

hopeful than in the picture we have drawn of winter feeding and its heavy costs.

Probably those farmers who put their cows in strawyard during the winter, and contrive for calves to drop in April, make more money of their dairies than those who struggle to keep up a regular supply the year round. On the other hand, good living in winter tends to keep cows up in condition during summer, and the manure made during the winter is of very superior quality to what is produced in an ordinary strawyard. The difference between the summer and winter wholesale price for milk is not sufficient, although we suppose it is regulated by supply and demand. If dairy farmers would make the calculation, and let us know what they are doing in the matter of winter feeding and winter production of milk, the publication of such results might be useful. While supply and demand regulate price, ventilating the subject may regulate supply, and thus indirectly affect prices; for no one is likely long to pursue a particular course after he sees his way to a more profitable one. *Ag. Gazette, Eng.*

#### STRAW MATS.

THERE is a vast difference between the rough, loosely made straw mats that are often seen in use and those made in a through workmanlike manner. In the first place the mats as usually made in this country are too thick; the strings are too far apart, and the straw is not of the right quality; the consequence is that when they get wet through in spring, they take a long time to dry, and therefore quickly decay. The employment of unthreshed straw is a step in the right direction; it is indeed the only way to ensure a perfect mat, as straw that has been bruised by the flail or crushed by the threshing machine does not throw off rain as it should do, and soon rots. I have never been able to obtain anything better than hand-threshed straw, but with this I have made mats that with something less than ordinary care lasted three winters. Good Wheat straw will make mats, but Rye straw is far better and lasts longer, especially if cut just before it comes to maturity, as it is then tougher and not so ready to break to pieces when in use, as would otherwise be the case. Those who would like to make their own mats should, if possible, grow the straw for them, as it is a matter of some difficulty now-a-days to get any that has not passed through the threshing machine, and it is utter waste of time and money to make mats of this torn and mangled material. The strings should not be more than 6 inches apart, or the straw will be apt to bulge between them; and not more than five straws should be laid in at a time. This will render the mats uniform in thickness and firm to the touch.

Taking into consideration the fact that a well made straw mat will keep out at least three times as much frost as Russian mats, and that when well cared for they will last three times as long, it will be seen that if they can be made or purchased for about 50 cts each, they will be cheaper in the long run than Russian mats. We find that in making them at home they cost about one cent per square foot for material, and a man or woman working briskly would get through some 60 square feet in a day—that is, doing all; but by having a boy to hand straw, nearly double that amount could be accomplished. In Switzerland a mat about 6 feet by 4 feet costs about two francs, but there, as well as in France and in Germany, they are mostly made by women employed on the place, or by the outdoor hands in wet or severe weather. In trade establishments, where there is an indoor and an outdoor department, the outside hands might in inclement weather turn to mat-making, a brisk and cleanly employment that men would like, and which would be much more profitable than a great deal of the work that they do when obliged to go under cover. Some I know object to

straw mats on the score of untidiness, as when they begin to wear small pieces break off and drift about, but in trade establishments and market gardens this objection would not have much weight, and even in private gardens there are places where utility rather than neatness should be considered.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

DEAR SIR,

Being a young farmer desirous of excelling in the profession, I appeal to you for information upon certain points which at present are exercising my mind.

My farm comprises about 100 acres, fully cleared, and in tolerably good heart, soil principally sandy loam—my stock at present consists of 1 Durham pedigree bull, 1 pedigree Ayrshire cow, 1 pedigree Ayrshire heifer calf, 14 high grade Ayrshire-Durham grade milch cows, and 12 calves of my this year's raising. Three horses, one sow, one hog and four young (Chester-white) pigs.—

My pasture is about 25 acres, divided into one piece of about 13 acres, another piece of 10 acres, and a small strip of about 2 acres. The river Yamaska rises and covers some portions of it during spring floods. What system of top dressing or manuring would you advise to keep it in good condition? When should it be applied, and how often repeated?

Of course some of my meadow land is poor, would my plan (to be hereafter mentioned) meet with your approbation, and will you kindly correct me in my mistakes and advise me?

There is a meadow of about six acres which I understand has not been turned over for about 10 years. I propose ploughing it this or next month, and in spring sowing oats without manure; then next fall again plough it say 6 inches, then spread 18 Scotch cart-loads (of covered shed) manure, then plough it again about 3 inches to turn this manure under, then sow barley and seed down. What mixture of clovers and grass-seeds do you advise for meadow land?

Would meadow land that I do not wish to plough be benefited by the application of say 10 good loads of manure per Acre?

If so, for how long would the benefit last?

Would an application of 200 lbs. superphosphate of lime and 200 lbs salt per acre be of equal benefit, and would it be equally lasting?

Do the salt and superphosphate do to be applied together, or in other words first spread one and then immediately follow with the other?

If I followed a rotation—first year oats on meadow land without any manure or fertilizer; second year corn, roots, or potatoes richly dunged in the hill with old manure; third year barley without manure; fourth year wheat, with 18 loads of manure per acre and seed down?

When is the best time to apply manure on meadow land? when on ploughed land? and superphosphate the same?

If I put in one acre Italian rye grass (*Lolium italicum*) this fall, or early spring, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre fodder corn to cut immediately succeeding the rye grass, should I not be able to keep at least 40 head of cattle?

We calculate we cut quite 110 tons hay this summer.

Many of my questions may appear elementary; but I wish on good authority to thoroughly understand the various points raised.

Your kind attention will greatly benefit me. H. T.

Dear Sir.—I was pleased with your letter of yesterday, and shall answer your present, and all future, questions with much pleasure, as well as I know how.

In my opinion, success with stock does not so much depend on the number of head a farmer manages to keep on a