

Shall We Build a Silo 't' is Year?

This is a most opportune time to give the question of silo building consideration. Doubtless many farmers and dairymen are giving this very earnest deliberation at this time after the severe experience of the past winter. 'Tis certain that the dairyman who had a good full silo last fall is quite ready to endorse everything that can be said in its favor and we can recount many that have brought their stock through the winter in good condition with this economical feed that would have been strained in circumstances without it. Last winter we saw those who with reduced crops of fodder, attempted to winter their stock on a scant supply, or made large purchases of feed to save sacrificing their herds. These were the men who had not yet built a silo. They did not appreciate the merits of silage as available and economical food for our dairy cows. These men have not been getting the results that are possible in the economical production of milk and cream. We are convinced that there is no improvement that can be put on the dairy farm out of which so much good will come and such dividends will accrue, as from a good substantial silo.

In all dairy sections of the United States, in many parts of Canada and also Europe, the number of silos is legion. The reasons for building them are innumerable. They pay a handsome dividend on the investment, much better than mining stocks, bank stock or various other stocks that take wings and fly away—into some sharper's pocket. Our silo remains to do its important work of keeping the feed for our dairy cows succulent for winter feeding.

The silo enables the farmer to preserve his feed for winter use at a time of the year when it is most convenient, and in a way that requires the least labor and the least expense. The silo enables him to store his corn in the least space and then dispose of it to the stock on his farm at a higher price than could be realized out of the same material put

up in another form. The dairyman gets a much greater quantity of feed per acre by sowing corn and converting it into ensilage than he could in any other way, besides it makes a feed that is palatable and most desirable.

While ensilage is good feed for horses, cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry, it is especially valuable as feed for the dairy cow. It provides her with a uniformly succulent green feed for winter as well as that portion of the summer when vegetation is dried up and the earth is parched, thereby enabling her to maintain a good flow of milk at a time when with other feed there would be serious shrinkage.

There are many crops suitable for ensilage. None, however, come up to corn for a large yield and the raking of a high class silage. We believe that the corn plant will hold its popularity and will be most generally used for ensilage for many years to come. Its productiveness, its good keeping properties, and its adaptability to a variety of climatic conditions gives it first place among the crops suitable for ensilage. The results of various experiments carried out by Experiment Stations in both the United States and Canada prove to us that ensilage can be grown and put in the silo at a cost from \$1.50 to \$2.00 a ton.

It has been proven beyond a doubt that two tons of ensilage are equal to one ton of mixed hay, and can be produced at a lower cost. In every instance where ensilage has been substituted for hay as a portion of the ration we have found an increase in the milk flow, and sometimes a slight increase in the butter fat.

The feature of the silo that predominates is economy. It economizes room and labor and the cost of butter fat. Every dairyman should give the matter of building a silo serious and immediate consideration. Prepare some land for the corn crop, work up a fine seed bed, sow with a drill, seeder, or corn planter, in rows not closer than three feet apart (where the land will permit planting

in hills 3 feet 6 inches apart each way will give the best results). Sow about $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel per acre, if in drills, cultivate freely and a corn crop will be a certainty on almost any well-drained soil. When the crop is growing and developing think over the kind of silo that will best suit your requirements. The old box silo is out-of-date. The round silo has come to stay. Of round silos there is the elm-hoop, the stave and the concrete, all are good and if you choose either one you will make no mistake. Only get a silo. Be sure and plant the corn so that you will have something with which to fill the silo next fall.—W. F. S.

Handling Alfalfa

"We always cut our alfalfa just when it is coming into blossom," said Mr. Henry Glendinning of Manilla, Ont., when speaking upon this subject at the dairymen's convention. "The ideal time to cut alfalfa is when one-tenth of the blossoms are out. We always cut the alfalfa in the forenoon; we never cut it in the afternoon. We cut it throughout the forenoon and we rake it up towards evening. We place it in small piles and allow it to stand there three or four days if the weather is good. If the weather becomes showery, however, this becomes a matter. If the weather continues fine, we turn these coils over and spread the butts out. Then in the afternoon, we draw it in. This is our method of handling the first crop.

