

# Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto

## Ensilage for Pregnant Ewes.

For feeding pregnant ewes as a part of the roughage ration, ensilage has won comparative favor with stock owners. They consider it one of the cheapest and most valuable of roughage feeds. Ensilage is found to successfully take the place of roots and when care is exercised not to over-feed, digestive disorders seldom occur. In years past I have fed ensilage to both fattening lambs and breeding ewes during pregnancy and have found it a most excellent feed. The animals soon become extremely fond of it, and especially during the winter when confined to dry feed. Years ago before ensilage came into general favor as a feed for breeding ewes we always encountered much trouble with grade Merino ewes at lambing and in rearing the lambs on account of the ewes not having sufficient nourishment for their newly-born young. The first winter we had ensilage to feed, the ewes were given about a half ration twice daily and the former trouble practically ceased. We have been feeding ensilage to sheep both fattening and for breeding purposes for the past thirty years and always with splendid results.

Quite frequently objection is advanced by flock owners that ensilage contains so much acid it is harmful to pregnant ewes and should not be fed. I do not believe there is any foundation for this opinion. Of course, ensilage made from too green corn contains a higher percentage of acid than that made from well-matured corn and some harmful effects might result from feeding heavily on ensilage of this quality. However, after thirty years' experience in feeding ensilage to all kinds of live stock I do not think we have ever encountered any harmful results. Some years ago we filled our silo with large western corn that had not matured. We began feeding the ensilage as usual to the pregnant ewes but we soon noticed that some of the ewes were scouring, so we cut down on the silage and began feeding dry corn stover and the trouble soon disappeared. We had similar trouble that winter from feeding the ensilage to dairy cows and I think it was caused from silage from corn crop before it came to maturity. This is good and poor ensilage the same as good and poor hay, but the consensus of evidence points to the fact that good silage is very beneficial in promoting the function of digestion, as an appetizer and general tonic. Experiments conclusively establish the fact that ensilage does not affect adversely, milk products nor harmfully interfere with the nourishing of young.

Flock owners and practical students of feeding problems recognize that succulence is essential in the ration of pregnant ewes during the winter months while confined to close quarters. When the weather is severe and the flock can not run to a pasture field where they may obtain some succulent feed, some means must be provided to furnish this necessary succulence in the daily ration or trouble is incurred with the ewes at parturition and during the early period of nursing the lambs. Pregnant ewes naturally require some succulence in their daily diet to assist digestion and reproduction.

English flock owners depend very largely upon roots to supply this essential succulence in the ration. In years past the English flock owner has had plenty of cheap labor and feed them abundantly. This is one of the chief factors that has enabled him to develop live stock of all kinds to such a high plane of perfection and induce American live stock lovers to become heavy importers. However, the average American flock owner does not take favorably to growing roots, as the crop involves a great deal of hard labor which in return makes the source of succulence too expensive and laborious. Ensilage is the cheapest and most valuable succulence for feeding farm animals.

Ensilage should not be fed to pregnant ewes as a sole ration. In physical character ensilage is bulky and contains a high per cent. of moisture which makes it a very valuable roughage feed, but its percentage of protein is extremely low and unless supplemented with leguminous feed, such as clover hay or alfalfa, best results can not be obtained. I feed pregnant ewes about half of the ration of ensilage twice daily, morning and evening. I feed it in tight-bottom racks, and in such amount that the ewes will clean it all up in twenty or thirty minutes. As ensilage contains a large amount of corn it is not advisable to feed too liberally as the ewes are likely to become overfat. Ensilage is a splendid appetizer and eagerly relished, and for this reason there is danger of over-feeding.

Judicious feeding of ensilage to the pregnant ewes determines in a large measure its success. Sour, moldy or stale ensilage should never be fed to sheep under any conditions. During severe winter weather ensilage is likely to become frozen in the silo or after being removed. Never feed frozen ensilage to pregnant ewes. Some means should be devised during the severe weather to prevent the ensilage from freezing or care exercised to take the silage fed ewes from far enough below the surface to insure fresh silage. In my stable the ensilage is thrown down into the basement, a feed or two ahead, and where it does not freeze. Sour, moldy or frozen ensilage, if fed to pregnant ewes is likely to cause scouring, digestive disorders and not infrequently abortion.

