

THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE AND HOME MAGAZINE.

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IN THE DOMINION.

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HORSES.

Four of the most important parts of the horse are the feet, pasterns, shoulders and hocks.

Strive to produce the first-class animal. The really "top-notch" is always the horse that will find ready sale, at a high price.

It might be a good time just now to buy a few horses to fit for sale. The market demand is just a little quiet during this off season, and they can be bought at a reasonable price.

When buying a horse, insist upon seeing him move at the trot. Many animals will show a fairly good gait at the walk, but are disappointing when asked to go faster.

Buying a lame horse is always risky, and is especially to those not well versed in the causes and treatment of the lameness a dangerous practice.

Irregular feeding, both as to time and quantity is one of the quickest and surest methods of injuring the horse's digestion, and consequently impairing his usefulness.

Never rush the horse into heavy work immediately following a liberal feed. The work takes most of his energy, leaving little or none for the digestion of the food.

The slope of the pastern and the obliquity of shoulder have much to do with how the foot stands the pounding to which it is subjected on the hard roads and pavements.

Where it has not been possible to get the mare bred sooner, rather than miss the chance of getting a foal next year, breed her to produce a fall foal. Mares give the best satisfaction as breeders when kept breeding each year.

A horse will not live on concentrated feed alone, yet, in feeding him, it must be remembered that this material furnishes most of the nourishment, and that the roughage is largely used as a filler.

Every horse-owner likes a horse of good disposition. This is largely bred in the animal, but a great deal of it also depends on his care and treatment. A horse roughly used will usually develop a nervous, restless, and often even an ugly character, while a horse which has a somewhat bad temperament bred in him may be much improved by kind treatment.

Coarse hair on a draft horse's legs is an indication that the animal has a coarse skin and a comparatively soft, spongy bone which will not stand the hard strain to which it is subjected, as well as the clean, flat bone which usually accompanies fine, silky hair.

Insist upon the shoer taking pains with his work, and do not allow him to fit the foot to the shoe, but rather the shoe to the foot. Many a good foot has been ruined by careless and improper shoeing.

Level roads are sometimes hard on the driving horse, because inconsiderate drivers expect them to trot at a fast pace all the time, believing that it is only up or down hill that the horse should be permitted to walk. More miles will be covered, and with greater ease, if the animal is allowed to mix the pace.

Should the Stallion Work?

It is generally believed that, for the best development of an animal, exercise or work at the particular kind of labor for which the animal is best suited is necessary. In trotting and running horses, it is conceded by most students that fast work by ancestors tends—is, in fact, essential—to develop the greatest possible speed in the progeny. Breeders and promoters of race-horses would not think of breeding their mares to a stallion which had never shown by actual performance that he had speed enough to warrant the mating. If it is necessary that the light stallion be made to race in order that great speed may be developed, why is it not equally important that the sire intended to produce drafters be made to do some of this work to develop draft power? You may contend that speed and draft power are acquired characters, and cannot be transmitted to the offspring, but, when speed or draft power are developed from generation to generation, it is reasonable to conclude that they become so established as to affect the germ plasma or the reproductive cell, and that thus the character is passed on, not exactly as an acquired character, but as a constitutional character.

