

FARM MANAGEMENT

Harvesting the Corn Crop

D. H. Gray, Carleton Co., Ont.

There still is doubt in the minds of many, as to the best method of cutting corn. That is whether by the corn harvester or by hand with the corn hook.

From experience I would say, cut with a harvester wherever practicable. If the area in corn is not large enough to justify the purchase of a harvester, then rent one. If the crop is intended for dry fodder and shocked in the field to cure, it can be handled much easier when in bundles than when loose.

Cutting by hand has one advantage. The corn can be cut closer to the ground than with a harvester; which means quite a saving of valuable fodder. Cutting too high is a mistake made by a great many, who think that the bottom of the stalk is of no value.

By keeping the knife of the harvester sharp a much nearer job can be done and a shorter stubble will result. The stubble is left too long it will interfere more with next year's seeding operations.

Put the crop into the silo if the full benefit and value is desired. When putting it into the silo, the first requisite is a low wagon for hauling; by having a low wagon much hard work is saved. Then also, one man less is required in building the feed is not necessary; except for a little on top.

A good sized gang means cheaper work. By keeping the harvester and cut-box going at the same time a much cheaper ensilage can be made. If the regular farm crew is not large enough permit this to the cooper with your neighbors. Keep the harvester about half a day's cutting ahead; or far enough so that if anything goes wrong with it, the hauling and cutting at the silo need not stop. It is well not to get too far ahead leaving the corn lying on the field, for should a heavy rain come on the corn would get full of earth making a very dirty ensilage and disagreeable handling. Make medium sized bundles or just what the cut-box will take in nicely. The machine can be fed steadily by this way and more corn can be got through in a day.

If the crop is to be cured in the field for dry fodder the best plan is to put it into shocks about 15 feet long. For this method something in the form of a trestle is required as a support. A simple trestle can be made by driving two fence pickets into the ground for each end, cross them to form a crotch and tie with wire. Then put up two or three braces from then out to steady them. Place a pole across these and it is ready for the corn. One of the principal things in making a trestle is to get it low enough. If put too high the rain will get in between the two rows of corn and cause moulding. See that the corn lies well together at the top and well above the corn pole. Put from 15 to 18 inches of corn on each side of the trestle but leave the ends open to allow for circulation of air through the corn.

Place the shocks in the east and west, as they will not be so easily blown down. When dry, if it is convenient, haul and put under cover to keep the corn from bleaching.

If the corn is left in the field until late in the fall, or as is done by some, well on into the winter, it deteriorates a great deal in feeding value.

Placing of Pump Cylinder

At what distance from the bottom of my well should I place the cylinder of a pump in order that it will work most satisfactorily?—J. W. York Co., Ont.

In order to work at all the cylinder of the pump must be placed not over

32 feet from the water. In practice, it has been found impossible to keep the pump tight enough to work properly when the cylinder is at that distance from the water. It is better to put the cylinder within 6, 8 or 10 feet to the bottom of the well. If the pump is a wooden one, the cylinder had better be 6 feet from the bottom. If it is a good iron pump 10 or 12 feet would do. It is easier to lift the water than to draw it up by means of suction.

Buckwheat as a Soil Improver

Would buckwheat sown on my land at this season of the year benefit the soil?—J. M. York Co., Ont.

Buckwheat sown at the present time would not do your land any particular good only in so far as it would make use of any available plant food elements and prevent them from leaching during fall rains and in the drainage water the following spring. By sowing a crop of buckwheat, these elements would be made use of and held in the form of buckwheat plants. This plowed down late in the fall or next spring would add considerable humus to the soil.

To derive the most benefit from sowing a crop upon your land now would be better to sow one of the legumes, preferably the hairy vetch. Unfortunately this seed is very expensive and it is doubtful if the returns in the form of fertility to the land would pay for the expense incurred in purchasing seed. Crimson clover, which is an annual, probably would be the best thing that you could sow for this purpose, unless you care to try peas. After fixing any available plant food, by sowing such a crop, you would tend to keep the land free from weeds, for where we do not provide a cover for the land, nature will start up and in the shape of various kinds of weeds.

