

The Canadian Dairyman AND Farming World

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THE CANADIAN DAIRYMAN AND FARMING WORLD

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WEEDS MORE PREVALENT THAN EVER

While travelling through Western Ontario recently, we were particularly struck with the great encroachment that weeds have made upon the farms during the past summer. On many farms that were familiar to us and upon which in years past it was considered almost a crime to allow weeds to seed, are to be seen weeds this fall in all the glory of possession. Fence corners, gardens, orchards and other places, more or less inaccessible to cultivation, or to stock, were over-run with various sorts of weeds. Fortunately none of the most obnoxious ones were present. Burdock, lamb's quarters, pig weed, motherwort, mallows, Canada thistles and may-weed were the most in evidence. In the corn and root crops, thistles, fox tail, lamb's

quarters, pig weed, wild buckwheat and others more or less injurious possessed the ground to a startling degree. In some instances, it appeared as if the farmers had lost all hope and had permitted the weeds to take full possession of such land.

It is regrettable that such conditions are permitted to exist. If such practices be followed for any length of time, we may rest assured that the more obnoxious weeds will soon become introduced and will gain a strong foothold. This comparative neglect on the part of what used to be very careful farmers is largely accounted for by the scarcity of labor. Frequently, during the past summer, many have been tempted to employ less labor which, of necessity, meant leaving weeds largely to themselves. The result of such folly, is already too evident. It will be more so in the years to come and it will take several seasons to undo the mischief that has already crept in. It is high time that our provincial governments, enacted some law to force negligent farmers to take care of their fields. There is no excuse for allowing farms to become over-run with this pest. Where a farmer is not alive to the great danger of weeds, the Government should step in and cut these weeds for him, charging the cost to his tax account.

THE CENT THAT HIDES THE DOLLAR

Some men are so anxious to make money that they fail to recognize that in their anxiety to make a few dollars easily they are indirectly losing many more dollars than they are likely to gain. We have in mind an Ontario dairy farmer who last winter had a barn full of hay. The price of hay was advancing and he thought that he saw a chance to make a nice sum of money. With that object he fed his dairy cows on straw and held on to his hay. Unfortunately for him he held on to his hay until the price began to drop. Even then he did not begin to feed it to his cattle but held on to it hoping that the market would improve. He still has that hay on hand.

Because of the feed they received his cows did not do as well last winter as they might have and they went on to grass in thin condition. The result is that he has lost many dollars this year through the fact that his cows have not yielded what they would have been properly fed last winter. It is an old saying that you cannot fool a cow. A man who expects to make money in the dairy business must feed his cows liberally when the price of hay is advancing as well as when it is low. It does not pay to try and speculate in hay and keep dairy cows at the same time.

NEW POTATOE DISEASES

According to a bulletin recently issued by the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, two new diseases of the potato stem and tuber not hitherto credited to the State have been found to exist in several localities. Since one of these is distributed by means of the seed and the other is probably

spread in the same manner, it is important that the growers at once learn to recognize them. The appearance of the affected plants, above ground, is somewhat similar in both diseases. The plants appear more or less unthrifty, varying with the severity of the attack. The branches and leaves, instead of spreading out normally, tend to grow backward, forming a somewhat more compact top, frequently with the young leaves incurled and folding up along the mid-rib. Later they may become lighter green and even yellow and the whole plant gradually dies. The disease is easily diagnosed by pulling up and examining the portions of the plant below the ground.

Growers of potatoes in New Brunswick or in the other maritime provinces should be on the look-out for the appearance of either of these diseases. Should one have reason to suspect that the disease is prevalent in his district, samples of diseased plants should be sent to the Agricultural College at Truro, where they may be identified.

THEY ARE AUTHENTIC

There seems, on the part of many, considerable disposition to doubt the authenticity of official records of dairy cows as compiled and published from time to time. Truly, it is hard for one accustomed to milking a cow that produces annually 3000 or 4000 lbs. of milk, or even 8000 lbs., to grasp the full significance of, aside from believing such records as published recently in The Canadian Dairyman and Farming World, where two cows owned by Brown Bros. of Leeds County, Ont., gave 1004 lbs. and 93 lbs. of milk respectively in one day. Some farmers state their doubt of such records.

Happily, the originators of official testing foresaw the scepticism with which such results would be received. Provision was made for guaranteeing the absolute correctness of the tests. The men who have charge of the tests are generally appointed by the Agricultural College. They are thoroughly capable and understand their business. They personally conduct the test; not the owners of the cows. Thus there is no occasion for any doubt. These records are positive facts, not mere hearsay, as a recent visitor to our office expressed it. We can place every confidence in them. When we fully appreciate the full significance of high or abnormal production we will then be in a fair way for putting our herds into such shape that they may do their best.

HORSE RING MANAGEMENT AT TORONTO

Reference to the ring management at The Canadian National Exhibition is necessary for the good of future shows. It is impossible to expect the interest in the horse judging there ought to be under present arrangements. With the judging of one breed spread out over several days of the show, with a couple of classes in the ring each day, it is very hard to follow, and the display of any one breed does not make the impression upon the public it should. Possibly some exhibitors

might be inconvenienced if, for example, the Clydesdale judging was begun one day and continued till finished, and then another breed brought on, but the public would be greatly benefited. This is done in the cattle ring. The dairy cattle are all judged first and followed by the beef cattle. This gives the lovers of the different breeds a chance to see their favorites judged without having to spend a week or more at the show. Then there are the facilities afforded the press for making a report of the show.

Whether from a desire to prevent criticism of the judging or what, press representatives were not allowed in to examine the horses, excepting when they were going out of the ring. They were kept "behind the bars" and forced to judge of the judging at long range. A board nailed to the fence and a "soft" hard wood bench was the accommodation for the "scribes." It reminded one of the desk and bench of the old log school-house of half a century ago. Surely the great Toronto fair should be above such small business. It needs the agricultural press more than the latter needs it.

FORM AN ASSOCIATION

Another word with reference to cow testing seems timely. Let us repeat clearly: there is no charge to the farmer, who joins a cow testing association, for the testing. The Dairy Division, Ottawa, pays each man who is making the tests, and supplies the chemicals, blank forms, etc., absolutely free. The dairyman has only to provide a small dipper, one sample bottle for each cow, and scales, should he have none at present, though there is plenty of use for them on any farm. This necessary outfit, including scales, will cost only about two dollars for ten cows, or three dollars for twenty cows. The time required to weigh and sample does not mean more than ten minutes a cow per month to the average handy man. Time and money thus saved down, let us emphasize this point, no one who is keeping cows for profit, not simply for pleasure, can afford nowadays, in view of prices of all feed-stuffs, to be without definite knowledge as to each cow's capability and actual performance.

To reduce expenses means to increase profits. If a cow is producing fat, she is expensive and the profit is necessarily reduced to the vanishing point. With this simple means of selection, this easy co-operative method right at hand of checking up returns monthly (by means of the individual report and the complete summary of the association met regularly from the Department of Agriculture) there is no excuse for any dairyman not taking this initial step towards building up a profitable herd. The Government helps you to help yourself. Make use of the means provided. Form a cow testing association in your neighborhood. The Dominion Government is doing good work in forming these associations.

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