

## OUR FARM BUDGET.

## Why Dairying is Profitable—Cheap Shelter For Cattle.

## Estimating the Age of Trees—Distinguishing Characteristics of Cattle—Land Roller—Grapes—Household Hints and Farm Notes.

## Why Dairying is Profitable.

The dairy farmer, as a rule, is prosperous and has fewer drawbacks and better results than the farmer who makes a specialty of grain crops, or even general stock raising. The reason is that dairying enables to sell his crops in the shape of a manufactured product, thereby securing better prices than when the crops are marketed in bulk. The majority of farmers, however, have not realized the fact that they do not derive more than one-half the milk from their cows than they should receive. There is a disposition to be satisfied with whatever quantity a cow may give, whether it be great or small. While we have in this country breeds of cattle that are superior for milk production, and individual animals from such giving over forty quarts of milk daily, yet the average daily quantity derived at the dairies is less than ten quarts. And yet with this small quantity from each cow, dairying proves profitable, and will continue to do so, but there is no reason why the profits should not be greater.

Dairying does not pay simply because the cows give milk but because there are several matters connected with dairying, which, taken as a whole, renders the business one that adds prominently to the wealth of the farmer and increases his capital in a manner not always observed. The cows increase the fertility of the soil, which produces larger crops, and adds to the number of animals that can be sustained on other lands, dairying is a surest tends to improvement and prevents impoverishment of the soil. It must be admitted, however, that in the course of time the elements of fertility will pass away in the milk and young stock held off the farm, but fortunately, the majority of farmers are compelled to purchase bran, shipstuff and other materials that supply the place of good, not produced on the farm, which compensates for the loss of that which is sent to market. The reason why dairying is profitable is because the farmer not only keeps up the fertility of his soil by the use of his stock, but by the better prices obtained for his products as compared with general farming, which gives him a surplus and enables him to expend a portion annually for food to be brought on the farm.

If dairying, however, is profitable with the low average of ten quarts of milk daily from each cow (and the estimate is high), it can not be denied that the profits could be increased if better animals were used. As long, however, as farmers persist in tolerating the presence of the scrub bulls it is plain that they must continue to derive little profit, if any, from the practice of purchasing cows. The practice of purchasing fresh cows will always retard dairying, as no reliance can be placed upon the value of such cows until they have been tested, which may show many of them to be worthless. Every farmer can not breed cows to yield forty quarts of milk a day, but every farmer can, by the use of thoroughbred bulls of the best breeds, breed up his herd to double up his herd as to double the average yield and largely increase the profits. A good cow requires no more room than an inferior one, nor is the labor and care necessary in the management greater. The expenses will be very little more, while the profits will be much greater in proportion to capital invested. With the desire to improve comes the inclination of adopting better systems of management, which includes fewer fences, smaller areas for pasture, and better fields for cultivation, as well as the careful breeding of the manure, and the selection of the choicest and best animals every season. It may be suggested, also, that even the management of the product (milk) will be so conducted as to improve the quality of the butter, thereby adding to the profit by increased prices as well as from the larger quantity resulting from improvement of the stock.

## Cheap Shelters for Cattle.

A farmer in New York writes: It is very poor policy to defer preparing suitable shelter until winter comes, with the thought that there will be more time after the fall's work is done, for before that time stock will have suffered a great deal from cold storms and frozen mud. We know that cattle and are about as susceptible to the first cold days of autumn as to the much lower temperature of winter, which the system is gradually prepared to endure. Although a farmstead looks more attractive with fine, clap-boarded, painted barns, with warm, dry basements for storing the stock, or warm sheds on solid walls—and these are undoubtedly more economical in the long run—yet if a farmer's pecuniary circumstances will not warrant the outlay, a simple shelter can be put up for temporary use. We have known very comfortable sheds made by stacking straw upon strong poles supported by posts. If the sheds are protected on three sides by straw, with the open side near the barn, they may be quite warm. In such a shed stock should be tied up, or a few of the stronger will take possession and drive out the weaker. A simple shelter of this kind may be built with rough boards by boarding up inside also and filling in between with straw. To save lumber quite large spaces may be left between the inside boards. If boards are used for the roof considerable care is necessary in battening the joints to prevent leakage. In all cases where the earth forms the floor straw should be liberalized with a few stones, so that when the shelter will be greatly increased by banking up the outside with earth, leaving a shallow ditch to carry off the drippings from the roof. A farmer of ordinary skill and a small outlay for rough lumber can build very good buildings for other stock than cattle. He can make a good pig sty for his swine, a shed for his sheep, and a house for his poultry. All these should be built with outside posts to be very ornamental in themselves, yet their manifest adaptation to their purposes makes a farmstead look a great deal more comfortable, and, consequently more attractive.