Feeding an Orphan Colt

I have a foal that was four weeks old when its mother died. It has been fed on corn and water and sugar and will now eat a bran mash, as well as a few oats. What is my best plan to feed it now?—A. D. Durham Co., Ont.

You should have no difficulty in successfully raising your colt since you have brought it to the stage where it will eat bran and oats. I would not advise you to have anything to do with stock food. If you feed it a mixture of bran and oat chop, about one to two, just what it will eat up clean three times a day, supplemented by some fine, nicely cured clover hay or alfalfa, the colt will do very nicely. Give it a roomy box stall in which to run these cold nights. Keep the stall clean and do not allow feed to accumulate in the manger. Provide plenty of exercise for the youngster and you will have no difficulty with it. If you have milk or skim-milk to spare, it will be a great help to the colt. There is nothing that seems to make a colt grow faster than skim-milk fed in addition to its other ration. I personally had the misfortune to lose a brood mare when her colt was four weeks old. The colt was successfully raised by following out the foregoing practice.

Building a Stave Silo

Would you kindly inform me through your paper how to build a stave silo. I am large enough to feed four cows for eight or nine months. As I have never seen but one stave silo I would like particulars from start to finish.—D. D. Feigh, Ont.

The first consideration in building a stave silo is to have a suitable foundation. A circular foundation of stone or brick which would extend about three feet above the level of the ground is the surest and most secure foundation of the timber from rot. The stone or brick wall being thicker

than the wooden tub which forms the superstructure, it is necessary to have a shoulder bevelled outward or inward. It is well to have about four or five inches of a bevel from the inside of the foundation to the wood on the inside. For your purpose the silo would not need to be over nine or ten feet in diameter. It should not be less than 24 feet high.

Granting that the foundation is in readiness the next thing is to erect the staves. If the silo is to be 24 feet high it will be well to have the staves of two lengths, say 10 and 14 feet. Then by alternating the different lengths the joints will be broken. Unless one is extremely handy with tools a carpenter who understands the business should be employed to erect the silo. The staves which have previously been bevelled and dressed so as to make a tight job, are then set up one after the other until the circle is complete. They are held in place by toe-nailing on to the other end the hoops are put on. The hoops may be made of old wagon tires or of half or five-eighths inch iron. A silo 24 feet high would require 10 hoops having at least the strength of half-inch iron. The hoops should be placed much closer together at the bottom than at the top, to make the added strength necessary when the pressure is the greatest. Provision must be made for the doorways for getting out the silage. The door should be made to fit tightly and should not be too large or they will be cumbersome to handle. A silo 34 feet high should have at least three doors. It would be more convenient with four. Make them 18 inches wide and two feet high. Outside of these build a chute to prevent the silage from being blown away when thrown down.

It is not necessary to roof the silo. Some claim that the silage is better for having the rains and storms. This is largely a matter of opinion, but good silage has been made and fed for years from silos without a roof. Suitable drainage should be provided for the silo by means of a tile drain, else the juices which will gather in the bottom will damage the lower layers of silage. Before building your silo you would do well to consult a carpenter and employ him at least during the time you are erecting the staves. Having an expert on hand may save considerable time and prevent any mishaps.

Non-appearance of Oestrus

Some of my cows and several of my neighbors' have not shown oestrus this season. What can I give them to cause oestrus?—W. W.

When nature does not act in this particular it is best to be corrected. In some cases the administration of nuxvomica will have the desired effect. Keep the cows in good condition, give

each 2 drama nuxvomica three times daily and allow a young vigorous bull to run with them.

Musty Clover—Dry Feed

(1) Is musty clover harmful to milk cows? (2) Is dry feed likely to produce as much milk as wet feed?

Unwholesome feed of any kind is not the best for stock. A cow may live and thrive well on musty hay but such is always attended with danger. Aside from affecting her health, the milk might become tainted. Cows that are not fed any too liberally often eat musty clover with gusto and in fact stock feed for nothing. They will frequently relish it at any time. However, I should certainly advise feeding nothing but wholesome food.

Other things being equal, the more succulent the better or the nearer we can approach June grass the more milk will the cow give.

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