

STOCK FARMS GARDEN

Edited by A. D. Cobb, Agricultural Expert

CHANGES OF CROP ONLY "SALVATION" OF FARMER IN U. S.

Diversified Farming, Increased Yield of Crops and Better Live Stock, Point Out Way.

Farmers are finding that they must go in for diversified farming, must increase the yield of the crops they have, combine field crops with live stock, grow the stock best suited to conditions, learn to fertilize their soil and to market their crops intelligently. Such are the conclusions of national and state investigations. In an article in the Technical World, F. G. Moorehead gives figures of the department of agriculture that show \$11.15 as the average cost of producing an acre of wheat, while the average amount of 14.1 bushels to the acre. At 80 cents a bushel this is a profit of 13 cents an acre. Corn costs \$12.27 an acre, and in the last ten years has averaged a profit of 26 cents an acre. Oats in ten years has averaged a loss of 25 cents an acre, the cost being \$10.66 an acre.

Labor is figured as the largest cost item. But there are rent and interest. If it were not that the farmer is being paid for his own labor and gets his own interest where he is an owner, his returns would be so small as to discourage him from continuing. All this has been learned from bookkeeping. The result is a change, Mr. Moorehead says, that is like a revolution. It includes increasing the yield of the grain crops, planting diversified crops instead of wheat, corn and oats, and raising live stock. Extreme specialization has not been profitable. The farmer is becoming a manufacturer by which he converts his "roughage" and waste into beef, mutton and pork.

Small farms in New York show that 90 per cent of profits comes from live stock. The country over, 75 per cent is set down as the average. An average steer in Wisconsin with beef at 5 cents a pound produces a profit of \$6.94 an acre. Minnesota and North Dakota experiments show \$8.90 worth of milk produced from cows, which, counting out the cost of pasture, leaves \$2.20 to the acre. A table, based on official state and national experiments and returns, shows the comparative acre profit of the grain farmer and the live-stock farmer: Wheat, 13 cents; corn, 26 cents; dairy cattle, \$2.20; beef cattle, \$5.94; swine, \$20; oats, a loss of 25 cents an acre.

But there is also the loss of soil depletion. Experiments at the Missouri agricultural college show that a ton of timothy removes as much from the soil as do twelve tons of butter. The former sells for \$10. The latter for \$5,000 to \$9,000. A ton of pork removes \$5.70 of fertility from acre. But it sells for \$11.40, while a ton of butter, which sells for \$470, removes only 77 cents worth of fertility, so that a butter farmer will require 238 years to remove as much as a grain farmer removes every year. The Iowa college showed that unused cornstalks wasted \$12.90 an acre a year. The remedy for the latter is the silo, of which fifteen thousand were manufactured last year. It preserves the entire plant and stops the waste of 40 per cent of the feeding value of the plant. The conclusion is that there should be an increase in the grain product to the acre and the use of live stock for saving the waste and increasing the yield.

METHOD TO KEEP CABBAGE IN WINTER

An excellent way to keep cabbages is to put them close together, roots in the ground, and cover them so as to protect against rain, first placing salt, hay or straw over the heads. By this plan the cabbages will keep until late in the spring, as the stalks will take root and throw out sprouts of green after the heads are gone. By burying the heads with the roots up, the frost prevents their use, and when the frost leaves them the ground is damp and the heads rot. It will be found of advantage to store cabbage with the roots in the ground, as stated, if for another purpose than to secure early greens.

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HOGS THRIVE ONLY WITH PROPER CARE

Mistake to Expect Excellent Animals If Housing Is Unsanitary.

Many of the ailments of hogs could be avoided if proper attention was given to the care of the animals, and the quarters were kept in even fairly sanitary condition.

It is a mistaken idea that because a hog is a hog he prefers filth and swill to a clean bed, and pure food. A hog wallows in the mud in order to keep cool, and to keep away vermin. Clean water will keep him just as cool as the mud, and a free use of disinfectants will keep the vermin away with better results.

No live stock is going to make the best gains when subjected to the attack of lice, fleas and ticks. Where any of the commercially prepared stock dips of crude oils are used, the animal will be free from these pests, and the general health of the herd will be much better.

The preparations may be applied with a spraying apparatus or a dipping tank through which the animals may be driven. Of late years a number of mechanical hog oilers have been placed on the market that give the animals free access to the oil or stock dip without wasting the material. Hogs seem to learn the use of these devices very readily, and many of the large hog raisers are adding them to their equipment.

It can be safely said that anything that will add to the general appearance and thrift of the herd will prove to be a profitable investment.

