



# Your Living Environment

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## CAN MAN AFFORD TO FARM GOD'S WAY TODAY?

If agriculture isn't your livelihood, this question may be somewhat academic and even surprising from a converted person. It will therefore be helpful to establish just why such a question would be asked, because it is -- and very frequently!

Preceding this question are a host of others, unasked perhaps, but in the farmer's mind; for example: Do you appreciate what drastic changes are involved? Systems of agriculture -- how many are there? What are the answers to the farmer's finance problems? Must the farmer question every aspect of food production? Surely we won't make much progress in agriculture until the millenium?

A change to God's way is quite dramatic -- even in farming! In fact the whole process of agricultural change is a physical parallel with the spiritual upheaval that sweeps over every individual called into God's Church.

Field Ministers are now finding that some farmer Church Members are making insufficient effort to radically change their approach to applying God's agricultural laws. In this issue of the Research News we hope to answer points they may raise, show success is possible and spotlight some current economic fallacies.

Unfortunately most food producers among God's people find out all too slowly and expensively, that almost every true agricultural principle is the exact opposite of their own life-long belief and practice!

So deeply ingrained is this error within our being that many a farmer to whom the basic Bible doctrines were no problem -- suddenly finds himself confronted with a real test of obedience!

But many people give up the work of a lifetime to obey God, so why should any farmer be surprised if he has to re-structure his agriculture and re-educate his mind?

Many Questions -- Yet All Have Answers!

Most farmers fear for their financial survival when confronted with this change from one system to another!

It is discouraging to see how often this concern overshadows man's desire to equip himself with the necessary theory and practical working experience of the new system!

This lack of drive to re-educate oneself often reflects uneasy hidden doubts (even natural ones) in the mind of the farmer about the merits of the methods he is taking on. But the more he doubts, the less chance he has for success. Doubt has that uncomfortable habit of quickly turning into concrete belief! And that will set the seal of failure on any undertaking!!

If only our desire toward God's law and putting it into practice could match the undying faith in the blundering and endless experimentation of man! The methods man has developed are legion, but let us now divide them into a few simple categories:

### Agriculture's Three Basic Systems

- I. THE OLD WRONG WAY -- human greed, breaking natural laws and paying the penalty by being driven out to yet another area, leaving a desert behind.
- II. THE NEW WRONG WAY -- the same human greed, breaking the same natural laws, but with the messiah of Science-falsely-so-called, telling man that he can stay put and in effect, continue law-breaking. (Part of its appeal is that man now has nowhere to move to).
- III. GOD'S RIGHT WAY -- obedience to LAW, (the only truly scientific approach), knowledge that our environment is His Creation, understanding of relevant laws that make it work and the wisdom to express grateful thanks for the abundance it gives, rather than make ridiculous demands upon it!

### Two Basic Problems -- But No Solutions!

Everyone believes Western agriculture is faced with two basic problems, (and both of them are 'economic'):

#### A. RISING COSTS

#### B. STATIC OR FALLING INCOME, (in relation to other sectors of the particular national economy).

Farmers have for years been accustomed to hearing their national leaders urge them to: Cut costs and Increase Productivity. But in most 'advanced' countries, food producers have done more in these directions than any other section of the community.

Is it not therefore ironic that food producers who have learnt to run faster and faster during the past twenty years, have at best succeeded in standing still? At worst, (and this is the great majority) they have lost ground financially, inspite of all their efforts.

So much for the 'experts' and the great 'New Wrong Way' of modern agriculture. Farming is now in its worst financial state since the disaster of the 1930's!

Attempts to cut costs and increase production have both tended to lead the agriculturalist away from success rather than to it! Both have encouraged him to mechanise. Both have encouraged him to specialize. And the cost of mechanising has intensified his need to specialize -- the beginning of a vicious and profitless cycle.

Along with this has come a costly high pressure programme for producing high-yielding breeds of seeds, plants, and animals, new management techniques and a more rapid turn-around of crops and animals.

Result? Take Britain for example, her agriculture is now the most mechanised in the world, Costs have been kept down more than in any other industry and production is at an all-time high. This looks like a true success story!

Unfortunately it is not! Farmers are desperate, angry and near bankrupt. Returns are at their lowest for almost forty years. They can't afford replacement machinery and fertilizer. And while the nation announces an unemployment figure of 570,000 for July, labour is still drifting away from agriculture! The nation can afford to pay 570,000 people every week to do nothing, but agriculture is now so sick that it can't pay for either labour or machinery.

So in spite of cost cutting, increased production and little gimmicks like 'subsidies', the farmer is in worse trouble than ever!

The farmer has tied himself to a dumb financial machine which refuses to recognise any limit to: A. Industrial production and B. consumer purchasing power. Instead, the financial machine should be tied to the legal limits of agricultural production, which were determined by God at Creation.

This impossible predicament of man has been well expressed in the statement that one half of his economy depends upon continuous expansion while the other can survive only in a state of delicate equilibrium!

