Marketing Hogs.

In our last we promised you a letter regarding the marketing of hogs. Your readers will remember that we have often urged them to have their hogs ready for market in June, July and August. We still advise this course, but every good farmer should have at least two lots for sale in the course of the year. We may look for larger deliveries from this time forward. Thousands of farmers still adhere to the old-time plan of getting their hogs ready for a fall and winter market and then killing and dressing them; by so doing they stand in their own light, and on this point we quote from a report of Prof. Robertson, Canada's Dairy Commissioner:—"As a rule, it pays the farmer and feeder better to sell his swine on foot than to market them as dressed hogs. To meet the requirements of the English markets, larger numbers of our swine should be sold by our farmers alive; they could then be slaughtered at packing-houses, where the carcasses could be treated and cured in a uniform and satisfactory manner."

Various dealers and commission men through the country will tell the farmers that they are losing by selling them alive, and on this point we give some figures which will convince any fair-minded man to the contrary. Moreover, we have no hesitation in saying that many of those who buy dressed hogs at country points are ready, ostensibly, to pay a high price per pound, if they can get the privilege of passing them over their scales one at a time. Farmers, generally, have very erroneous ideas as to what a hog loses from live to dressed weight. A hundred pounds of live hog will dress from seventy-two to seventy-eight per cent. of dressed pork, varying according to the fatness of the hog and its condition, whether full or empty, when weighed. Then, as all farmers know (when they sell them dressed), they are weighed singly and two pounds a hog deducted. It goes without saying that Toronto market is the best in Ontario for dressed hogs; notwithstanding this, a number of near-by farmers, who commenced two or three years ago selling their hogs alive, have found it so much to their advantage that they continue to do so. The export pork-packers and bacon-curers pay higher prices than the local men can possibly give, and the former could not handle the hogs except alive. For the English market special preparation is required, and we would earnestly ask the hog-producers of Ontario not to throttle and cripple the large business which has grown up of late years in this line, but to sell their hogs alive through the fall and winter. We are glad to report that hundreds, probably thousands, of our progressive farmers have heeded the advice which has been given for years past to raise more hogs and sell them alive. We have paid out for live hogs since the 1st of April more than one-half million dollars. We require 2,000 hogs per week to keep our factory going, and in these times when horses can hardly be given away, when cattle are very low, what can compare for profit to the farmer with feeding of hogs and selling for about five cents per pound, live weight? Doubtless many of our readers will receive the report of Prof. Robertson referred to above; there they can learn the results of experiments in feeding, which are very valuable. But for the benefit of those who may not see it, we propose in our next to take that matter up.

WM. DAVIES.

The exports from Canada during the month of August show an increase in value to the amount of $3,100,000, attributable to the abnormal development of agricultural and forest products. The value of the imports, which had changed but slightly for several months, shows an increase for August of $3,500,000.

The Farm.

Growing Grasses.

One of the best paying crops on a farm is a good field of grass, and the most economical harvesting of this crop is done by the live stock of the farm. Every thoughtful farmer recognizes the importance of a good supply of grass for his stock, whether he purposes to use that grass for pasturage or hay, yet this is a branch of farming which is at the present time very much neglected and little understood. The staple grass in Ontario is timothy, usually sown with red clover; in fact, it is rare in some sections to hear of a farmer who seeds down his land with any other mixture. In some sections these may be the best that can be grown, but throughout the large area of this province there are many kinds of soil, different geological formations, different altitudes and different degrees of rain fall, each of which vary the conditions of growth. And it is quite evident that with such varying conditions no one kind of grass can give every where the best results.

Timothy *(Phleum pratense)* is certainly a good grass, and well adapted for many sections of Ontario. It makes excellent hay, which contains a large quantity of nutritive matter in a small bulk. It grows in tufts and never by itself; forms a thick, grassy cover for the ground. It is not a first-class grass for grazing, and does not come early in the spring, nor does it recover quickly after being cut. It has the good property of standing cold well, and is not easily winter-killed, and it responds well to liberal manuring, though it, too, seldom gets this chance in our country. When cut before flowering, and before all the spikes have appeared, it makes excellent hay for horses. Usually it is left uncut till too ripe to give the best results to the feeder, though overripeness does give more weight—woody weight for the seller.

