

FARM AND DAIRY

RURAL HOME

Issued
Each Week

Only \$1.00
a Year

Vol. XXIX.

FOR WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 15, 1910.

No. 50

PASTURES MOST SUITABLE TO THE NEEDS OF ONTARIO FARMERS*

Prof. C. A. Zavitz, O.A.C., Guelph, Ont.

Mixtures Recommended for Various Kinds of Pasture Crops which are a Great Improvement over the Pasture Ordinarily Grown. The Advantages of Various Pastures and Supplementary Fodder Crops Explained.

THERE is probably no branch of farming in Ontario in which there is a greater need or a greater opportunity for improvement than can be found in connection with our grass lands, of which we have over six million acres. Of this area, over three million acres are used for pasture purposes annually. Both the quality of the pasture and the quantity per acre should be greatly increased. Timothy is not a particularly good pasture grass, and yet it is used more extensively than any other variety. I wish to state very clearly that in my opinion there are far too many old timothy pastures in this province.

With the object of getting information of practical value, a large number of varieties of grasses, clovers, and grains have been tested at the Ontario Agricultural College both singly and in combination for the production of pasture. The results which have accumulated from these experiments during the past 25 years are interesting and important. They show us that various mixtures can be used to good advantage in fulfilling certain requirements. I wish to present a few of the mixtures of grasses which might be used by farmers, according to their various requirements.

A PASTURE FOR ONE YEAR

A farmer sometimes realizes either in the autumn or in the early spring that his pastures will be quite inadequate for the purposes desired during the coming season. Under such circumstances, he is anxious to know the best way to supplement his present pasture lands. One of the ways in which this can be done is to sow a crop in the spring which can be used for pasture purposes in the same year in which it is sown. After testing 17 crops separately and six different combinations within the last 15 years, we are now in a position to state that the following mixture has been used during the past few years with much satisfaction: Oats, 51 lbs.; early amber cane, 30 lbs.; common red

clover; 7 lbs.; total, 88 lbs. per acre. The oats and the sugar cane can be mixed together and sown from the grain box of the seed drill, and the clover can be sown from the grass seed box placed in front of the tubes of the drill. If this mixture is sown during the first week in May, it is usually ready for pasture about the 20th of June, or six weeks after the seed is sown. The oats are early and rapid in growth; the sugar cane is later, stools well, and thrives in hot weather;

and after taking off one crop of hay, to use the land for pasture until it is again plowed. The clover soon disappears and the timothy forms a comparatively poor pasture especially in dry seasons. Some of the most important European grasses when grown in Ontario are very hardy and will withstand our hot, dry summers much better than the timothy. The following mixture is suggested as a very satisfactory one for average conditions when a pasture is required for two, three, four or five years: Red clover, 6 lbs.; alsike clover, 3 lbs.; meadow fescue, 3 lbs.; orchard grass, 3 lbs.; timothy, 3 lbs.; total, per acre, 18 lbs.

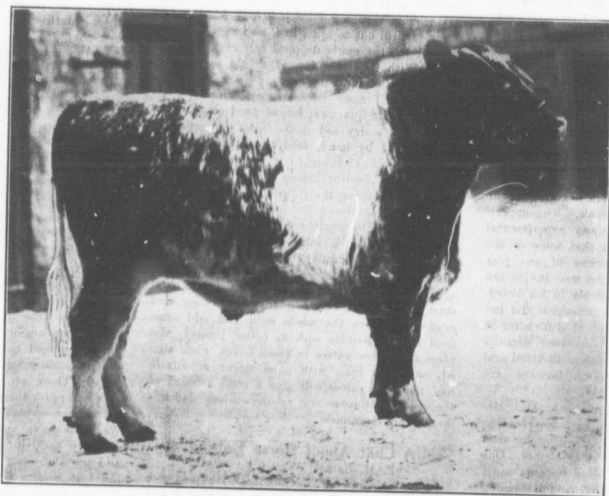
This mixture can be sown in the spring of the year either with or without a grain crop. It should be sown in front of the tube drill; the clover and the timothy from the grass seed box and the orchard grass and the meadow fescue by hand. It could be used as a hay crop the following year and for pasture afterwards. In comparison with timothy, this mixture will start earlier in the spring, produce a greater growth in the hot, dry months of the summer, and furnish a more abundant growth of leaves in the autumn.

PERMANENT PASTURE MIXTURE

As time advances, I believe that permanent pastures will be used more and more in Ontario as our best farmers realize their value. Land, which is not required in the regular rotation of the farm, can often be seeded with a permanent pasture mixture to excellent advantage. From more than 20 years' work in testing different varieties of grasses and clovers both singly and in combination, I

would suggest the following mixture for a permanent pasture, under average conditions of soil, drainage and climate: Orchard grass, 4 lbs.; meadow fescue, 4 lbs.; tall oat grass, 3 lbs.; meadow foxtail, 2 lbs.; timothy, 2 lbs.; alsike clover, 2 lbs.; white or dutch clover, 2 lbs.; alfalfa or lucerne, 5 lbs.; total 24 lbs. per acre.

In Europe, it is very common for the farmers to use 45, 48, or 50 pounds an acre of permanent pasture mixtures. Our own seedsmen usually recommend a much heavier mixture than is here given. We have been very careful, however, to recommend nothing but some of the hardiest and most vigorous grasses, believing that in a short time some of the smaller grasses, such as the Ken-



Beef Type Exemplified in the Champion Steer at Guelph Winter Fair

"Boan James" the Shorthorn steer here illustrated, owned by James Leask, Greenbank, Ont., was champion at Guelph last week and reserve champion at the recent Chicago International Live Stock Exhibition. Note his depth and thickness of body. He is thick and even fleshed to a remarkable degree. Note his straight top and underlines, low setness, short neck, full quarters, and the light but strong bone.

and the clover forms the principal pasture in the autumn. All varieties are readily eaten by the animals, especially the oats and the sugar cane. If desirable, the clover may be allowed to remain over winter to furnish one or two cuttings in the following year. The tramping by the cattle has not caused any marked degree of injury either to the plants or to the soil. During each of the past five years, we have had eight or nine acres of this pasture which has carried more than one two-year-old steer per acre. The animals have thrived splendidly, keeping in the best of health, and gaining on the average two pounds a day.

It is a common practice among farmers to seed their grain with timothy and common red clover

*Part of an address delivered last week in the Lecture Room of the Guelph Winter Fair.