

Make the Whole Field Return a Profit

The profits coming from the operation of the average farm are reduced to what they might be in most cases, through paying no attention to the smaller details of the farm. At this season of the year and especially this spring, are to be found spots where the crops have been winter-killed or where, owing to the wet spring and the lack of proper drainage, large patches are killed out. Unless something is done with these, there will be nothing but a harvest of weeds from these areas this year. These areas often are of considerable size. If left in their present condition they will give a return that is worse than nothing, in that they are a paradise for weeds. In the majority of cases, it is only necessary to work these plots when dry enough with some cultivating implement, then they may be reseeded with some crop which will return a profit. In all cases, these spots are of the best land and hence will return a crop that will more than repay the extra effort required in obtaining it.

These areas can often be made use of to good advantage by seeding them to some sort of crop which may be used for soiling purposes for our dairy cattle during the seasons of dry pasture which, in most years, are too common with us in July and August. It is not too late to seed these places with a mixture of oats and peas. A mixture of a bushel and a half of oats to a half bushel of peas sown now will be of use for feeding cattle when our other soiling crops have passed their best. Should the season be favourable and rust not too prevalent this crop will yield a fair amount of grain should it not be required for soiling. If the area is fairly well drained, it may be planted to corn. On such places it is preferable to use some large growing variety of corn such as the Mammoth Southern, or one of the larger growing varieties of sweet corn, that may be used for fall feeding.

If grain of some kind is wanted, buckwheat can be used to advantage. Probably one of the best grains for this purpose is the common emmer (improperly called spelt). This grain has the advantage over all common grains for being sown at a late date, as it would, if sown earlier.

If you have any of these spots that will be waste places throughout this season unless reseeded to some kind of crop, make sure that it is not allowed to remain in its present state but receives another chance to produce a crop this year. Land, especially such land as this, is too valuable to allow to remain idle for a season. It will return a handsome profit if you will give it the opportunity. By doing so, you will add considerable to the income from your acres.

Sow Thistle Easily Eradicated

Alfred Hutchinson, Wallington Co., Ont.

Editor, The Dairyman and Farming World. I have seen many enquiries of late, re the eradication of the Perennial Sow Thistle, but none of the answers appear to me to give any reasonable hope of getting rid of this pest, without much more work than the average farmer is able to afford. I have been fighting the sow thistle for 5 years and think I have got the only feasible plan for complete eradication. Like many discoveries, I stumbled on this plan quite by accident. Some three or four years ago I had a sod field on rented land which I knew to be badly infested, so I decided to make a "bastard" fallow and take off a crop of rape. My intention was to get plowed as early as possible so as to get as long a season as I could to kill the thistle, and have the land in the best possible condition for the rape, as I had no manure to apply to the field. However, fortunately, we were behind with our work that summer and it was the 20th of June

before a furrow was turned in that field. We plowed it between 20th and 24th of June, disced, harrowed and cultivated, at intervals until the 23rd of July. Then sowed rape broadcast.

The resulting crop was somewhat uneven, in spots poor and in parts really good; it was fed off in the fall. The most careful search, failed to find more than one weak little sow thistle, that season, but I did not care to say much about it, as these weeds have a way of bobbing up when you least expect or want them. If any thistles were left they would be easily seen next harvest. I kept a sharp look-out when cutting the crop, and found just two stalks on seven and a half acres; as the grain—barley and oats mixed—was a little on the short side, I do not think any escaped me. I do not credit the rape with any part in the destruction of the weed, but it is the only crop, except fall wheat, that could be sown so late in the season.

THE PLAN IN BRIEF

Put briefly, my plan is—plow after the middle of June and surface work at intervals for four weeks. It is so ridiculously simple and easy, that I shall not feel hurt if some of your readers feel, like Naaman the Syrian, when the Prophet told him to wash in the river, to cure his leprosy. But, I can only say, try it!



GROUP OF HOLSTEINS AFTER MILKING

A few members of the herd owned by Gordon H. Manhard, of Manhard, Ont. M. Manhard is a strong advocate of cow testing and expects to test five young cows, officially, during June.

I have cleaned out completely two other patches by the same method and not a plant left. But do not think this is the only way I have tried; I have cultivated in fall, cultivated in spring, hoed all summer, and dug with a spade and carried the roots off in a pail, and nearly every time failed to make a clean job, though I only had two or three small patches a year to work with. Just one small patch we cleaned out of a corn crop by careful digging of the roots with the end of our hoes. But where we conquered one, we certainly failed with half a dozen, and I know that the general experience has been that the sow thistle cannot be destroyed in an average season with any ordinary amount of cultivation in a hoe crop. It can be checked but it will grow the next year in the grain with greatly increased vigor, and whereas it may have been confined to one or two spots, it will be found almost all over the field.

HARD TO KILL OWING TO DORMANT ROOTS

Now why is this? It is in my opinion due to the fall and spring cultivation. The perennial sow-thistle has a very short season of growth. It does not start until warm weather comes in spring, and the first frost in the fall blackens it off. Consequently the roots are in a dormant condition at the time of either early or late cultivation, and thus exceedingly hard to kill, even with favorable weather. Moreover, the

cultivation at this season puts the land in a fine state of tilth. The thistle roots will trail on the harrows or cultivator, quite a distance, and if one end only is embedded in the fine moist soil, it will grow.

By plowing late in June, the land will break up rough and clotty. It will dry very rapidly. The roots will be shaken off the harrow teeth almost at once, greatly lessening the danger of spreading the weed over the field, and a very short exposure to a July sun will put them out of business for ever after. It was a great surprise to me to find the thistle so easily and completely killed when handled in this way, for it seems absolutely impossible to destroy it by ordinary methods.

ANOTHER LIKELY REMEDY

Last year I tried a slightly different plan; we broke up a clover sod immediately after haying, about July 23rd, surface worked at intervals until last week in August, then sowed fall wheat. There were two patches of the thistle in the field, and I believe both are completely destroyed, though it is a little early yet to speak quite positively. But last year was rather exceptionally dry and it might not work so well in an ordinary season. I consider July rather late to plow for best results in this line, but if it proves

effective, this will be an excellent method of eradication. There is no doubt in my mind, that the thistle is easier killed in a sod than in stubble, and the longer the land is left in sod, the weaker the sow thistle becomes.

If farmers will follow a short rotation, four or five years at longest, and treat infested fields as I have outlined, I do not think they need have any fear of the perennial sow-thistle. It is far easier killed than the common thistle. Far more to be dreaded than either, is couch grass or twitch, which is becoming alarmingly prevalent and will give an immense amount of trouble.

Dairying is a profitable business, and you get your pay in cash.—W. F. Stephen, Huntingdon Co., Que.

A farmer who carries on dairy farming successfully will secure good returns from it and will have a source of revenue the whole year through.—N. J. Kuneman, Man. Agri. College.

If you have been accustomed to draw out your manure and place it in piles or heaps, afterwards spreading it in a more convenient season, then the spreader will save about three-fourths of your time, to say nothing of the loss of manure by leaching and fire-fang in the field.—W. H. Taylor, Brant Co., Ont.