and produced only 12 tons. In February 1966, we ran soil tests and found an unbalanced condition, the soil being highly acid and almost void of life. We applied 7,000 pounds of crushed limestone per acre, a heavy application of the bacteria culture and disced it in. About a month later we applied 500 pounds of "organic," and 500 pounds of "KMP" (diatomaceous earth) per acre and disced it in. (Write for information on "Organic" and "KMP.") The crop raised this year was quite different. It grew 14 to 15 feet high, had a beautiful green color, and produced 760 tons.

However, most soils would not be as expensive to recondition as ours. We had only loose sand as a base. Many soils already have sufficient minerals and need only organic matter to produce living organisms and a natural balance.

Another interesting result was with our milo crop. Our neighbor across the road planted his crop "at just the right time," a good three weeks before we did. (We used the Spring Feast days as a guide.) He used heavy amounts of

chemical fertilizer. For a while his crop looked, and was, way ahead of ours. We were pressed for time and were able to apply only the soil bacteria culture. When harvest time drew near, both crops looked similar from the road, maybe his looked better. The difference

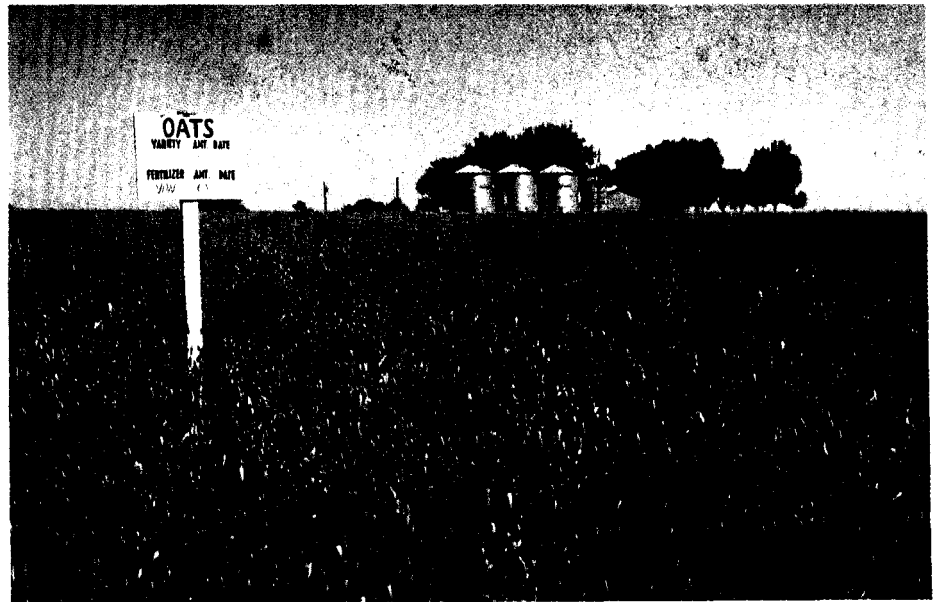
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Stand of Ora oats in the experimental plot in Big Sandy.

was quite revealing when we began to harvest. We had gotten two or three "unseasonal" showers which helped us greatly. Mold formed between the berries on his milo and as it ripened the mold turned to a black, dusty blight. When harvested it was lightweight and made 12 bushels per acre. The berries on ours were large, bright, firm and made 41 bushels per acre.

Just prior to the Feast of Tabernacles we planted wheat and oats which were harvested after the Conference. According to our local county agent, wheat is not grown in this area. Our wheat made 31 bushels per acre and the oats made 40 bushels per acre. These would not be outstanding quantities in some areas of the country, but for an area that doesn't grow wheat, it is pretty good. Those of you who have been to the Big Sandy area must admit we have been blessed.

These are some examples that illustrate blessings from following God's



principles, hard work and *faith*. I mentioned earlier in the article that we are just now beginning to understand *true values* in agriculture.

In the April 1967 issue of *The Good News* magazine was a notice asking everyone to "hold off" requesting agricultural material. We were "snowed under" with urgent requests and in trying to handle them we fell way behind in our regular work. Since that time we have acquired more equipment and are better organized for distribution of information. We now have literature and material available at your request on bacteria culture, organic, "K.M.P" (diatomaceous earth), soil samples and test-

ing, information on non-debittered yeast and a recommended book list. All the information from the Letter Answering Department is still available; this is simply an addition to it.

More To Come

Society has promoted highly specialized occupations not only in the fields of the arts, business, technical science and industry, but just as much so in the field of agriculture. Educators in this field gloss over and depress the need for diversification and true fundamental knowledge. A Ph.D. degree can be obtained in swine nutrition and the individual may still be totally ignorant of the cause of sicknesses in his own body as a result of eating swine's flesh.

Like every other facet of God's Work when new understanding is revealed and followed, more is added to it. Since the last Conference much has been learned concerning the ecology — or environmental balance — of plants in relation to each other, to the soil, to animals — and their relative values. This is basic in that proper soil, plant and animal ecology maintain the soil and begin to build new soil once it has been restored to a balanced state. It takes the interrelationship and interdependency of ALL facets of the field of agriculture to finally produce *HEALTHY human lives*.

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Here is a sample of the fine White Rock breed of hens at Ambassador College in Big Sandy producing fertile eggs for the students there.

