

Farm Experiences

THRESHING SYNDICATE

The threshing problem is one of very great interest to the farmer, because it handles practically the entire result of his year's labor. It is very important that the threshing machine procured to do the work should be one of the best, and also one that will give to the farmer all that is possible to give and not throw any of his grain into the straw pile. Of course the machine itself cannot do proper work, and should have a man looking after it capable of getting the best results out of his machine.

I would like to give my experience with regard to buying a threshing machine by shares. Six of my neighbors and myself bought a thresher, and it was decided to thresh two days at each shareholder's place before completely threshing any of the seven shareholders out. Well, they commenced threshing, and instead of each shareholder supplying a certain number of stook teams, some of them kept their teams at home to haul out the grain which was the result of the two days' threshing. Consequently the remaining shareholders had to furnish most of the teams, and although they were drawing five dollars per day, still they had no hands at home getting their threshed grain to market and therefore lost the high price of wheat in the early fall. As a result this brought about a few words between shareholders, and two or three sold out to the remaining ones.

During the next two or three years there were but four shareholders, growing on an average about 400 acres of crop each year. Still things did not run smoothly. One of the shareholders would not furnish more than one stook team where eight teams were needed, and besides that the other three shareholders could in no way please him with their job of threshing. He was the only man on the job to do any kicking about the grain not holding out in weight, although he was the only shareholder who remained at home to haul out what wheat was threshed while the other shareholders had to thresh their own grain and his, too. Therefore, I find that a syndicate threshing machine is not a very profitable or satisfactory means of getting your grain threshed. These men were all neighbors, and the words which they had between them did not help to make them the kind of neighbors that farmers should be.

That is the kind of experience I had in being a shareholder of a syndicate threshing machine. My advice would be to farmers to buy their own machine, or, if they were not financially able to do that, to hire their threshing done. However, if you are a shareholder in a syndicate thresher, I would advise you to see that each shareholder was responsible for his even share of the work on hand, and after having rules of that kind to always make them hold good and not allow any exception to the rule. I believe that co-operation amongst the farmers is certainly what is needed, and would be a profitable organization for any community of farmers if they had a man at the head of affairs who thoroughly understood his business, and the shareholders knew enough to keep him there. But a very important factor is that the work is evenly divided up amongst the shareholders, and if any shareholder will not do his share of the work he could be compelled to do same or to sell his share either to the company or to any person whom the company were agreeable for him to sell to.

PRAIRIE FARMER

Sask.

Editor's Note.—The question of owning a threshing machine on shares is a very important one. The success of the plan depends almost wholly upon the agreement which each of the parties enter into when forming the purchasing syndicate. The Guide would welcome an expression of opinion on this important subject. We would be glad to publish the experience and opinions resulting therefrom of any of our readers with threshing syndicates.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPERIENCE?

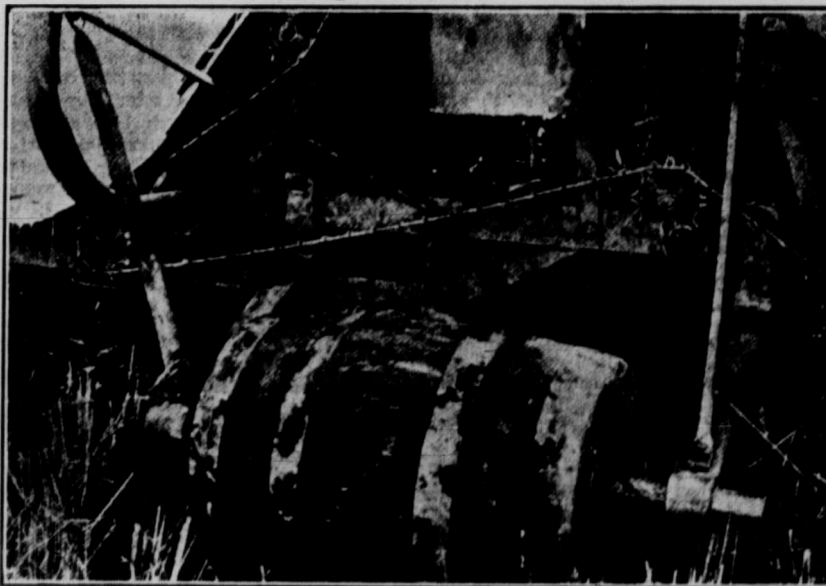
We welcome contributions to this page from our readers. Each article should relate to one subject only; it should be the actual experience of the writer and should not exceed 500 words in length. Every farmer has some particular way of doing a thing which saves him time and which his fellow farmers could make use of to advantage. If you have a "good thing," would it not be a generous act to tell your friends about it? All the readers of The Guide are friends, so make this a place for "swapping" ideas. If you have nothing else to write about, give your experiences on any of the following subjects:

What work can be most profitably done on the roads thru the summer? How can roads in your district be best maintained? Which way have you found to be the most profitable in marketing your grain? By the load at the elevator, consigned to a commission firm, on the track, or how? When do you figure on having your cows freshen? And why? What provision do you make for succulent crops for your pigs during the summer? What crops do you sow, and when and how for this purpose? How have you made provision for a plentiful water supply on your farm? Did you have any difficulty finding water? What method did you adopt or what led you to dig your well where you found water? Have you an automobile? If so, how much does it cost you to run it? Is it more economical than a team of drivers? Do you consider it a good investment for the farmer? How much did you make feeding steers during the past winter? What did you feed, how much and so on? We pay for any of this material used at the rate of 25 cents per 100 words. Address all letters to Agricultural Editor, Grain Growers' Guide, Winnipeg, Man.

