

Favors Sowing Corn Thickly.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

We have read with interest, along with many others, the discussion in your valuable paper during the last few weeks, "Thin versus thick-sown corn." It is much more interesting and convincing when you are able to write from facts drawn from experiments conducted on your own farm known as "Weldwood." Perhaps a few lines drawn from observation, as well as personal experience, might be a help to those who are still in doubt. A successful dairyman and a horseman in this district, who fed more stock on a 100-acre farm than any other farmer in the district, was the first to draw my attention to thick-sown corn. He always sowed twice as thickly as we did, and always had twice as much per acre, and his feed seemed to produce as good results, but remember he got twice as much per acre. Then again, some years ago one of our men was drilling corn in a 12-acre field; the drill was set for about one-half bushel per acre, about 28 lbs. He sowed in this way till he got about half the field done, when he changed the index and did not tighten the screw properly, and the result was that about 50 lbs. per acre was sown on the other half. In the winter I managed to watch the results, and I could not see any difference when we came to the thin-sown corn with abundance of cobs, except that the cattle wasted more because the stalks were so thick that they left them untouched in manger. Although I was convinced, through this observation and personal experience, that thick-sowing was proper I still had my doubts because so many advocated thin sowing. But after all most of these are amateurs, and of course, they always know it all. I say I had my doubts until I read in your paper some few years ago about a test conducted by one of the experimental stations in the States. They experimented there much the same as you did at "Weldwood," but they found out that by feeding the two kinds of silage to a dairy herd that the thick-sown gave a larger amount of milk per acre than the thin-sown corn. Since then I have become enthusiastic over thick sowing. One point that you made strong that people should follow, is to get a corn that will mature, for we must remember that even if there are only a few cobs to mature, that the stalks must be matured. I might say in closing that we find in feeding our dairy cows this winter on thick-sown corn, that we have never yet had to carry any silage from their mangers, although our mangers are swept out twice a day, yet it is not because of the silage, for I never saw cows that cleaned up everything like they do the silage made from thick-sown corn. I am pleased that you started this discussion in time so that we will have it threshed out before sowing time.

Peel Co., Ont. JAS. B. ROSS.

Providing Summer Pasture for Swine.

More or less planning of crops and rotations is, now in order, but, of course, the system on a well-regulated farm necessitates a certain order for the crops of 1916. In addition to the general plan, however, there is always the opportunity to vary a little to provide for exigencies that may arise, and if any phase of live stock husbandry and farm management requires consideration, it is the production of swine. The fields and what they are to produce can be so manipulated as to make hogs more profitable than they have been, and this factor should be given attention before seeding is commenced in the spring. In the past the majority of farmers have considered pigs most adapted to pens, and to rations of meal and slop. Originally the hog ran at large and subsisted on feed of coarse texture. The digestive system was arranged accordingly, but domestication has so altered the apparatus that converted nuts, leaves and grass into the assimilable form that we now have an animal constituted somewhat differently than were its ancestors. Practical farmers have demonstrated in the last few years that swine will quickly adapt themselves to conditions similar, in many respects, to the environments of the ancestral hog, and that breeders and growers have confined their stock too much from the viewpoint of health and profit alike. More pasture will reduce the cost of production, and that is really the aim of every producer, be he farmer or manufacturer.

A field of clover or alfalfa is almost ideal. It comes along early in the spring, it will grow up after being eaten off, and the quality of the grass makes it a very suitable substitute for the costly grains and meals that must be fed to pigs in close confinement. Grain should not be withheld altogether, even on good pasture, if the stock is turned over at the customary age for pork or bacon. It is while on grass that live stock give the maximum gains for meal fed.

The plan suggested by Prof. G. E. Day, O. A. C., to the meeting of stockmen at the Guelph Winter Fair, could be adopted on almost every farm. It was briefly as follows: Sow a small field near

the buildings to oats and barley, and seed with red clover, about 8 or 9 pounds per acre. Cut the grain for green feed or hay in late June, and turn the pigs on the clover, which will grow up quickly, about the middle of July. Fifteen or twenty pigs per acre can be pastured on a field such as this if the clover does well. Prof. Day recommended keeping the pigs inside until they would weigh in the vicinity of 100 pounds, and when turned to pasture they should receive at least one-half a full meal ration. Three-quarters of a full meal ration he thought would be even more profitable. A similar and adjoining field could be treated in the same way in the following season, and clover sown the year previous would come along and make early pasture.

It would be a grand idea to attempt to make two pigs grow where one grew before. Perhaps this is aiming too high, but farmers can reduce to a considerable extent the cost of production on the number of hogs they usually turn off in the fall. There is yet time to think it over before the season for action comes around.

The Outlook for Sheep Breeders.