Ensilage contains a large per cent. of carbohydrate or fat-forming elements. If pregnant ewes are fed too liberally on ensilage they take on flesh rapidly and soon become sluggish and inactive. This is a dangerous condition for pregnant ewes as it tends to weaken the growth and development of the embryos which results in lambs coming low in vitality and the ewes lacking in sufficient nourishment for their newly-born young. Ensilage will not take the place of the grain ration. Feed plenty of clover hay or other leguminous roughage with ensilage for the best results.—Leo C. Reynolds.

## Mr. and Mrs. Jack Spratt.

In the attic of many farm homes may be found old copies of Mother Goose rhymes. If we turn over a few pages of one of these good books we are sure to find appropriately illustrated, these familiar lines:

Jack Spratt could eat no fat;

His wife could eat no lean;

So betwixt them both, you see,

They licked the platter clean.

We are inclined to the opinion that if Mrs. Spratt had been the manager of a co-operative marketing association, she would have studied carefully her home market, just as she apparently did the feeding of herself and husband. In this study she would have learned the kind of products needed by the people living around her. Then, in a business-like way, this motherly woman would have gone about to supply these wants and have the supply so regulated that there would not be too much of any kind left over to glut the trade. She would want the market platter clean when she had supplied their needs.

Farmers of Ontario can well afford to follow the wisdom of Mrs. Spratt in connection with their marketing business. It is better to see that the folks next to us are properly cared for, than it is to forget them while endeavoring to ship farm products to the uttermost parts of the earth. We should watch the market platter, and seek to keep upon it products which appeal to our home trade.

## Dairy

To prevent horns from growing on little calves chip off the hair about the top of the head where the horns are showing in small, tough-like buds. Get a stick of caustic potash from your drug store. Wet the swellings where the horns are coming through. Rub the caustic potash stick, like a pencil, over the budding horns. Repeat this process two or three times at intervals of a week. The horns will thus be destroyed and never grow.

When using the caustic potash, wrap the stick in paper or cotton so it will not burn the hands. It should be kept in a bottle, well corked, so it will not absorb water and meet away.

Many a man has died of heart disease brought on by worry over his heart.

## Acid Phosphate is Best Manure Preservative.

A recent bulletin from the New York Experiment Station, Geneva, gives results of tests with various materials for preserving manure. The results show, to the satisfaction of the station, at least, that the only material to use is acid phosphate. The materials compared were straw, peat, acid phosphate, rock phosphate and gypsum.

"Most manure preservatives are of little value in checking loss of nitrogen," the station advises. "In the tests the amount of nitrogen lost ranged from 15 per cent., for manure treated with acid phosphate, to fifty-one per cent. for untreated manure."

Immediate application of the preservative is advised, even if the manure is to be hauled to the field as soon as voided. It is suggested that two handfuls of acid phosphate be scattered in each horse stall every day, so that the horses will tramp it into the manure. Wheat straw was found to be detrimental to manure. Where the straw was added to manure applied to growing crops, a detrimental effect was noted, as compared with results from fresh manure alone. The station does not explain why this is true.

So far as the tests have gone, it seems that the best results will be secured where acid phosphate is mixed with the manure as soon as it is voided and the mixture stored in a covered shed or pit until such time as it can be conveniently spread on the field.

## On Naming the Farm.

Farmers who have had occasion to sell goods on a special market, or to do a great deal of publicity, are fully agreed that every farm ought to be named. This name should be something apart from the owner's name. These farm names have real commercial value. This is particularly true where some special crop is sold from the farm. In the event that the farm should change hands, the name becomes an asset, and should increase the intrinsic value of the farm. Such a name makes a farm easier to locate and has immense value in dollars and cents as a business ad.

The shortest way to do many things is to do only one thing at a time.

If your horses shy when your hired man goes near, get another man. Contentment consists not in great wealth, but in few wants.

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Increase for year \$44,716,730.99

Cash income - - - - - 36,251,322.13

Increase for year, \$5,144,172.97

Payments to policyholders - 15,615,505.85

Surplus over all liabilities and capital - 14,269,420.95

Increase for year, \$3,885,511.85

New assurances issued and paid for  
in cash - - - - - 90,798,648.79

AVERAGE RATE OF INTEREST EARNED 6.27%

# SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA

HEAD OFFICE: MONTREAL

## SQUARE DEALING PAYS

Breeders are but regular human beings and naturally some are better than others. The business of selling pure-bred live stock is subject to the same high standards of honesty and integrity that determine the success or failure of any other business.

