

Farm

Topics for Discussion

In recognition of the fact that valuable hints always are obtained from men engaged in actual farm work THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE has adopted the "Topics for Discussion" column, in order that our readers may see an open channel through which they may inform their brother farmers as to practices that are worth adopting and warn them against methods that prove unprofitable. Not only do we wish our readers to discuss the topics announced for the various issues, but also we desire that they suggest practical subjects on which it would be well to have discussion.

This notice appears under the "Farm" department, but the questions dealt with cover all branches of the farming industry. Letters should not exceed 600 words and should reach this office 10 days previous to the date of issue. They are read carefully and a first prize of \$3.00 and a second prize of \$2.00 awarded each week. Other letters used will be paid for at regular rates to contributors.

December 7.—Our Christmas number comes out on this date. It will be bigger and better than ever. Perhaps friends and readers of this department can spend their time to advantage discussing with their neighbors the merits or demerits of *The Farmer's Advocate and Home Journal*. If they knew what this special number, as well as the ordinary issues, are like no doubt they would become regular subscribers. It might be well also to place an order for an extra copy or two to be sent to friends.

December 14.—How have you built and equipped your workshop in which general blacksmithing and repairing is done? Discuss cost of providing this convenience and approximate saving per year. What advice have you to offer to newcomers along the line of having a workshop on the farm?

December 21.—How do you manage, feed and care for the boar in winter and summer? If kept for public service, what suggestions have you to offer as to his use, fee to charge, etc.?

December 28.—Should the boy who proposes to be a farmer be trained as an up-to-date farmer capable of taking part in discussions at public meetings and holding positions in public life? What can be done to overcome the scarcity of labor on the farm that makes it necessary for him to work from early morning until late night when he is too tired to read or study, or do anything to remove the picture of hard work to get more land and make more money. Too many farm boys are "old men" at 18 or 20 years.

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Letters in reply to the topic for discussion this week appear in the "Horticulture" department on page 1725.

Manitoba's Annual Report

A 96-page report of the Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Immigration reached the office of THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE on Tuesday morning of last week—at least six months later than it should appear. A two page introduction, followed by eight pages of figures showing crop statistics, dairy products, live stock and expenditure for farm buildings summarizes the year's work.

The fourth annual report of the advisory board of Manitoba Agricultural College covers four pages. The superintendent of dairying takes up five pages to give a report and a list of cheese factories and creameries. The provincial noxious weeds inspector gives a report covering the work done in the province in the place found on two pages. Seven pages give details from the chief game guardian. The work of the live stock associations is placed on four pages, and that of the horticultural society on three.

The remaining 57 pages are devoted to cattle brands, stallion registration, immigration, weather data, vital statistics, etc. Those wish-

TEN DOLLARS FOR AN ANSWER

We want readers to outline for us a system of farm bookkeeping that is simple enough for the average man to follow and efficient enough to show at the end of the year all that needs to be shown to let a farmer know how his affairs stand. We want those writing to explain clearly the handling of each part of their system, to send us samples of the principal accounts opened; in brief, to outline fully how they keep their farm books. For the best system received we will pay TEN DOLLARS, and for the second best, FIVE DOLLARS in cash. Copy should be in our hands before December 19. The first prize system will be published in *The Farmer's Advocate* of December 28.

ing a copy of the report can have one by applying to the department of agriculture and immigration, Winnipeg, Man.

Shrunken Wheat for Seed

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I have noticed articles in your paper on the value of frozen wheat for seed. Can you tell me if shrunken wheat that was not frozen, but cut on the green side, will act the same as the frozen wheat? I cut my wheat on the green side. I was afraid of frost. I capped the shocks, but we had no frost for ten days or two weeks after it was cut and capped. Some of the wheat is quite full, and some is not more than half full. How do you think the half-filled kernel will do for seed? —ALBERTA READER.

Ans.—Grain that has not been fully matured never does as well for seed as grain that has ripened in the head. It makes little difference whether the lack of maturity is due to the grain being cut a little on the green side or whether it is caused by the immature grain being touched by frost. In the average number of cases results from the use of shrunken seed will not be as satisfactory as from plump, well ripened seed. This has been proved time and again by our experimental stations and practical farmers. Sometimes one may get a satisfactory crop from seed that is frozen or has been cut green and is shrunken, but seed of this kind cannot stand any serious setback to the crop that comes from it. It hasn't the strength to throw up a vigorous second growth in case the first growth is cut off by a spring frost. In all cases it is advisable to use the best seed obtainable. There are dangers enough besetting the crop after it gets properly started—drought, insects, weeds and frost—so that one cannot afford to run any chances in not getting it started into strong, vigorous growth.

At the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, experiments in the use of plump, small plump, shrunken and broken wheat, for seed, have been conducted for a number of years, and results indicate conclusively that it does not pay to use anything but the largest and plumpest kernels for seed. While occasionally the difference was not very marked, in the average of a number of years, the use of large, choice seed paid.

Records for gardening in Manitoba were all broken recently when Alex. Rowley, a prominent farmer residing a mile south of Selkirk, on the east side of the Red River, received a check for \$250, in payment of his crop of mammoth turnips, raised last summer on a plot of land less than an acre in extent. Mr. Rowley's turnips ran to extreme size, many of them weighing from 17 to 21 pounds each, and one specimen tipping the scales at 22½ pounds. We have not seen the turnips, but have the details on good authority.

Crop Summerfallowed Land

In a letter to THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE recently the Jensen Ranching Co. say that in recent years they have found that wheat can be grown in Alberta quite successfully, even when the year is as dry as this has been. They have found it the safest plan to farm summerfallowed land only as it retains the moisture and has more strength to produce a crop in either dry or wet seasons than spring plowing. In seven years they have not failed to get a fairly good crop.

Making Concrete Fence Posts

Cement is put to a number of uses these days. For several years attention has been paid to concrete fence posts. Some manufacturers have made them round, square and three-cornered and of various sizes. Some recommend posts larger at the base than at the top. Molds are prepared in which posts are made by simply pouring or by tamping in the concrete mixture composed usually of one part of cement to three or four of sand and gravel. Reinforcements, generally of twisted wire, are used to add to the strength.

The Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station after, making numerous experiments, arrived at the following conclusions:

Poured posts are easier to make than tamped ones. They are somewhat more expensive because one mold will make but one poured post per day, while the same mold may be used for making as many tamped posts as the builder can mix and tamp in the same time.

According to the tests made poured posts are a little over 25 per cent. stronger than tamped ones of the same size, mixture and reinforcement.



THIS PHOTOGRAPH, TAKEN LAST SUMMER ON THE JENSEN RANCHING CO.'S FARM, SHOWS THAT CROPS WERE NOT A FAILURE IN THE MAGRATH DISTRICT