At the annual meeting of the Dominion Sheep Breeders' Association, held in Toronto, on February 3, the outlook for sheep breeders was discussed from several viewpoints. The packers' ideas were voiced by John Taylor, of Gunn's Limited, Toronto, while the breeding and producing phases of the business were explained by W. A. Dryden, Brooklin; J. D. Brien, Ridgetown, and John Gardhouse, Weston. The essence of Mr. Taylor's remarks was that the market requires the handy lamb around 35 to 40 lbs. dressed weight, and the handy sheep around 70 to 80 pounds, with an absence of patchy fat, and evenly finished. In connection with the handling of the greater bulk of the Canadian lamb crop, the season for which extends from August to the end of December, the packers have the greatest trouble with the heavy lamb, and in this regard Mr. Taylor said they found the long-woolled lambs "the great offenders." At the time of year just mentioned, the lambs are ready for market and producers are ready to sell, so the packer has to buy and kill large numbers to fill his coolers, with which to supply the winter trade when lamb is no longer obtainable in any quantity in its live condition. "Here," continued the speaker, "is where the raiser of heavy lambs feels the pinch; heavy lambs being decidedly poor lambs for storing are rejected for this purpose, and all sold fresh. Now, anyone can see at a glance that this kind would be a drug on the market at this time, and in any ordinary year they sell from 2 to 3 cents per pound less than a handy lamb." Mr. Taylor commented upon the probable decimation of flocks within the War Zone in Europe, and the future demand to replenish the live stock of the warring countries. "The stocks of sheep and lamb," he said, "held in the largest exporting countries are very much smaller than usual, and Australia lost about 20,000,000 head last year owing to drought. Our home consumption is steadily increasing, and if the light, handy weights, properly finished, were marketed, double the present stocks would be marketed locally. Canada is yearly importing about 5,000,000 pounds of mutton and lamb, this mostly being used in the Western Provinces, but why not furnish their supply from Eastern Canada? The outlook for marketing a very much increased production of sheep and lamb on a profitable basis never looked brighter, so far as it is possible to read future conditions."

The viewpoint of the breeder and producer was discussed by W. A. Dryden, Brooklin, who stated that if lambs weighing from 75 to 90 lbs. live weight, were required by the packers that it would include a great number of scrub lambs and encourage the breeding of such. One reason why packers were not getting the right kind of lambs in large numbers, he remarked, was because of our marketing system. "We as breeders of sheep, cattle or swine," he said, "do not always know the market values. We do not always know the less we know the better the buyers of our products like it." Elaborating on this statement, Mr. Dryden, said that a buyer would come into a man's yard and purchase 50 lambs at an average rate. The producer had no way of learning which type of lamb sold the others. The speaker then described the system in vogue in Great Britain. There live stock, which is sold in a commercial way, is taken to a market, which is usually a local market. A small lot of lambs are put into a pen, and they are sold by auction. The buyer pays what he considers each small pen of lambs is worth, and the producer has an opportunity of knowing whether the

lambs he is producing are bringing the highest price. Mr. Dryden furthermore discussed the systems of breeding, and the chosen breeds in Great Britain. Different breeds are popular in different districts, where they breed for different purposes and under different conditions. "It has always struck me," he continued, "that, in Ontario particularly, the long-woolled breeds of sheep are the chief offenders in regard to the marketing of heavy lambs. It has always appeared to me that the long-woolled breeds of sheep have got a hold on the farmers of this Province, perhaps not through the demand of our local market, but through the demands of outside markets for breeding sheep. A few years ago there was a very large demand from the United States, for rams of the heavy, long-woolled breed. There were a great many sheep of this type imported from Great Britain to Ontario. Small flocks of pure-bred, long-woolled sheep were kept all over this Province with the idea of selling rams for export to the United States. That was quite all right at the time, but it produced in Ontario a good many small flocks of grade sheep of the heavy, long-woolled type." Mr. Dryden then applied Mr. Taylor's remarks to the get of these flocks, and opined that there is something wrong from the market point of view with regard to the kind of sheep the average farmer in Ontario is keeping.

The long-woolled breeds were championed by J. D. Brien, of Ridgetown, who said, "I think if we keep on breeding from the long-woolled sheep we can make our business pay about as well as the 'short-woolled' men." The reason for the feeling against heavy lambs on the market, Mr. Brien thought, was due to the fact that old sheep is too often served as lamb, consequently people are suspicious of heavy lambs.

"We know that things shift about a great deal," said John Gardhouse, Weston, "and probably about the time the average farmer would get a supply of the type of lamb they are asking for at the present time, packers might then say, 'we want something heavier.'" As regards different breeds, Mr. Gardhouse concurred with Mr. Brien's remarks.

THE FARM.

How About the Seed Grain?

While two months may elapse before seeding will be in full swing, it is not too early to think about a suitable supply of seed grain. On many farms oats lodged, last summer, before they were mature, consequently there are many light kernels. Owing to unfavorable harvest weather, considerable grain commenced to grow in the stock. Light-weight or sprouted grain is not the kind that gives heavy yields. Now, while there is considerable grain in the bins, is the proper time to commence cleaning the seed. The first time the grain is put through the fanning mill it is best to use plenty of wind, to remove the light-weight and many of the sprouted kernels.

It is surprising the number of kernels that blow over the screen and are worthless for seed. This is one reason why the grain should be cleaned while there is plenty to choose from. For the second cleaning it is wise to use screens that will remove the small seed, as tests have proven that small seeds, oats especially, do not produce as heavy a yield as large kernels. If, on examining grain prepared for seed, it is found unfit, there is still time to look around for suitable seed. The best that can be secured is none too good. The same applies to clover and grass seeds. Plump seed, free from impurities, is the only safe kind to sow.

If any of the small seeds grown on the home farm are not quite up to the mark, the following screens will aid in grading the seed and removing impurities: For clover, a screen with a mesh 4 by 22 or 4 by 24 wires to the square inch will clean out a good deal of rib grass or buckhorn and other weed seeds. A mesh 20 by 20 wires to the square inch is quite suitable for cleaning and grading alsike.

Favors Winter Application.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

With pleasure we read the article from Glenarry Co. regarding spreading manure on fields during winter. I consider that is the proper time to do it, when one is not rushed with farm work. I have practiced it for the last five years, and with good results on a level, tile-drained farm. Conditions of land, of course, would make a difference I think.

Lambton Co., Ont.

J. E. D.

A Nova Scotia correspondent, Jas. Sterling, reports open weather in the Province by the sea. He plowed up to December 29, and again on Jan. 6. If Nova Scotia has experienced the April-January weather which prevailed in Ontario, more plowing may yet be reported.