Pursue Truth With Determination!

Man's 'New Wrong System' of agriculture has no more chance of success than the 'Old Wrong Way'! Every single practise, (ancient or modern) must be treated as suspect until proven otherwise.

No cherished method of the past or present is sacrosanct. Stubborn retention of just one of these strongly held beliefs,

(and farmers don't give up their ideas easily) can overthrow any man during that critical change-over period to the right system.

Our Agriculture Department would have made little progress had it not been willing to sustain its challenge against any farming practise. We have had to repeatedly fight the human tendency, (and we still do) to abandon new ideas that are under trial. Often they lack only a man with the determination to make them succeed. A significant point for any who would follow God's way, in a world that is following its own.

Remember that in going God's way, man has to swim only against the ideas of men. But that challenge is just tough enough for you to need God's help in order to succeed.

#### Seven Points Toward Success!

1. LAND PRICES: The biggest anomaly in British agriculture -- land prices at a record high, while farm profits on invested capital are at a 30 year low! Farmers have an unfortunate history of confusing the value of land with its market price. Land value must be governed by what it will produce. Today's discrepancy in these figures is spelling doom for thousands of modern farmers!

Our people can capitalize on the secret of soil-building by selling all or some of their over-valued land and buy-in elsewhere. This will be land considered unsuitable by the majority, but we do have the secret of soil building!

Today most land-users are in the business of destroying soil fertility. We know we are to be in the business of building it up, we know how, so why not capitalize on this knowledge!

2. THE RIGHT SYSTEM: Even if a farmer can't put himself out of the 'Red' and into the 'Black' by land selling, he should stop destroying his environment and begin building it up.

Farmers will not escape all the penalties for past law-breaking, but God's way of agriculture would bring them to grips with the real cause of their problems. British Agriculture for example, claims the immediate need of £140m to avoid disaster! This could be saved many times over, if it stopped treating the symptoms of self-compounding and self-created problems. (Every Agricultural Show indicates the depth of the farmers' involvement with those who live by having their hand in his pocket.)

3. QUALITY PAYS DIVIDENDS: All growers today are advised by the 'experts' that their only chance lies in specialized production! Result -- mass production of a single item, crudely dumped onto world markets through some system of bureaucratically controlled bulk-pooling. Here, quality is measured by the lowest common denominator. This type of production and marketing are both wrong, but let them go ahead anyway!

Once we start following the right system of agriculture, all our produce will be high quality. Our people should therefore specialize on their market, not on the line of production. If we stand or fall by the quality of our produce, we can be identified

by the purchaser who will pay a premium for the quality he receives. He will even expect to and will also return again and again.

4. OUTSIDE CONTRACTING: Those who abandon monoculture are often left with excess labour and large, expensive, unsaleable and (many times) unpaid-for machinery. These can often be hired out to others in the local area at a profit, because they lack the cash for permanent labour and new machinery.
5. ACQUIRE NEW SKILLS: Most farmers who take a part-time or full-time job, have trouble getting one that pays well, (once again -- because of specialization). Those who can, should acquire some specialized skills that will help them sell themselves to a local expanding industry.
6. VERTICALLY INTEGRATE: A high-sounding term for cutting out the middle men. Milk prices in Britain for example, in the past 15 years have risen by less than 40% for the producer, but by more than 80% to the consumer!! Quite a margin to cash in on. (The farmers' town and factory contacts could blossom into customers for direct selling of farm produce).
7. ENTER THE HOLIDAY INDUSTRY: The tourist trade can be tapped via bed and breakfast accommodation and land with beauty but low productivity is ideal for picnic and camp-site development. All these are avenues for direct food sales too, through a roadside stall!

Keep Your Eye On That Vital Long-term Goal!

Yes, man CAN AFFORD TO FARM GOD'S WAY TODAY! In fact right agriculture is just like obeying the Tithing Laws -- regardless of any anxiety or difficulty, we simply can't afford not to obey! Every true member of God's Church has proved (in many cases, to his own amazement) that the tithing laws really work. But how many have ever stopped to consider that God actually gives far more detailed promises and dire warnings in The Bible concerning agriculture? (Lev.25, and 26. Deut.7, 14 and 28.) They too, must be heeded!

Most of these fantastic physical blessings and terrible punishments we tend to chalk-up against much wider and more general issues. But aren't we kidding ourselves that: A. God blessed nations and individuals with prosperity and abundance without requiring their agricultural obedience and B. That He would continue to pour out agricultural blessings on people who are knowingly breaking agricultural laws? Wrong!! LAW-BREAKING ALWAYS BRINGS PENALTIES!

Remember too, man's food production is highly vulnerable and under attack from Satan in his efforts to destroy this world! Therefore some will have to get out of farming, but for the time being the majority can continue -- keeping one point in mind:

The poorest peasant will enter God's Kingdom IF he is keeping God's laws, while many kingsize farmers perish! (See Mat.13:40-43)