WHEAT RECORD

If the crop report further curtails the harvest figures on account of deterioration in August, it remains a fact that the wheat harvest will be very far the largest we ever gathered and 300,000,000 bushels beyond all domestic requirements; that the corn crop will be about 150,000,000 bushels more than last year, and that the oats crop will be large, though not a record-breaker. In regard to wheat, furthermore, it should be borne in mind that last year's crop was the greatest we had ever raised, so that the surplus brought over to this season was presumably unusually heavy, increasing therefore the exportable surplus. It is computed that the war has already added \$735,000,000 to the value of our cereals, but of course, these prices may not be maintained through the year. Agricultural prosperity, however, is assured, and that is the most important factor in our general business.

In the last five years Peru has produced 199,346,000 pounds of cotton. The United States last year bought \$1,224,508 worth of Peruvian cotton.

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FARMERS PREPARE FOR COLD WEATHER

Attention Should Be Given to Comfortable Housing for Live Stock.

At this season of the year the farmer will do well to take stock of the preparation he has made for the approach of winter. He may ask himself the following questions: Are the stable floors in good condition, or are they rotted and damp? Are the walls air tight or full of cracks? Has a good supply of bedding been stored away to add to the comfort of the animals, and conserve the manure? Are the stables close and stuffy, or has provision been made for proper ventilation? Are the tools and machinery under cover or still out in the fence corners?

All these are important factors in the economical management of a farm business.

Damp stable floors are the cause of many ailments of livestock. Pneumonia and rheumatism are often caused by dampness and improper bedding. The stable walls should be tight to prevent draughts, but plenty of ventilation must be provided. It is a good plan and also inexpensive to cover the open windows with light cheese cloth, which will allow for light and free circulation of air without draughts.

Saves Fertility.
Plenty of bedding not only adds to the comfort of the animals but saves a great deal of fertility in the manure. The liquids are absorbed by the bedding and much loss prevented. Shredded fodder makes better bedding than straw as it is more absorbent.

The average depreciation on farm machinery is 7 per cent of the original value each year. This loss is much greater if the tools are exposed to the elements all winter. All machinery should be sheltered for the winter and the working parts smeared with grease or oil to prevent rusting. This will save much additional labor in the spring.

If these details are looked after before severe winter sets in it will mean that the work will not be crowded by a sudden storm, and the work will be better done.

FERTILIZER NEEDED FOR APPLE TREES

It is estimated that an acre of apple trees in twenty years, counting ten crops of fruit to that period will consume 1,336 pounds of nitrogen, 310 pounds of phosphoric acid and 1,985 pounds of potash. To restore the potash alone would require more than twenty-one tons of high grade ashes containing 5 per cent potash. How much of this does the average fruit grower return to the soil?

FARM HORSE "KEEP" COSTS \$100 A HEAD

Horse Labor Expensive Item in Management of Modern Farm.

Horse labor on the farm is expensive, and many farm businesses are so run that the expense of the horses maintained is abnormally high compared to the benefits derived from their labor. A recent article published by the department of farm management shows very plainly the necessity for knowing what the horse labor on the farm is costing.

Farmers generally aim to keep sufficient horses to be able to handle their work promptly during the rush periods. Some men keep an extra horse as an assurance against mishaps. On highly specialized farms, where only one or two crops are produced, this may mean the keeping of horses for work during short periods with little or no work for them the rest of the year. Unlike the idle plow, the horse must be fed and cared for even when not used.

The actual cost of keeping a farm horse is close to \$100 a year, and one or two extra horses materially increase the expense of operating the farm. Many farmers, when brought to realize the expense of keeping a horse, have modified their farm systems so better to distribute the need of horse labor, and by so doing have been able not only to dispense with one or more horses but also to get more profitable work from the remaining horses and to increase the net earnings of the farms.

One farmer, after obtaining a record of the cost of keeping his work horses, found that the feed alone, charged at farm prices, was \$68.70 per horse. The total of all costs was \$92.30. By crediting the horse with value of manure saved and with the increase in value of young horses, the net cost is \$87.50. Compared with other cost data on horses this is a remarkable yearly cost per horse. These worked an average of 813 hours per horse, which cost \$87.50, or 10% cents for each hour.

GOOSEBERRY BUSHES REQUIRE PRUNING

Every spring, young roots are thrown up from the ground, and these bear fruit the following season. The old wood must be removed to make room for the new, or else you will soon have a mass of shoots so crowded that they can bear no fruit. It is not meant that the old wood should be cut every year. Rather select two or three good shoots and let them branch and be the fruit bearers for some years. Meanwhile, remove the most of the new growth.

CATTLE GET FOOD OFF STALK FIELDS

Access to Corn Fields Builds Up Selling Value of Live Stock.