In the spring, for a few months, stallion owners are busy preparing their sires for the season. Every effort is put forth to place the horse in the most attractive condition and best bloom possible. But, after the season is over, and during the late summer and fall, what becomes of the stallion so well looked after during the spring and early summer? In many cases he will be found in a small, dark box stall or a little paddock where he is receiving little or no exercise, his ration is cut down, grooming has ceased, and he is largely left to take care of himself. This treatment has a marked reaction on the horse, which is suddenly reduced from the best of care and high feeding, with considerable exercise. Is such treatment best? The draft stallion is kept to be a sire of draft horses, and, to be able to sire drafters, he must be a superior draft horse himself. Can he be this if he does not receive regular exercise throughout the year? During the breeding season he has been well cared for and highly fed, and the matings make such demands on his vital forces that he should not work; but when the season is over the horse should be put to regular work, not heavy labor, but enough to keep his mind employed and divert his great amount of energy produced by the high feeding during the season. The stallion has had exercise every day during the breeding season, and so great is the change when the season is over and he is huddled up in his little stall, without any chance to move around, that very often he succumbs to disease brought on by these abnormal conditions. Nature never intended that the horse should receive such treatment. It is contrary to the laws of health and contrary to the functions of the draft horse to be kept in enforced idleness. Most heavy stallions are lazy, and will not take a reasonable amount of exercise, even if allowed the run of a fair-sized paddock, and the farm work usually takes all the time of the men, so the stallion is not exercised. Now, the best thing to do is to put him to work, and by so doing he will get the exercise so necessary to the maintenance of his vitality, and at the

same time will be paying for his keep by the work he is doing.

Every stallion that is to sire draft or work horses should be capable himself of doing the work that it will be necessary for his offspring to accomplish. He should be worked and fed like a work horse, according to his size and the work he is doing. Hard muscles, health and vigor are produced by work in the open air, and it is these that are required in the draft sire. A horse kept in condition throughout the year is sure to be a stronger, more virile animal than one kept under unfavorable conditions for the greater part of the year, and then highly fed and exercised throughout the short breeding season, only to relapse into the resting, uncared-for state as soon as this is over, treatment which he may stand for a time, but which is in the end bound to impair his usefulness.

There is every logical argument in favor of working the stallion between seasons. It keeps him contented, develops his muscle, allows him to pay for his keep during the off season, keeps his general health good, does not allow him to become fat or flabby, a condition which ruins many a good draft sire; keeps him vigorous and robust, and in a condition to go into service the following season with a better chance of getting a large number of good strong foals. Put the stallion to work and watch the results.

LIVE STOCK.

Replace the unsatisfactory individuals with young animals of the best type. High-priced feed is too expensive to feed to poor-doing stock.

A dry summer, with burnt pastures, always has a tendency to crowd the market with half-fat cattle.

At this season of the year many breeders are on the look-out for new sires. Never buy an inferior animal. Do not skimp on the price. A few extra dollars invested in a good sire will be money spent to the best advantage.

The spring calves will, by this time, be showing indications of their ability to grow rapidly and make good gains. Only those that have done the best should be kept as breeders, and the weedy specimens discarded.

Don't forget that manure plays an important part in the economic feeding of animals. It should be removed from the stables regularly and often, and should either be immediately applied to the soil or stored where there is as little danger as possible from loss.

Have you weaned the lambs yet? Many owners allow them to remain with the ewes too long. They get very little nourishment from them, but their incessant endeavor to get milk from scantily supplied udders is a great annoyance to the ewe, and keeps her from gaining in flesh.

Place the ewes on fresh pasture, and, if necessary, feed them a little grain. It always pays to have them in good condition and thriving at the time of turning the ram in with them. More and stronger lambs will result than from ewes thin and run down in flesh at the breeding season.

Few feeds are relished more by the sheep than is cabbage. It is especially valuable for the lambs after weaning and for the pens of show stock. Rape is also a very good feed for this purpose, and either one of them is excellent fall feed for the entire flock.

Do not sell off all the lambs. Keep a few of the best ewes to fill the places in the flock made vacant by the discarding of some of the older matrons that have outlived their usefulness as breeders. This weeding out and building up should be practiced yearly.

The early fall litters will soon be coming, and, to get the best results, the sow should be placed in the pen in which she is to be kept with the litter at least a week before the youngsters are expected. It would be better if she has access to an outside paddock.

This is the time of year when the fodder-corn crop can be used to good advantage. With a little pasture and liberal feeding of green corn, the cattle should keep in fair condition until time to begin stall-feeding. Too often the mistake is made of allowing them to fail in flesh just before stabling.