Red Clover *(Trifolium pratense)* is perhaps the best all-round clover. It suits our soil and climate fairly well, but mixtures of other clovers usually give better results than a pure sowing of red clover. It is easily winter-killed; is often uprooted by thawing and freezing in spring, at which time it is very sensitive to dry cold. It makes good forage and good hay for sheep or cattle. It recovers well if the season be moist after cutting, and gives a good second crop; very good for pasturing young stock of any kind. Lambs or calves do well on it, but for beef or milk the best crop of clover or timothy that can be grown will not compare with a good pasture of native grasses, such as blue grass *(Poa pratensis)* and red top *(Agrostis vulgaris)*, with or without white clover *(Trifolium repens)*. It is often said that we cannot get a close sod of grass in this country with any mixture of so called permanent pasture grasses. But most excellent pastures of these grasses are in use from twenty to twenty-five years old, and better at that age than they were fifteen years ago. And these grasses will put on fat quickly. Another great advantage is that they come early in the spring. A well-known feeder put his cattle out a year ago on the 15th of April. After that date they got no feed, but as much hay under cover as they cared to take. This they did not require but in the cold, wet days of the early spring. The bulk of this lot of cattle were sent to England the first week in July, and brought the top price to the seller. This pasture had been down about twenty years, but had not been grazed the previous autumn after the first of September. These native grasses are common here, and have been brought into cultivation of recent years, though growing wild in many parts of Ontario. There are numbers of other native grasses which, if carefully tested, might give as good results. What we specially want for any permanent pasture is an assortment of grasses which, from early spring till late autumn, will keep an unbroken period of growth. The permanent pasture grasses recommended by seedsmen and others have usually been such mixtures as were found suitable in Europe, where climatic conditions are quite different from what we have here. These have been tried and have generally failed, but from those trials we have found that orchard grass *(Dactylis glomerata)* does well with us. It comes early in spring, and is a great yielder—growing quickly, but not liked when allowed to get rank and ripe. It stands drought well where it has a good depth of soil, the roots branching down two feet or more. It is not much affected by the cold of winter.

Meadow fescue *(Festuca elatior)* is another tufted grass that does fairly well, though it does not give the yield of the other. These have come into use through the trial of permanent mixtures.

Another European grass which promises well, and which has been tested at the experimental farms, is Brome grass *(Bromus inermis)*, a cousin of our common couch grass. This grass is largely grown in Australia, Hungary and some parts of Russia. It withstands drought well, and is not much affected by cold, but does not do in shady places. It is said to do very well on sandy soils, where other grasses are difficult to grow. The Hungarians reckon that an acre of brome pasture will carry eight sheep for the summer. Such grasses as these, mixed with our native blue grass and red top, might increase the yield largely, and would certainly give a much larger quantity of leafy pasture than timothy alone.

Among the clovers, our farmers are using a greater variety than they are of the grasses. In many parts of Ontario alsike *(Trifolium hybridum)* is used in mixtures, and east of Toronto it is now largely grown for seed, and is paying well as a crop. It does well on clay soils, and stands damp better than drought, as its roots are superficial. Some farmers last year realized fifty dollars per acre for their crops of alsike seed.

The little yellow trefoil *(Medicago lupulina)* has been tried in mixtures, and not only held its own, but has now in many sections spread to the roadsides, and is growing there most luxuriantly. It stands cold and drought better than red clover.

Lucerne *(Medicago sutiva)* is the clover that can stand the hot scorching days of August. It sends its roots far down into the soil, and can thus drain water from considerable depths. Where the subsoil is suitable its roots will go down from nine to fifteen feet. In some parts of Europe fields of lucerne from twelve to fifteen years old are quite common. These kinds give us good variety of the most valuable plants of the clover family. We are much behind, however, in the testing and cultivation of our native grasses. Every farmer may help in this work by trying a few of the most likely kinds on a small plot, and thus ascribing for himself those varieties most suitable for the soil and surroundings of his particular locality. There are a great many grasses growing wild in different parts of Canada that promise well, and that may become sources of wealth as cultivated forage plants.

How Canadian Horses Sell in New York.

In commenting upon this subject a prominent New York city paper remarks:—Within the past three days over one hundred Canadian horses have been sold at a single mart in this city at an average price of $500—one four-in-hand team bringing $7,340. These animals, it must be borne in mind, were of no special line of breeding. They did not owe their good prices and ready sale to fancy strains or great ancestry, or their own records. They sold thus well simply because they were bitted, mannered, dressed and fitted for instant use. Here is an object lesson of value for our farmers. They are in their horse breeding running too much to mere thoroughbreds and trotters. Let them devote their attention rather to the development of practical, shapely, capable and gentle pleasure horses, suitable for carriage stock, for park purposes, for the ordinary highway. Let them produce the all-around gentleman's driving horse. There is an unlimited and constant demand for such horses, and it is the demand that sets the price.