From an economic standpoint it is desirable to turn the livestock into the stalk fields as soon as possible after the corn has been husked. A great deal of the nutriment of the stalks and blades is lost by leaching if the stalks remain exposed to the elements. At the time of harvesting the grain the blades have a good deal of food value, and cattle will make the best showing if they can have immediate access to them. There is a great annual waste in Wayne county corn fields by allowing the stalks to fall and become trampled in the mud or covered by snow before the cattle are turned in.

The stalk field is not a good place for fattening cattle. The cattle take a great deal of exercise in grazing over the field, and this fact offsets the benefit of the grain feeding at night and morning. For young cattle and horses that are to be roughed through the winter, the stalk field makes a good pasture ground.

Need Salt Diet.

The cattle should be turned into the field gradually at first until they become used to the new feed. It is better to salt and water them before turning into the fields, for if they are allowed to gorge full of stalks and then get to salt before being watered they will drink too much, and cases have been known where cattle were killed by drinking too much water after coming in from the stalk field. The

pithy stalks are very absorbent and swell when soaked.

Many cattle and horses are lost each year from the so-called cornstalk disease. Some of these at least were lost through carelessness in allowing the animals to drink too much water after coming in from the fields. This disease, however, is a disease of the digestive tract of the animal, caused by eating diseased or moldy stalks, and animals should be allowed access only to clean, healthy stalks.

Poultry Hints

The best prices for broilers on the Chicago market are obtained from March to July; in New York the market opens in February and prices are best in April.

In order that the broiler may be ready for the market, hatching must start in October and continue until about the middle of March. While it is possible to grow a broiler in twelve weeks, the average time required is about sixteen weeks.

A chicken ceases to be a broiler after it weighs two pounds, dressed. The general demand is for a chicken weighing about one and one-half pounds dressed. The broiler for the winter market must be an attractive looking bird. Plump chickens, fat, with unsold skin and with perfectly clean legs will find good sale. Inferior stock is a drug on the market.

Dry quarters are necessary to raise good broilers. The chicks must get plenty of exercise. Various feeds are prescribed for raising broilers, but each raiser must use the feed he has found best by experience.

No waiters appear in the dining room of a new French hotel. The guests telephone their orders from their tables, to which the food is delivered from a kitchen below by electric elevators.

ROUGHAGE ENHANCES LIVE STOCK VALUE

As the editor has repeatedly advocated, there should be sufficient live stock kept to consume the roughage as well as some of the grain produced on the farm. This will not only maintain the stock, but it is the very best means of making the farm profitable.

It is equally important, too, that the stock be well bred. This does not necessarily imply that the cattle must be pure bred, but it does mean that none but the best bloods should be used. Good crossing, the mingling of good blood, will give results far in excess of haphazard crossing or mixing. Where no care is taken in this, mongrelism is the result.

A bulletin from the Washington Agricultural Experiment station states that a cow is at her best during her fifth and sixth years, up to which time the production of milk and butter fat by cows in normal condition increases each year. The length of time the cow will maintain her maximum production depends upon her constitution, strength and the care with which she is fed and managed. A good dairy cow should not show any marked falling off until ten years of age.

Many excellent records have been made by cows older than this. The quality of milk produced by heifers is somewhat better than that of older cows, for a decrease has been noted of one-tenth to two-tenths of one per cent in the average fat content for each year until the cows have reached the full age. This is caused by the increasing in the weight of the cow with advancing age.

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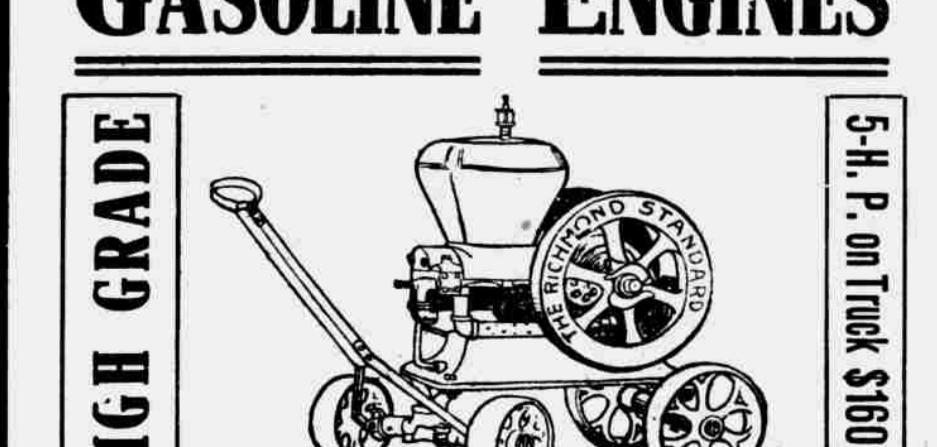


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