## Novel Form of Ice-House.

A Boston paper says: The best form for an ice-house would be that of a globe, because then we should have the greatest bulk with the least surface. Such a shaped house, however, would be inconvenient and expensive to construct. The next best form is a cylinder. Practically, however, an inverted truncated cone will give all the advantages of the cylindrical form with the further advantage of being more economical in construction and easier to raise in timber. The worst possible form is a cubical or square ice-house, for the corners of the ice in such a house will always melt away and leave the mass of ice round. The large amount of water which penetrates the ice in such an ice-house make it porous and it rarely happens that a single house will last a large and deep well keep ice throughout the summer. In our climate, ice-houses are rarely built above ground. The best way to construct one for family use, and this is the result of experience and observation, is to select a northern hillside or exposure where there is a good growth of forest trees. Lay off a circle on the surface of fifteen feet in diameter and dig to the depth of ten feet, sloping so that the diameter of the excavation at the bottom may be ten

feet. In the bottom of this sink a well six feet deep and five feet in diameter for the purpose of catching the water from the melted ice. Over this well lay slabs of white oak or other hard wood, with the bark taken off and the ends cut long and from five to six inches at the larger ends are set up against the walls of the ice-house. The smaller ends being turned downward. The sloping sides of the ice-house and the tapering poles make a beautiful fit, and after the poles are adjusted the house will resemble a large churn turned bottom upward. If desired, a few large hoops may be nailed to the poles above and below. The poles, however, will retain their positions without the hoops. Over the house a square pen or frame work three feet high should be erected and covered with a projecting roof. The earth should be thrown against the sides of the house until there is a slope outward in every direction. This is done with a shovel and a maul into the ice-house. Gutters for carrying off this roof water would be better and keep the earth near the pen from becoming saturated with water. The ends of the superstructure should be weatherboarded up, but slatted windows in both ends would be advantageous in permitting the hot air to escape. A large door should be constructed of oak and permit the ready removal of the ice. In putting up ice, the first thing to be done is to throw down straw enough in the bottom to cover the slabs two or three inches deep, after it is compressed by the weight of the ice. Straw must be kept also next to the sides so that the ice will nowhere come in contact with the wood. The ice-house should be built on a level with the top of the ground, several wagons loads of straw should be used in covering it. If the entire roof is filled with straw it will be all the better, though the ice will keep well if only a third of the roof is filled.

## Estimating the Age of Trees.

The counting of the rings added by exogenous growth is a safe and tends to improvement and prevents impoverishment of the soil. It must be admitted, however, that in the course of time the elements of fertility will pass away in the milk and young stock held off the farm, but fortunately, the majority of farmers are compelled to purchase bran, shipstuff and other materials that supply the place of good, not produced on the farm, which compensates for the loss of that which is sent to market. The reason why dairying is profitable is because the farmer not only keeps up the fertility of his soil by the use of his stock, but by the better prices obtained for his products as compared with general farming, which gives him a surplus and enables him to expend a portion annually for food to be brought on the farm.

Preserved Crab-Apples.—The red Siberian crab is the best for this purpose. Pick out those that are nearly perfect, leaving the stems on, and put them in a preserving jar, with enough warm water to cover them. Heat this, boiling, slowly, and simmer until the skins blanch. Drain and skin them; then, with a penknife, extract the cores through the blossom ends. Weigh them; allow a pound and a quarter of sugar and a teacupful of water to every pound of fruit. Boil the water and sugar together until the skins are soft enough to be easily removed. Take out the fruit with a perforated skimmer and spread upon dishes. Boil the syrup down until it thickens, adding, just before you take it up, the juice of three pounds of fruit and boil until clear and rich. Fill your jars three-quarters full of the syrup, pour the syrup in, and, when cool, tie up.

Ripe Tomato Preserves.—Seven pounds round yellow or green tomatoes, peeled; seven pounds sugar, and juice of three lemons. Let them stand to soak in the water for half an hour, then boil them, stirring, until they are soft enough to be easily removed. Take out the fruit with a perforated skimmer and spread upon dishes. Boil the syrup down until it thickens, adding, just before you take it up, the juice of three lemons. Put the fruit into jars and fill up with hot syrup. When cold seal or tie up.

Quince Marmalade.—Pare, core and slice the quinces, strewing the skins, cores and seeds in a vessel by themselves. Put just enough water to cover them. When this is done, add sugar to extract all the juice. Boil the water and sugar together until the skins are soft enough to be easily removed. Take out the fruit with a perforated skimmer; spread upon dishes to cool and harden; add to syrup the juice of one lemon to three pounds of fruit and boil until clear and rich. Fill your jars three-quarters full of the syrup, pour the syrup in, and, when cool, tie up.

Prune Jam.—Choose fine, ripe prunes, wash them, remove the stems and pits, and boil them with a pint of water to which a few drops of lemon juice have been added. Boil until the skins are soft enough to be easily removed. Take out the fruit with a perforated skimmer and spread upon dishes. Boil the syrup down until it thickens, adding, just before you take it up, the juice of three lemons. Put the fruit into jars and fill up with hot syrup. When cold seal or tie up.

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