

spoon material, the other on the fork. Which is the cheaper? But, surely, now we have reached the tidal point favoring on silage—its feeding value. Our acre in dry fodder corn is to fall far in the rear of the acre of ensilage fodder corn. Professor Geo. H. Cook made a brilliant, practical, theoretical test of just this question, half of fodder corn was put in the silo and half was dried in the air, and for three years his cows failed to discover this "new truth"—that the value of a fodder is governed by the amount of water in it—likewise failed his chemistry. Professor Henry pursued the same plan with identical results. Professor Wolff has just published a critical trial of the same order with the same result. Sir John B. Lawes's German experimenters fail to find green food more effective than the same food carefully dried. Three years with green food versus dried foods forced the same view upon me. Dr. E. Lewis Sturtevant showed nothing better. There is no appeal from these critical experimenters, at least not from them to the careless guesses of the fresh enthusiasm of stock feeders. It would pleased me to marshal the figures of the above experimenters before the reader, but they are too many for any inclosure that the editor will be likely to assign me. I have not spoken for or against ensilage. It has its fair pros and cons, doubtless. I merely state what I believe to be the sober truth or data, and say: "Choose ye." But strip ensilage of its pretentiousness before choosing.

SECOND PRIZE ESSAY.

IS SHEEP RAISING PROFITABLE?

By John Adams, Ambleside.

The question is asked, is sheep raising profitable in the Dominion? One of the first questions to be asked is, what does it cost to keep sheep, and what can be shown in profit at the end of the year? In order to do so, please allow me to submit the following memorandum, and I should like to hear from other farmers and ask them to criticise my figures freely:—

First, then, there is the cost of five butchers' ewes at, say, when yearlings, \$7 per head.....	\$35.00
Rent on one acre good grass land for summer run.....	5.00
Rent and expenses in procuring one acre of good oats and peas, cut into chaff for winter feed, all fed together, with, perhaps, the addition of a little straw once a day, say.....	14.00
Interest on outlay.....	2.25
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	\$56.25
By a fair average of seven lambs from five ewes (butchers' prices) at \$3.....	\$21.00
Wool from same.....	7.00
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	\$28.00
Less depreciation in value, &c., &c.....	3.00
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Leaving profits of.....	\$25.00

This shows a very handsome profit on the outlay, which some may say needs a little clipping down. To those I will say come on "mac freens," it will do us all good to have a friendly bit of good natured banter on this question which I enjoy sometimes more than my dinner, but don't hit below the belt.

I am quite satisfied that there is a large quantity of land in Ontario and Quebec nearly worn out by constant grain growing and a poor system of farming, which could raise sheep nearly as profitably as my memorandum shows. Any land which will grow grass, peas or oats will raise sheep and fatten them also.

If I am not drifting away from my subject allow me to say to anyone having poor or worn out land: try sheep farming.

Plow the land deep in fall at once, then give it a sort of an early fallow in the spring, and if a little manure can be added all the better. Then sow the field with white or yellow Aberdeen turnips, and then fold sheep on the turnips after they get a reasonable size. Have the sheep folded in a small enclosure easily made of wire netting, and made moveable. Have the sheep folded over the entire field, unless they are hollows which don't require manuring. Should you not have sheep enough purchase a lot of lambs; they will pay handsomely, and will be ready and fat in the fall to sell. Then after a light plowing in the fall, sow the land with barley, or peas and oats the following spring and seed down with clover. It is really surprising what can be accomplished on a poor worn out farm after five years proper sheep farming.

In order to make sheep farming more profitable, cheap land is wanted, so that you can get a large run with large flocks, the labor and the interest on capital would be less.

The exports of the Dominion could be largely increased in a very short time by changing the system of farming in many portions of our country. I am satisfied that at least \$5,000,000 annually would soon be added to our exports by sheep farming on some worn out lands that I have seen in Ontario and Quebec; and light sandy loams, and thin, stony gravelly, rocky sections of the country which will produce grass and coarse grains will be cleared and reclaimed.

The large ranges of land north of this place, Muskoka, Haliburton, Kinmount and Beboaygeon district, are admirably adapted for sheep raising, and those lands can be procured very cheaply. A young man with pluck and energy could soon make money, and if of good business habits, with a good head, could in time become rich by raising Down sheep, which breed is the best adapted for such a country. There is also a large acreage of lands on the shores of Lake Erie and in other parts of the Dominion, that could be made profitable by a proper system of sheep farming, which now produces very little to add to our exports.

Now, what are our future prospects for profitable sheep raising? I say excellent, if we can only get a free market for our wool, lambs and mutton at our American neighbors south of us. The people of American cities and manufacturing centres are largely increasing their consumption of lambs and mutton. It is really surprising to see that the vast numbers slaughtered and consumed in those populous centres, and Canadian lambs from three months to nine months old have almost an unlimited demand in their markets if we could only get into them free of duty. In December, January and February nine month lambs when fat readily find customers at from \$6 to \$7 each. What can a farmer raise to pay so well at so small a cost of labor and first outlay in so short a time, and at the same time increase the fertility of lands which have produced too much wheat in the past, which, in the near future, will be grown for our own use in the far west?

And now, without offending anyone, I suppose it is right for me to say which breeds of sheep I should recommend. My answer is, study the American requirements, indeed, we have already anticipated their wants and tastes, and there is no breed which we have to excel the various breeds of the Downs. They are hardy, plump, lean meat producing sheep. Their carcasses is the best selling meat in any market, and their wool is so well adapted for the use of the inhabitants of this hemisphere where so much flannel is used all the year round.

There is another favorable consideration which should be taken into account, viz., that this Province in particular is the best sheep breeding ground on this continent, so that in the future as in the past we can derive a greater profit than I have shown in supplying pure bred, healthy breeding sheep to our own kinsmen to the east and west of us, and also to our gallant cousins residing south of latitude 45°.

Farmer's Advocate.