In selling stock by mail, even a higher standard is required. The customer who sends his first cheque to a breeder many miles away is obliged to trust that breeder to a considerable extent. The breeder who betrays that trust, who does not bend every effort to please that customer is not worthy of the name. He not only makes an enemy for himself, he discredits his fellow breeders and his gives his chosen breed a black eye. It may be carelessness, or thoughtlessness, or pure cussedness that causes an occasional man to grow crooked, but whatever it is, he is in the wrong business if he is handling pure-bred stock.

On the other hand, the man who makes it his foremost object to make every customer a satisfied one, finds his circle of friends constantly widening, and his business growing better and better. He is a credit to his chosen breed and to the breeding fraternity. He is continually enlisting new recruits for his special breed, and lending impetus to the drive against the scrub.

There are many men, whom we could name, who through the medium of pure-bred live stock on the farm, coupled with business methods that are above reproach, have paid for fine farms and elegant homes, and hold a position of respect and influence among people wherever they are known. There are others, sad to relate, who have failed to grasp the cardinal principle, that "Honesty is the Only Policy," and have abused the rights of their customers. These are all "broke" to-day, or worse, so far as we know of them, and in addition have lost the respect of their fellow citizens. The shrewdest of men are not smart enough to play keeps with the rest of the world and win.

## How to Grow Currants.

If you want currants to bear choice fruit and plenty of it, plant the bushes in moist, cool soil. Clay loam, or even stiff clay, is good for currants. Some shade is not objectionable; that is why currants do well as orchard fillers.

A dozen plants will supply the average family, if they are set out on good soil and cared for as they should be. Do not set them along the garden fence and let the weeds and grass grow up among them. Work plenty of barnyard manure into the soil before and after setting the plants.

Set the plants four feet apart in the row. Make the rows six feet apart. Shallow cultivation is best; if you cultivate too deep you will injure the roots. Ashes, sawdust and manure make good mulches. Confine the mulch to the hills and within the row, and cultivate between the rows.

The most and best fruits are borne on two and three-year-old wood. On older wood, the fruit is likely to be small. Hence, the need of pruning out old wood.

From four to eight main stems are left to bear fruit. Nip back the new shoots in the summer when they are about eighteen inches high, since the best fruit are borne near the ground. Except in severe climates, the bushes will winter all right without protection.

The worst insect pest on currants is the currant worm. The young green worms will eat all the leaves from the bushes in a few days. To kill the worms, spray the plants with white hellebore, one teaspoonful to a gallon of water. This material has strength from standing, so be sure you are using fresh powder.

Curant borers sometimes bore inside the growing plants and so weaken the shoots that they break with their heavy loads of fruit. Only remedy is to cut out canes with borers in, and burn them.

Mildew is one of the worst diseases. The leaves become covered with a white mold and dry up. To prevent this trouble, spray the plants with Bordeaux mixture when the leaves appear, and repeat every two weeks, until fruit sets. Then substitute potassium sulphide for Bordeaux mixture, a half ounce to a gallon of water.

## Barred Rock Wins Canadian Honors.

Canada's blue ribbon hen, a Barred Rock, has just finished up at the second New Brunswick egg-laying contest with a credit of 247 eggs. Two hundred birds were in the contest, covering a period of fifty-two weeks and making an average of 139.49 eggs, as compared with an average of 152.13 for the previous year.

The best pen in the contest was of the Barred Rocks, with a credit of 247 eggs for the fifty-two weeks, and was the only pen which showed an average of over 200 eggs per hen. Six of the birds in this pen laid over 200 eggs, and the lowest one had a record of 171. The 200 hens consumed 11,672 pounds of mixed grains, 7,790 pounds of mash, 8,930 pounds of skim-milk, 685 pounds of grit, 682 pounds of shell, a small quantity of charcoal, and a liberal amount of green feed during the year. The total cost of this feed was \$515.13 and the value of the eggs sold was \$902.27, leaving a balance of \$386.89 to cover the cost of labor and housing.

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