The second crop is handled in the following manner: Cut in the forenoon, ted in the forenoon and after dinner and towards evening rake it up and let it lie in wind-rows overnight. The next day, after the dew is thoroughly dried out, we ted it again. About four o'clock in the afternoon, we go out and ted the hay loader. This same method is followed for the third cutting."

When asked if he did not knock the leaves off by tending, Mr. Glendinning replied: "If one gives it frequent tending, it is not allowed to lie long enough to dry and it will be found that the leaves will be all on. If you allow it to lie for a day or even a few hours and it is exposed to the sun, one will find that there will be a large quantity of leaves drop off, but by keeping it teded, the leaves do not have a chance to dry and fall off."

Mr. Glendinning never salts his alfalfa or any kind of clover when storing it in the barn. He has very decided objections to salting hay, claiming that where there is a heavy salting, it comes out brown instead of that green color which we so much desire in hay for winter feeding; much better hay will be obtained if salts is kept away from it.

The Ideal in Dairying

The following extracts taken from an address given by President W. J. Gillet at the Wisconsin Dairymen's Convention, while referring particularly to the Wisconsin cow, are equally applicable to the conditions of our dairymen:

"The time was never known in this country," remarked Mr. Gillet, "when a herd of good cows, properly fed and judiciously managed, did not compensate its owner well for the feed, the time and labor expended, and it is safe to say that we have passed through contingencies that are not liable to be repeated in the near future."

"I cannot refrain from calling attention of the average earning capacity of our cows under prevailing Wisconsin conditions. A large number of herds within our borders are showing a yearly average of 300 or 400 lbs. of butter per cow per year, in fact, many are even surpassing these

figures, which would indicate an average earning capacity of \$100 or more a cow in many instances. What, then, must be the conditions under which many of the co-operators of the state are laboring, that the average is reduced to 170 lbs. of butter a cow or to an average earning of \$30 a year? To the owner whose cow has lost 100 lbs. of milk in the guise of the profitable dairy cow? It would seem that prevailing conditions in many herds, caused by the state of the dairies, are not but burlesques to the dairy business.

For the purpose of comparison and as an illustration of the possibilities in breeding, developing, care and feeding of the dairy cows, you will pardon me for mentioning the performance of a cow in our state that recently came into the hands of a well-known dairyman. This cow, 10 years of age, produced 908 lbs. of butter fat, or the equivalent of 1,064 lbs. of butter. The actual return from the milk of this cow delivered to a cheese factory, aside from the value of the by-product, was \$320.13, or more than eight times the annual earning of the average Wisconsin cow, while the quantity of butter which could have been made from the fat she produced was more than six times the amount produced by the average cow, omitting the proportionate increase in the value of her by-product.

The results that are possible for one man to accomplish are always possible and within the reach of his neighbor under the right conditions.

Of course, we never expect to see many cows produce 1,000 lbs. of butter fat per year, but it would seem that, by better breeding, better feeding and caretaking, deeper thought and a wider observation of cause and effect, we might be able to increase the producing capacity of the average Wisconsin cow.

VALUE OF MIND OVER MUSCLE

There are many cow keepers who are, to a greater or less degree, blind to the value of financial upbuilding, resulting from a lack of knowledge and a keener appreciation of the principles that lead to progression. Many are overworked by manual exertion and neglect the more important part of allowing the brain to solve problems that would lighten the burden of the weary hands. Our most successful dairymen and our best breeders are those whose minds, as well as muscles, have been engaged in the execution of their business engagements.

There is little hope for him who settles down in his own shadow, content with his own accomplishments; for it is discontent that prompts the man to better his condition and he will aspire to do better and he who does better is sure to try for further improvement. The spirit of aggression often leads of progression and there is always hope for him who is willing and anxious to be taught.

What we need in our rural districts and for a deeper uplifting of our dairy husbandmen is more education, more light and a deeper, broader and keener knowledge of the forces that stimulate improvement and progress. The solution of this great proposition lies in a wiser selection of our breeding animals, better caretaking and more liberal and intelligent use of feeds.

It is no question of experiment or gravitation, and by him who realizes these things and acts accordingly, we may expect the standard of excellence to be constantly improved and by him who is negligent and indifferent to them the average will never be raised.

In the approved pure bred sire lies the foundation for up-building and the salvation for future live stock improvement, and the sooner our



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