

FARM

Topics for Discussion

To afford an opportunity for the interchange of ideas, and to provide a place where information may be given and received, we publish each week at head of the Farm department a list of topics, which our readers are invited to discuss. Opposite each topic is the date of publication of contributions on it and readers are reminded that articles contributed on any of the subjects given must be in our hands at least ten days earlier than the subject is scheduled for discussion in our columns.

Readers will understand that this department of the paper is theirs. They are invited to write the editor freely expressing their opinion of the manner in which it is conducted and to suggest topics. If any reader has in mind a question which he or she may think can be profitably discussed, it will be given a place in the order of subjects if it is deemed of sufficient general interest. Because this notice runs weekly at the head of the Farm department does not mean that farm questions, only, may be taken up. The discussions will be spread over every department of the paper.

For the best article received on each topic we will award a first prize of Three Dollars and for the second best Two Dollars, paying the latter sum for the contributions on the subjects received and published in the same issue.

Articles should not exceed 500 words in length.

January 12.—Discuss "Short cuts" or special conveniences to lessen the labor and facilitate work connected with farm chores in winter.

January 19.—Compare the usefulness and efficiency of the roller and packer. Which of these implements would you advise the average farmer to buy, and why? Are there conditions in which one is superior to the other? If so, state them.

January 26.—What is your opinion as to the comparative feeding values of prairie hay and cultivated grasses or clovers? Discuss the use of each for horses and for cattle.

January 26.—What is your opinion of two-rowed barley as a crop for the Canadian West? Is its malting quality of sufficient merit to warrant prairie farmers undertaking the production of this cereal?

Attend Winter Fairs

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

To the sheepmen of Saskatchewan I take this opportunity of wishing you the season's greetings, with the hope that each of you will take into consideration the advantages to be derived from attending the Winter Fair at Regina, and also from putting up an exhibit of sheep, the expense of which exhibit will be found to be very trifling in comparison with the prize money to be won. I assure you that a few days spent at the winter fair will prove one of the best investments you can make.

The Dominion Department of Agriculture have assisted a good many young industries, among them, dairying, fruit growing, bacon production, the poultry industry, etc., and, if at any time they are out of a job, they will find scope for their surplus energies in encouraging the mutton and wool industries of Saskatchewan. There has been some talk of demonstration farms to encourage agriculture, and if any are to be established, I think they could start one to advantage to demonstrate that grain farming, with the aid of sheep as scavengers (preferably enclosed by live hedges), would be one of the most lucrative ways of farming possible in this country, a system of farming that would keep the land clean and in an improved condition of fertility, instead of in the impoverished, dirty state, resulting from present methods. There would also be scope for the establishment of a central wool-sorting and grading warehouse, so that a man who took pains to have clean wool would not have to sell it for eight cents per pound, which is the usual price offered for Western wool. At present Western wool is all classed as "no grade." Canada is too busy to spend much time in anything, but dissipating her natural resources, especially the virgin fertility of her farming lands, but the time will come when attention will be paid to such small considerations as "producing our own clothing

of good wearing quality," instead of being clad with the worthless, imported shoddy goods with which we are largely dressed to-day. Space will not allow me to enlarge more fully on the clothing question, but until we find some means of creating "winter employment," Canada will not attain to the importance which she otherwise would.

I know of a case where a neighbor of mine has upwards of two hundred acres of wheat yet in stook, with the snow ten inches deep, and if we had not been favored with exceptionally fine weather last fall, who will say that there would not have been many thousand acres in the same predicament.

The summer-fallow system and farming with fire is doing its work, and in the older districts the soil blows like snow, cutting off the young crop and doing much damage. However, water will find its level. Owing to a wet summer, the fallow land for next season has produced a heavy crop of volunteer grain and weeds. Some farmers have found time to plow it under, and next fall they will be wondering why they have a smutty crop.

Under proper condition sheep will be found a much more profitable implement than the cultivator, disc-harrow, soil packer and manure distributor combined.

All should join the Saskatchewan Sheep Breeders' Association. The fee is one dollar per annum, and entitles the holder to free admission to the annual winter fair at Regina.

Sask.

FRED. T. SKINNER.

Soiling Crops and Silage in B. C.

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I received the book on soiling by Peer, but since reading it I find I have not sown enough fall rye to last through May and into the beginning of June. Can you advise me what crop would be best to put in for soiling in May and June? I have some high land, but it is very poor and sandy. My good land, is too damp for very early seeding. I thought about trying peas and barley or millet.

Can you also let me know how to make corn ensilage by pitting the corn? Peer says it has been done with success, but does not give any particulars. Has the corn to be wilted or just green? A few particulars would be a great help.

Pender Island, B. C.

