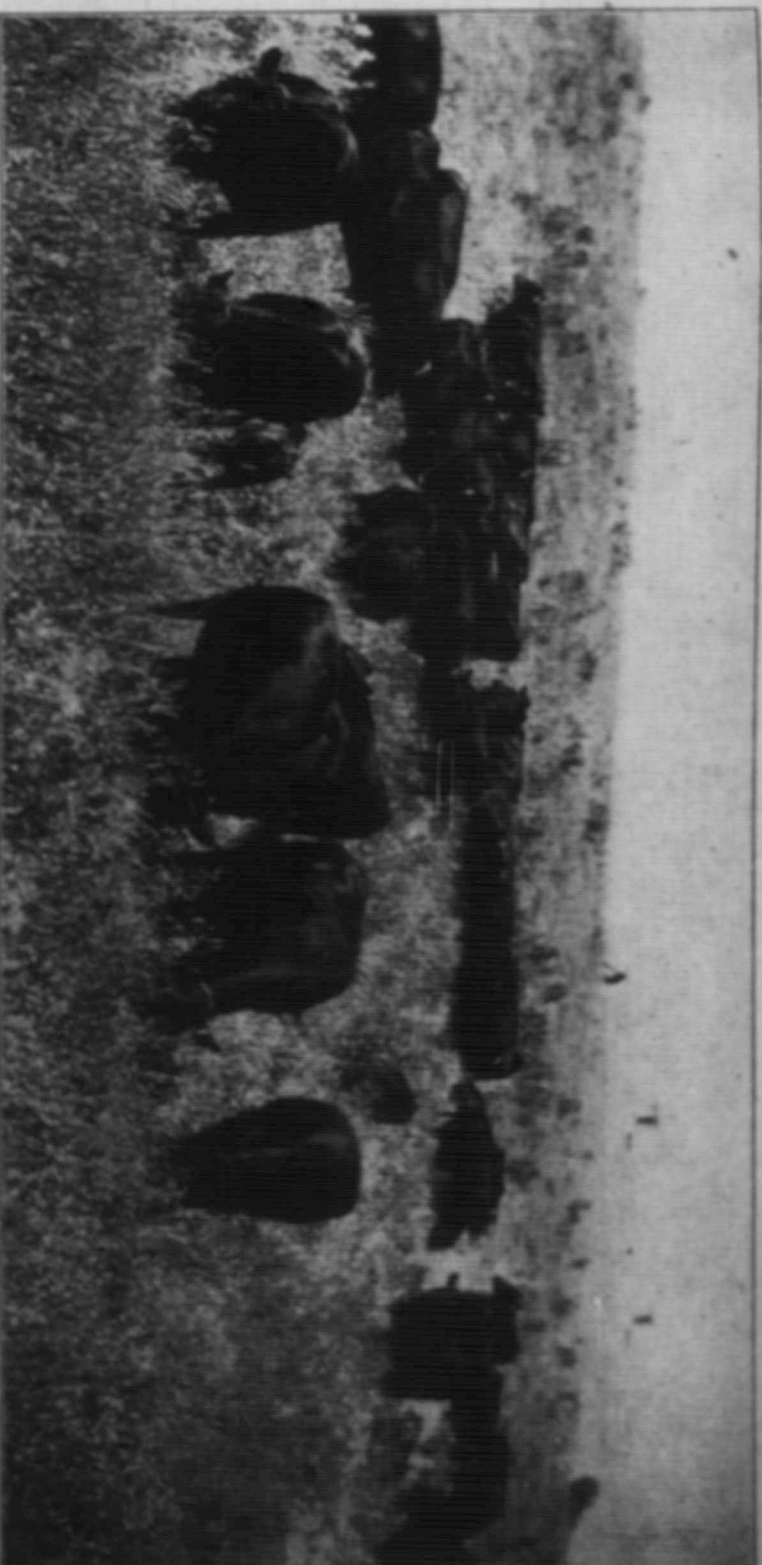




Millions of Dollars' worth of Crops are lost Annually in this Country that could be Utilized by Livestock. Livestock Store Boughts, Mainland and Feeding, Turnish the Best Market for Crops and Distribute Farm Work More Evenly Over the Year. This Aberdeen Angus Herd is Doing Its Bit.

LIVESTOCK IN WAR TIME

*The Place of Livestock in war economy, by
R. H. Williams in The Breeders' Gazette, Chicago*

LIVESTOCK always has and always will play a predominant part in war. The larger number which must remain at home to equip and supply those actually on the firing line have just as important work before them as the man who pulls the trigger. Our animals may be drawn on closely, and the evils used to supply meat, but it is important that the best breeding stock and the animals of tender age be maintained for future use. It should be remembered that all animals must serve man and those that can serve him to the best advantage will be longest in demand. The object of feeding animals is to transform food materials of little value to man into more valuable products. Thus silage and alfalfa make a fairly well-balanced ration for cattle which convert them into milk and meat. Human beings cannot make direct use of silage and alfalfa, but they can use milk and meat. Some of the distinct advantages resulting from livestock farming may be summed up as follows:—

Farm animals utilize many products which would be wasted without them. They maintain soil fertility and the crop-growing capacity of the land. They offer a ready means for storing roughage, concentrating it and bottling it in suitable form for emergency. They are machines to utilize and manufacture non-edible products into edible forms. They offer a diversified means of agriculture. They supply the best market for farm crops. They regulate and distribute the work evenly over the year. They furnish the only means for utilizing immense areas in the west. They lend a charm to farm life and develop industrious habits in young and old.

