

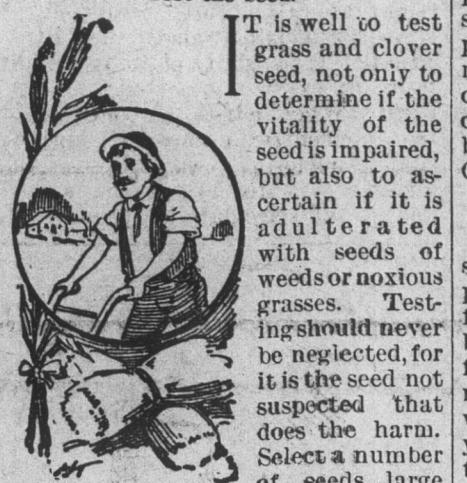


REAL RURAL READING

WILL BE FOUND IN THIS DEPARTMENT.

Grass and Clover Seed Should be Tested—Leaks on the Farm—Cash Profit on Hogs—About Breeding Cattle—Orchard and Garden Hints.

Test the Seed.



IT is well to test grass and clover seed, not only to determine if the vitality of the seed is impaired, but also to ascertain if it is adulterated with seeds of weeds or noxious grasses. Testing should never be neglected, for it is the seed not suspected that does the harm. Select a number of seeds large enough to make a test at least 100. Count carefully. Place the seeds between wet cloths moistened with tepid water. The cloths should be boiled before they are used, and the plate or pan in which they are laid should be scalded to avoid the growth of fungi or mold. For the same reason, only recently boiled water should be used for moistening the cloths. At least two cloths should be laid upon the plate. Then the seed is distributed over them, and covered with another cloth. If the reader can cover the plate with glass he should do so, as this will retard evaporation and protect the cloths from floating germs. Under these conditions and a temperature of 70 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, good seed will germinate within ten days. Seeds of little vitality may germinate after ten days, but they should not be counted in the test, as they would probably fail to germinate under field conditions. Seed should not be used when more than 10 per cent. fails to germinate, if better seed can be produced in time for testing and sowing.—Cincinnati Gazette.

Breeding Cattle.

The breeding of cattle the farmer should make up his mind for what purpose he wishes to use them—either for beef, butter, milk or work. If for beef the Durham or Hereford is best, for butter the Guernsey or Jersey, for milk the Ayrshire or Holstein and for work the Devon. For the calves that you wish to raise it is better to have the cows come in in the fall. Feed the calves in the barn until six months old. Give new milk for a few days and gradually change to skimmilk till at four weeks old the calf will thrive on all skimmilk. At this time begin to put hay, bran and linseed meal where they can get at it and they very soon will learn to eat it. Feed the milk regularly twice a day. Go among them daily, pet them and teach them to eat choice bits out of your hand. Keep this up after they go to pasture and they will never trouble you by being wild.

Carrots for Horses.

Nothing is better for horses than carrots. They help to regulate the bowels, make the coat shiny, and keep the horse in good condition. They seem to possess qualities which no other root or vegetable has. While being a rather expensive food to grow, yet they pay well. Two or three every day, or every other day, is all that is necessary to feed. Plant a quarter or half an acre, or more, and put the rows wide enough to allow of cultivation with a horse.

ORCHARD AND GARDEN.

To Raise Fine Tomatoes.

The tomato should be closely watched and all laterals or suckers that appear above each leaf kept off. This will induce the plant to set more fruit which, being well fed from the rich soil, will grow larger and ripen earlier than if the suckers were allowed to grow. As soon as the plants are ten to twelve inches high set a good stake five or six feet high by each plant and keep them well tied up. This will keep the fruit clean and it will not rot so badly as when left on the ground. Tied to stakes gives the plant a better chance to ripen and it is easier to pick when it is ripe. Take off all imperfect fruit as it forms. This will throw more force and vigor in the well-shaped fruit, causing it to grow larger and ripe sooner. I have tested plants pruned and not pruned to see what advantage pruning was, says a correspondent of Farm and Home. Those pruned had much larger, better-shaped fruit that ripened less and gave ripe fruit much earlier than those not pruned. As soon as the fruit is grown let the suckers grow. They will give you fruit till frost.

Asparagus.

There are many leaks upon some farms, and some upon nearly every farm. A few of them are, a lack of knowledge of the principles of feeding, so that foods are not rightly prepared for the results desired. An attempt to do more than can be properly done, and a consequent neglect to do work in the proper season. This leads to extra cost for labor to destroy large weeds which could have been easily killed while small, and in future seasons to killing those that sprang up from their seeds. It also results in crops not harvested when they are at their most favorable conditions, at the late-cut hay, the frozen vegetables or fruit and other damaged products will testify.

The keeping of land which does not, either as pasture, mowing land or woodland, or in horticulture, pay a fair profit over the cost of manure, labor and seed, with fair wages to the farmer, is another bad leak of common occurrence. Again, cows that do not pay their keeping for more than nine months in the year, and horses whose days work during the year does not amount to as much as their feed costs, are leaks that let the profits run away very rapidly. When these are all stopped others can be easily named, but these are enough for once.—American Cultivator.

Growing Strawberries.

With the thought of the health-giving principles of this luscious fruit, it is a surprise that so many farmers can be found who make no attempt in the line of cultivation. It is largely for the reason that there exists a belief that cultivation is difficult. Where this is the case, we should recommend the investment of the small sum of 25 cents in the purchase of "Farmer on the Strawberry," or "The Strawberry" by Green, both of which are sufficiently explanatory to lead in the line of cultivation. Every family should be well supplied with this fruit so long as it can be raised easily and at so little expenditure.

HOUSEHOLD AND KITCHEN.

The question is sometimes asked how well-balanced rations are formed. All that is necessary is to take from tables of analyses of fodder substances in which are given the percentages of protein or albuminoid substances, the carbohydrates and fat and construct by combination so as to secure the desired ratio between the albuminoids and the carbohydrates and fat, reduced to a basis of carbohydrates by multiplying by 2.5, combined. While this may be a little perplexing at first, it can in a little time be accomplished with comparative ease. In the case of average farmers, we hardly recognize the necessity of resorting to any practice or giving special rations.

Cash Profits on Hogs.

I do not feed any hay from the last of September until the first of April, writes G. R. Ames, in Farm and Home. My corn fodder is kept clean and dry and fed to horses, cattle, and sheep. I have a Ross feed-cutter with four knives thirteen inches long which cuts up the fodder in half-inch lengths, run by horse power. This cutter can cut 200 bushels per hour. An ordinary horse will require about six bushels per day, of which he will probably need one-half bushel for bedding, for which it is unexcused and, for an absorbent of liquids, there is nothing equal to it, as the pith of the stalk is like a sponge. If I had room sufficient for my stock to run loose in box stalls I would let the manure stay there with the fodder, for there is no danger of its heating while being packed. It can then be taken up and carried immediately to the sod field or put upon winter wheat and not thrown out in a pile to burn up and wash away. The ears should be ground cob and all fed to all kinds of stock, not merely crushed, but ground tolerably fine. Then

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