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## THE APPROVED PRACTICE IN MANGEL AND BEET CULTURE

George Rice, Oxford Co., Ont.

### Mangels and Other Roots Fill a Particular Place in Rations for Dairy Cows—Ensilage Cannot Take Their Place Entirely—How to Secure Quick Germination of the Seed

SINCE the advent of the silo there is a disposition on the part of many farmers to give up the growing of roots. Ensilage is better to preserve for the largest part of the feeding season, and it can be kept over for summer feeding. But to those who are producing winter milk, mangels, or cow beets, or sugar mangels are of great value. In fact, the roots are better for making milk than is silage.

Most dairymen engaged in making large records like to have the roots. A large breeder of dairy cattle living in New York state wrote me last winter asking if I knew where he could get a carload of mangels, or cow beets. Now, to ship them so far, haul them to the car and then from the car, not to mention other work and duty added, it would make them come very much more expensive than roots are to the farmer who grows his own. And yet farmers who can grow roots to perfection don't seem to realize the advantage of them.

#### ROOTS AND CORN.

One-half an acre of good corn and one-quarter of an acre of roots will grow more feed than an animal can eat in a season; it will provide sufficient ensilage for 300 days and roots for 200 days. Add to this straw that has been well preserved, and we have the basis of a mighty cheap ration, either for milk or beef. In fact, this feed grown on three-quarters of an acre and fed along with the straw is a better ration than 75 per cent. of the stock in the country gets.

Turnips, I consider to be of equal value, to mangels, but there is a danger of tainting the milk when they are fed improperly. Since it must be acknowledged that many people are careless, and as the mangels or sugar beets can be grown as easily, it is well to avoid any danger from turnip taint.

#### MANGELS FOR EARLY FEEDING.

I like to grow some mangels for early feeding in the fall. Mangels are softer than the sugar mangels or beets, and cattle learn to eat them whole more readily. I consider pulping roots, when there is silage on which to feed the feed, as so much waste time. Most people can find enough to do on the farm without doing useless work.

The long red mangels are great croppers, but the yellow intermediate will yield about the same, and on account of their shape they do not break

up so much in harvesting. The sugar mangels or beets are the best to grow. They keep better and are harder, do not break and are a little higher feeding value. The yield is quite satisfactory, and they are easy to harvest—unlike the sugar beet grown for the sugar factories, they stand well out of the ground.

#### RICH SOIL REQUIRED.

The soil cannot be too rich for mangels or beets. For these it is best to manure the land well the fall before. However, good crops can be grown from spring prepared ground. Manure heavily with well rotted manure, or with manure containing not too much straw, as that has a tendency



A Well Lighted, Well Ventilated, Well Drained Eastern Ontario Stable

The cow stables in which is produced the milk that supplies the City of Ottawa, came in for most favorable mention in the report of the Ontario Milk Commission. The dairies that supply Ottawa are sanitation. Note the abundance of windows provided, also the outlet chutes and the inlet apertures of the ventilation system of the stable illustrated.

to make the soil too dry. Plow as early as possible and keep the soil well worked in order to get it mellow and to start as many of the weed seeds as possible so they will not bother so much later.

#### SOW MANGELS ON THE FLAT.

Some prefer to sow their mangels on ridges. I have grown them of late years on the flat and have sown the seed with the grain drill, using every fifth hole; that puts the rows 35 inches apart, which is close enough.

From four to six pounds of seed is usually sown; four pounds is quite enough if sown evenly, but it is better to have them too thick than too thin. Some sow their mangels as early as May 1st; but I think labor will be well spent if the seed is not sown until after the 15th of May, and in the meantime the ground is kept worked up and gotten in very nice mellow condition. The seed, then,

comes up quicker and the weeds do not get such a start.

#### SOAK THE SEED.

In order to hasten germination it is a good idea to soak the seed. First put the seed in a grain bag and pound it on the floor by swinging the bag as one would a mallet. The seeds from striking the floor and one another will wear off the roughness and permit of them being sown more evenly. Blow out the dust after pounding and put the seed to soak. Make the soil quite wet and drain off any surplus water not taken up in six or eight hours. Keep the seed in a fairly warm place; stir it occasionally so that the top seeds will not become too dry, and then after a couple of days the seed should be about dry enough outside to sow well. They will still be soaked on the inside. If not dry enough to sow well, then dust-plaster or sifted ashes on the seed and mix together. When prepared in this way mangel seed will come up very quickly and thus not let the weeds get the start, in which case the mangels can be thinned out much more easily.

#### THIN WHILE SMALL.

Mangels should not be allowed to get too large before thinning, as they mat together. Taken at the right time, they can be thinned as easily as turnips, and without using the fingers. They should be thinned 12 to 16 inches apart; the richer the ground the thinner they should be left, as they will grow larger on the rich soil. Some like to leave them 18 inches apart.

It pays to have rich, well-fitted soil for mangels or sugar beets, as it saves labor and in harvesting it is no more work to lift a big mangel than a little one, and mangels should be large enough to pile up like stove wood. Then you have an

immense lot of good feed off a small amount of ground.

It is a discouraging feature to have so many roadside curs in the country. Not only the hounds, which are kept by the genteel sport, but the mongrels kept usually by men in towns and villages who scarcely keep their families well can sport one or more curs. These curs in the autumn get hungry for blood of some kind and too frequently satisfy it with the blood of some farmer's nice flock of sheep. This flock is thus injured to the extent that they never do so well again. But even under such handicaps as the many dogs that are around, some of our farmers are doing well with sheep. A few sheep can be kept to advantage and will prove profitable on almost every farm.—T. S. Raynor, Ottawa, Ont.