Livestock and Waste Elimination

Stockmen in the United States and Canada should aim to produce a maximum number of pounds of human food from their farms. It happens that practically all animals thrive best when given reasonable amounts of grain, but grain is suitable for human consumption, and at least 75 per cent. of the food value is lost by feeding it to animals and consuming the animal products resulting. It so happens, however, that livestock may be used chiefly for consuming waste products. The table waste of one individual can half-feed a hog; and along with the garbage, alfalfa hay and a small amount of grain will make well-balanced rations. The use of a small amount of grain in such feeding may result in fully two or three times as great returns as when fed

alone. This is the reason why certain grains may be used to advantage in supplementing otherwise unsatisfactory rations, while they would be unprofitable if fed alone. Hogs and poultry require food of a concentrated nature, and therefore, they should be limited to the extent of their ability to utilize waste or foods which would accumulate without them. Skim milk, which may be easily converted into cottage cheese and used directly for human consumption, may also be used for hogs profitably in small amounts to supply protein in a ration otherwise unbalanced. It is important that we should strike an efficient balance between the various foods used for animal and human consumption. Certainly we cannot hope to do without the hen and hog, even if grains cost two to three cents a pound, for these animals may be largely fed on waste.

Livestock may be used to the best advantage as scavengers, and those that are best suited for this purpose will always be in greatest demand. Coarse bulky foods such as hay, straw, range plants and the products of manufacturing, including bran, cotton seed meal, oil cake, butter milk, skim milk, beet pulp, gluten, and a hundred other feeds would be of little value without livestock.

Millions of dollars' worth of crops are lost annually in this country that could be utilized by livestock. Weeds and fodder growing on ditch banks, road-sides, fence-corners and in all out-of-the-way places should be converted into meat, wool or milk. This may be done with facility if the farm operations are managed with a view to utilizing these products to their maximum. Livestock must convert corn and alfalfa, and the waste products of cotton and wheat, as well as millions of tons of range forage into meat, milk and wool. Even on the best-managed farms there is considerable waste. Take the wheat crop: 60 per cent. of the wheat crop is found in the straw and another 10 per cent. is rejected in the bran. Farm animals are required to utilize this 70 per cent. of the wheat plant and convert it into a product of greater service to human beings.

The true place of farm animals in the nation and the world should be decided on, and then operations conducted so

that the animals may serve best. It so happens that there are certain animals which may be useful for special purposes where other animals would fail. Dairy cows, pigs and poultry do best on farms where feeds are supplied them, while beef cattle, sheep, goats and horses will thrive on the open range. There is no place inhabited by man where animals cannot serve. It requires knowledge of the various characteristics of the animals, and good judgment in order to place them where they can serve best. Our problem is to fit in livestock where it is of greatest service. The slogan should be: "Livestock where stock can serve best," and not, "More livestock."

How to Increase Livestock

The west is not receiving maximum returns from the livestock industry. Careful estimates indicate that with proper management it is possible to increase the number of animals on the range fully 50 per cent. During the next 10 years this increase should be reached. Livestock preparedness should be seriously considered by range stock men. Among the specific ways to effect it are the following:—

Conserve the range.—Reduce the mortality. Improve methods of management. Use better animals. Buy land and develop it. Destroy poisonous plants. Co-operate in production and marketing. Use regulated stirs. Destroy predatory animals. Develop more water. Raise silage to tide animals over drought. Have better sanitation. Secure a higher percentage of offspring. If stockmen in the west would improve conditions and attend to their animals as well as they could, it is certain that fully 40 per cent. more food could be produced, and this would be of better quality. By culling out inferior animals and providing better conditions for those that remain greater returns will be possible. There are too many evils on the range. The following considerations may guide in eliminating the unprofitable animals:—

Get rid of all males and females that do not produce, or are not regular breeders. Cull out all barren, long-legged animals. Sell the wild ones. Grade your stock so as to get it uniform in size, color, breed type and other characteristics. Sell breeding animals before they get so old and infirm that the

mortality is high. Castrate all grade males. Discard inferior native females. Cull out all animals that are weak in constitution or do not reach early maturity. Eliminate the small animals and those that are not good eaters.

It is a mistake to breed range animals, or to breed females at too young an age. The bulls should be kept up and fed during the winter months. The best animals require more attention than the inferior ones, for those animals improved by man require man's attention to maintain their quality. Among the chief considerations of improving animals by means of breeding are the following:—

Use nothing but pure-bred sires of one particular breed. Never sell the best individuals, but cull the inferior ones. Take proper care of stock during critical periods so as to avoid high mortality or low yield of offspring. Secure a special market. Avoid inbreeding. Do not breed from immature animals, but allow them to gain their growth.

The Responsibility of Stockmen

Western stockmen on the irrigated and dry farms also have a responsibility at this time. They should recognize their operations so as to increase food production. Each person should look over his farm and take stock with a view to increase his food units which may be marketed as a surplus. They may plow up strips of inferior land and seed crops which will produce more food, make every inch produce its maximum, grow the greatest crops possible of those foods which are the best for man or farm animals, conserve the manure and spread it over fields, prevent disease by proper sanitation, clean up the farmstead and burn all rubbish, watch the animals more closely and treat them for scree worms and lice, provide feed and comfortable quarters for stock, avoid losses due to inferior feeding or bloating, vaccinate for blackleg and hog cholera, test cows for tuberculosis and kill all reacting animals, use greater precaution in purchasing animals to make certain that they are free from infectious diseases, use more efficient animals, and develop greater sympathy for the business.

American producers of human food dare not take chances, they should follow well tested practices which are known to yield returns. There is no time for experimentation, but safe and certain products should be emphasized. Each stockman has a distinctive work to perform and he should feel the responsibility.