



MIXED FARMING

MANITOBA - SASKATCHEWAN - ALBERTA

BY W.C. McKILLICAN B.S.A.



No. 23

Planning the Farm

ONE of the most important factors in saving labor around the mixed farm is convenience in the arrangement of fields and buildings. The extra distance travelled in going to and from distant fields soon uses up time that in a year is worth many dollars. The extra turns that have to be made in irregular or short fields are another cause of loss of time.

Arrangement of Fields

It is necessary for the mixed farm to be fenced. Live stock are an essential part of any mixed

52 Ac.	52 Ac.
52 Ac.	52 Ac.
50 Ac.	50 Ac.

Fig. I Scale 20 chains, 1 inch

farming system, and the only practical way of handling them in summer in our climate is fenced pasture. Rotation of crops is another important feature of mixed farming which must be considered in arranging fields. When a rotation has been decided upon, the farm must be divided to suit the requirements of that rotation. For instance, if a six-year rotation is to be used, then the arable portion of the farm should be divided into six fields as nearly equal in size as conditions will permit. A farm that is divided into four fields is hard to use for a six-year rotation. Or if the fields are of unequal sizes it makes the operation of the rotation less

52 Ac.	52 Ac.	52 Ac.	52 Ac.	52 Ac.	52 Ac.
					18 Ac.

Fig. II Scale 20 chains, 1 inch

satisfactory. The division fences should always be straight and parallel unless natural conditions prevent, and they should have as few corners as possible. Corner posts are the most expensive part of the fence and usually the weak spots.

Large fields are the most economical to fence and to work. They should be two or three times long as wide; this gives a long round with few turns. A square

field makes too many short rounds with mower or binder. A very large square field is all right as it may be split into two strips when these machines are used. Fields that are very long and narrow are all right for working, but they increase the cost of fencing.

A farm is most easily divided and most economically worked when the buildings are centrally located. However, the advantages of being near the road are so many and so great that one is not often justified in getting a central location by getting away from the road. The middle of a side of the farm is probably, everything considered, the best location for the buildings. Fig. 1 shows a farm of 320 acres with the buildings in the middle of a side, and divided into six practically-equal fields, with a ten-acre block left for building sites, lawn, gardens, permanent pasture lots, etc. This makes a very convenient arrangement. The fields are a good shape and size, they

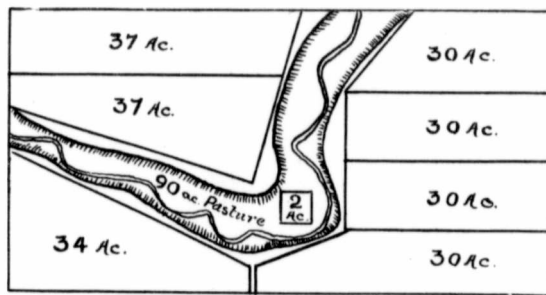
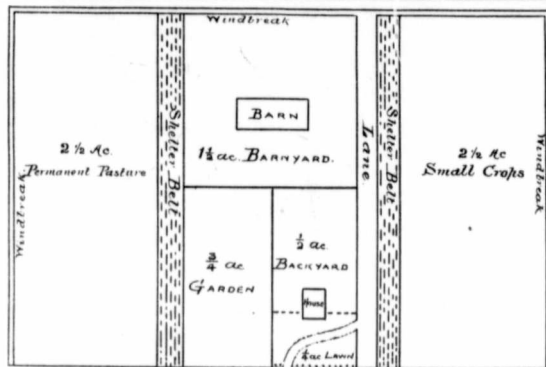


Fig. III. Scale: 20 Chains = 1 inch.

are all easily accessible from the barns, a short lane makes it possible to drive stock directly to any field. The fencing is not more than commensurate with the number of fields and has no unnecessary corners.

A very common location of the farm buildings is on the corner of the farm. When a group of neighbors live around a cross-roads, this arrangement has its merits from the standpoint of neighbourliness and social life, but from the standpoint of convenience in working the farm, it is the worst possible arrangement. No matter how such a farm is arranged, some fields must be far from the buildings. When such a farm is fenced for mixed farming, either a long lane must be put in, or else the public road must be used for a lane. Fig. 11 shows



PUBLIC ROAD

Fig. IV. Scale: 2 Chains (132 feet) = 1 inch.

such a farm (half section) subdivided about as economically as is possible on a six-field basis, using the public road for lane.

In each of these instances uniform land is supposed, but under actual conditions, natural obsta-

stock farm on account of the water supply and shelter for stock. But with poor planning it might easily be made a very unhandy farm to work. With an arrangement such as shown, it is very little less convenient than a level prairie farm.

These illustrations all refer to half-section farms, but the same principles can be used in reference to larger or smaller farms equally as well. They have all been divided on the basis of a six-year rotation. Where four or five-year rotations are used fewer fields are required, and it is correspondingly easier to divide the farm satisfactorily. It is seldom wise to have more than six main fields on a Western farm; perhaps if the owner is very anxious to adopt a seven-year rotation it may be advisable to have seven fields, but that is multiplying the divisions and fences too much. Where eight or more years are in the rotation, it is possible to have half the number of fields that there are years to the rotation and have two crops in one field.

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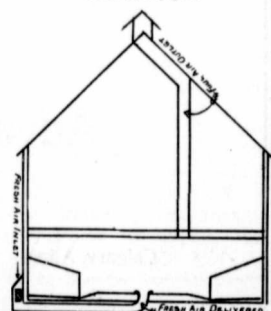


Fig. V. Scale: 8 ft. = 1 inch.