DEVICES FOR WET HARVEST

Owing to wet weather harvest operations have been greatly hampered in parts of Nebraska. In a recent issue of the Nebraska Farmer, E. E. Brackett, of the Nebraska Experimental Station, describes various kinds of "floats" used to support the binder in soft places as follows: I investigated these devices and found that they were of two general types, the roller or keg float and the plank or drag float.

The keg float, shown in the accompanying illustration, has been used most. It is made by passing a piece of one and one-half inch pipe about three feet long thru holes bored in the centre of the heads of the keg. This axle is then attached by braces to the frame of the binder, so that it will be carried back of the "bull" wheel and about three inches off the ground when the binder is set for cutting properly on firm soil. By using the tilting lever a part of the weight of the binder may be thrown on the roller at any time.



Method of attaching keg float to a binder

The two lower brace irons are one-half inch by two inches, the upper one being five-eighths of an inch, or three-fourths of an inch round.

The plank float is favored by some of the farmers, because it is simpler and can be made at home. It is constructed of a piece of two by twelve inch plank about six feet long, and slides along the stubble, carrying no weight except where the ground is so soft that the large drive wheel sinks down several inches. Farmers using this device are well pleased with it, claiming that they can cut successfully in any field where the horses can be worked.

HANDLING LODGED GRAIN

It is evident that all over the west there will be much more lodged grain this year than usual. This is chiefly attributable to the recent heavy rains causing a too heavy growth of straw and failure of the tissues to harden thru lack of heat. Many good fallows are already down in patches, and with

the present price prospect, heavy crops and a scarcity of harvest help, it is well to consider any good points in handling the crop.

First we must remember that a lodged crop, however uninviting, represents the results from an investment of money and labor and, with the possibilities of profit good, it is folly to cut round the field as usual, cutting what the binder catches and leaving long stubble to spoil later crops, shelled grain and poorly formed sheaves which will add to the loss by poor preservation, bleaching and loss in threshing. With a crop lodged by changing winds it is best to walk over the field several times, marking the directions carefully, and it is generally possible to arrange to cut it in plots and make fairly good work, when going round the block would be wasteful practice. In almost any case a man or boy to straighten up the worst places will prove a great saving in time and grain. Lodged grain does not ripen normally and is immune

needs to be directly over knife to keep dividers and knife head clear and move grain onto the canvas. It must not be thrown too far back, and the presentation of the grain to the binding attachment is best governed by the retaining slats over the table canvas. For grain sloping from the machine the reel needs to be just far enough forward to lift the heads and tilt the grain back as it is cut; if too far ahead the effect is lost as the sloping grain will not tilt until cut, and if too far back the cut grain will fall forward. If it is windy it is advisable to heighten the wind guard or close the opening between horses and binder with a wind shield, as in thin grain especially it is hard to do good work when windy. The skill of the operator in working the reel is the most important point, and in some cases its position must be changed every few rods if good work is going to be done.

Whatever the method of cutting adopted, it is well to remember that for slovenly methods we must pay dearly in the loss of the year's profit by shelling, waste and land pollution, and that there is much to be gained by a little added expense in doing it well. When a sheaf of wheat is worth ten cents it takes but few to pay for careful handling.

—T. W. W.

Man.

INFORMATION WANTED

Dear Editor:—Will any of your readers please give me the benefit of their experience as to the best way or plan of building a granary for about 4,000 bushels capacity? I would like to have my fanning mill in a permanent position.

Alta.

—G. M.

POINTS IN HANDLING CORN

Last year's feed scarcity and the growing popularity of fodder corn seem to be responsible for the great impetus given its production this season. Being practically a new crop to most people, many did not consider that corn requires special handling if it is to be a success under varied conditions. The fact that many are plowing the crop down and that good fields are quite rare show that valuable lessons can be learned from this year's conditions. Three causes are mainly responsible for failures—frost, weeds and weak, sickly plants, while in some cases the seed never germinated at all. Having had success every year under all conditions, I will give my deductions as to what will ensure success. It will at least benefit some who are disheartened. I generally use third crop land, this year barley stubble quite dirty except for wild oats and couch grass, which I will never tolerate in a corn patch. The land was manured in winter, harrowed well, then plowed six inches deep in April, then harrowed and packed to germinate weed seeds. Three crops of weeds were disced down before the end of May. I firmly believe that the cleaning of the land—in fact two-thirds of the corn cultivation—can be done with the least expense before the corn is planted. Last year I sowed on May 15, and the crop was frozen to the ground but recovered slowly. This year I sowed on May 30, and it is far ahead of other crops sown three weeks earlier. Note carefully these points which arise from the foregoing treatment: A cleaner field, a better condition of the soil and immunity from frost by the later seeding.

The weather was cold and unseasonable and other fields had germinated poorly, so I treated the seed with formalin solution, not for smut, but because corn rots in the ground if germination is delayed, and this results in having either no plant at all or a very poor one. Part of my field was under water for a week, yet it was not destroyed. I think many fields of corn would have been saved this year if the seed had been treated. Soaking in

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