H. G. BAKER.

You need not expect to get much from poor sandy soil unless you give the crop some assistance in the way of artificial fertilizers. I would suggest that as early in the season as possible you put the land in good condition with the disk harrow and drag or wheel cultivator, to let the air and sunshine warm it up. At the last cultivation apply 150 or 200 pounds per acre of Thomas slag, and sow a mixture of oats and peas or oats and vetches, one and half bushels good, clean plump oats, and if vetches be chosen, 1 bushel of vetches. At the same time sow 50 pounds nitrate of soda per acre, and if in your district the spring is showery I would recommend another 50 pounds per acre of nitrate in about three weeks after the grain is up. The peas or vetches will gather nitrogen from the air, but must first make some growth before drawing on the air for help and the more vigorous the plant the more work it will do. If you could give the rye a dressing of manure it would produce a better crop. Failing manure 50 pounds per acre of nitrate early applied as growth commences, and 12 pounds per acre of common red clover seed sown early to be turned under later on its preparation for rye or corn, would put that sandy land in better condition.

There are many silos in British Columbia but I do not know of any using a pit. If you are dairying for a permanent business a good stone silo with a hard clay or cement bottom will pay for itself in the saving of ensilage or compared with a pit or stack. Corn makes a large growth here but for climatic reasons does not mature sufficiently to make first class ensilage. Clover makes good ensilage and may be put into the silo as it is mowed. Clover is a cheaper crop than corn, as it needs no cultivation. It yields as many tons per acre and leaves the land in good condition, as far as humus and nitrogen go in improving the soil, which corn does not.

B. C.

THOS. A. SHARPE.

Contributors' Addresses

Frequently our readers write us for post office addresses of contributors. While this can fairly be considered a compliment to our correspondents it would be out of the question for us to accede to our readers' requests. The post office addresses are omitted from our columns to avoid contributors being flooded with correspondence.

However, since THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE lends its columns to exchange of ideas, it is in order for those who wish more light on any question discussed by our staff of correspondents to send us a letter asking for further particulars on certain points.

Please do not ask for post office addresses.

A New Way to Sow Grain

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

Not having seen much about sowing grain in THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE I thought a few words might not come amiss, even if it is a long way from spring, which will soon slip around. First of all I pickle my grain, which I have already cleaned twice or three times through the fanning mill; then I put about a pint of formaldehyde to about 30 bushels of grain, running it through a pickling machine, which does a pretty fair job for grain not smutty; but for grain with any sign of smut I advise dipping it in a tub. My plan is to put a wagon down in front of the granary door and pickle right into it from the machine about 30 or 40 bushels at a time, doing it night and morning, so as to lose no time at noon, as there's always lots to look after at noon, such as oiling seeder, tightening nuts and so on, and what I do at night is ready in the morning for sowing, and what I do in the morning is ready at noon, so I never have a lot done ahead as I think it better sowed as soon as it is dry enough to run through the drill. I then bag it up and have a low truck with two planks which I throw it on, and find it the handiest way to take it out to the field, as you can scatter it along almost without stopping the team. Next I hitch to the drill and start, generally making one round before oiling, as if it's a cold morning the team gets warmed up and the drill takes oil better.

Now the new way I do it is, instead of going up and down the field, as most farmers do, I go clean around the piece, filling up at the corners if on a half mile piece, and at the centre, if on the mile piece; when on the mile I leave my grain half on one side of the field and half on the other, filling up the seeder every time I come to the centre, the same as you would have to do if going up and down, as no seeder will carry enough grain for two miles of sowing. The advantages of this way over the other are that you can sow about five acres a day more without working any harder, as you never need to stop only to fill up, and never need to take the pressure off the drill shoes when you get to the corner; just make a half turn the same as with a binder, but you miss a little piece every time, but never mind that till you get done. Then just go up and down each corner when you are through. Of course you double-sow some of the corners where you cross it, but it don't amount to anything, and for the bit of seed it takes it doesn't amount to a bushel on 80 acres. The first advantage, therefore, is we do more and do it easier. With the old way sometimes we break the outside shoe off the drill by getting the chain under the wheel. The next advantage is that if you get caught with rain and the piece is half sowed you can cut what was sown first and let the later sowing ripen, as it's in the middle of the piece. I made at least \$500 on a piece this year. The outside was ripe, as I got it in three days ahead of the centre while the centre was quite soft. Had I sown it the old way I should have had to slash through the middle to save it, or wait on the green to ripen and lose the ripe. As it was I cut up to the green and stopped, not bothering me the least.

Some may not think there is much in this, but, just for fun, try a piece this way and see; and if you've a lazy horse that needs touching up put him on the outside next to the sowing where you sit to watch your wheel mark and you can drive him in comfort without disturbing the rest of your team.

With flax I take off the drill tubes and let it go broadcast and drag two light harrows behind, attached to the drill. I am going to try drawing a light set over the wheat this year. It goes a little heavier but four good big horses seem to handle a 20 shoe drill without any trouble if the land is in shape. If not keep off till it is.

Saskatchewan.

G. G.