

FARMER'S ADVOCATE

AND HOME MAGAZINE

* AGRICULTURE, STOCK, DAIRY, POULTRY, HORTICULTURE, VETERINARY, HOME CIRCLE. *

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VOL. XXXVI.

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA, MAY 20, 1901.

No. 526

Teaching Stock Judging.

It will have been noticed that in the scheme for a Provincial School of Agriculture, in issue of March 5th, and in the editorial of Commission on Agricultural Education, in the last issue, special attention is called to the teaching of animal husbandry. A general idea of the topics discussed under that subject has already been given, namely, the breeds of domesticated animals, including their history and characteristics, the principles of breeding, feeding and judging live stock, together with the elements of veterinary science and bacteriology. It will at once be seen that to compass such a subject is no child's play, neither is it a subject to be taught except by specially trained men; no mere study of books can qualify one to teach such a subject.

In this connection we are reminded of some questions coming from readers of our agricultural college scheme: "How can a professor teach stock judging unless he has raised, fed and sold live stock, and thus found by practical experience why the money is in one animal and not in another?" The seemingly low estimate of a professor's knowledge implied in the question is not altogether inexcusable. When agricultural colleges were first started, stockmen educated to express themselves as teachers were not available; consequently, what little teaching was done necessitated the employment of men whose training was entirely academic—educated men, yet not versed either in the principles or practice of live-stock husbandry, nor entitled to be considered as live-stock judges.

The advanced agricultural colleges are now turning out men trained in live-stock work, who are qualified to act as teachers of animal husbandry or to act as live-stock judges, so that the objection to the professor is no longer tenable. The assumption of all live-stock knowledge by the man who feeds and handles live stock, under the plea that he alone is practical, is unwarranted and unsound. Too many people seem to think that the only qualification of a practical stockman is that he has made his living by handling stock.

In the industries, the so-called practical man has no place to-day: the really practical man is the one in possession of the principles underlying his work; therefore, we find that the professor's claim to be considered practical is the only right one, namely, a knowledge of the principles that underlie practice!

The teaching of live-stock judging involves a knowledge of the principles of draft, of milk or meat production, and of the reproductive powers, all of which are indicated to a great extent by the conformation of the animal. A description of the methods used in the teaching of live-stock judging will aid in making clear the advantages to the young farmer of such instruction.

The following will illustrate the method adopted in teaching the element of draft-horse judging. The instructor gives, first of all, a clear description of a draft horse, impressing on the students the essential points, such as weight, quality of feet and limbs, and the gait, and endeavors to get into their minds an ideal of a model draft horse. The drafter used as an illustration by the instructor is then made to walk straight-away, it being explained that a rolling motion means loss of draft power. The walk should be rapid, so as to accomplish plenty of work, and the tread should be even and elastic, with no tendency to stumble, thus avoiding to some extent the wear and tear of the feet. The gait at the trot is then reversed, notice being taken of the way the legs are handled, not crossed or mixed up, the joints well flexed and the limbs extended properly. The trot will aid in showing the presence of any unsoundness, and as a test for the wind. The horse is then made to stand squarely on its feet, while several students go over the animal, point by point, the head and eyes, the neck, the shoulders, the forelimbs, the arm, forearm as to its position, the hock, the knee as to its size, the cannon bone,

their shape, the tendons as to their being clean and well defined, the slope of the pastern, the width of the hoof heads, size and texture of the hoofs and the appearance of the sole and frog, are all gone into and carefully summed up. The depth of the chest, indicating lung capacity, the closeness of the coupling and depth of the back ribs are noticed, the latter being evidences of the digestive and wearing powers; the length and straightness of the back, width of loin (over the kidneys), length and straightness of rump, the setting on of the tail, the shape of the hips, all aid in determining the fitness of the animal for its work according to draft standards. The muscling through the stifle and of the lower thigh, together with the rump muscles, are taken together as an indication of the propelling powers, depending on the development of the parts mentioned. The size and cleanness of the hocks, absence of spavins, etc., the cannons and their tendons, the pasterns and feet, receive similar attention to that accorded the fore limbs. The junior student marks the score card, his score showing where he considers the animal deficient. A corrected score is given the class by the instructor, thus showing them the points overlooked, too heavily scored, or underscored—the perfect score being 100 points.

The use of the score card is continued until the student is thoroughly familiar with the points and their respective score-card values. Score-card values are obtained not by any arbitrary method, but from the experiences and opinions of the best judges, and are intended to show the student the relative importance of the different points.

Score cards done with, advanced work for senior students—namely, judging by comparison—begins, two or more animals being required for this phase of the work. Similar methods are followed in comparison judging, save that the students are furnished with a blank sheet of paper on which they will mark the animals placed first, second and third, each animal's weight and sex, and give the reasons for placing each animal in its position. As soon as the students have completed the work a "quiz" is conducted and the awards made, and if the placings are wrong, the instructor endeavors to make each student see why and how the awards were wrongly placed.

The teaching of the method thus outlined will not of itself make a man a live-stock judge. One result will be that the farmer's son so trained will involuntarily sum up the good and bad points of animals—analyze them, in fact. Constant practice in analyzing and comparing animals, both at the farm and at the agricultural show, will in time make a person a judge of live stock.

Brandon Experimental Farm Notes.

Seeding commenced on the Experimental Farm on April 9th, but owing to the snowstorm of the 15th, no seeding was done during the third week of the month. By the 22nd, some of the higher fields were again in good condition, and the drills have been busy every day since. With the exception of the very small plots, wheat seeding was finished on April 26th.

We find that an unusual number of perennial and winter annual weeds started during the wet weather last fall, and the land requires a great deal more work than usual to prepare it for seeding. When the soil is dry and not filled with coarse rubbish, the wide-toothed lever cultivator makes a clean sweep of these weeds, but on land filled with trash or that is slightly sticky, a disk harrow gives the best satisfaction.

We have sown, so that it is likely to meet with severe frost when the plant is in its most tender stage. Later sowings a week apart will enable us to obtain some light on the best time to sow this newly introduced grain.

Brome grass before the end of April was from three to four inches high, and the cattle were feeding on it all day long, while there was not a bite on the corn pasture.

Cleaning Crop and Fodders.

With the increasing attention to stock-raising and dairying, and the rapid settling up of the country, the question of winter feed becomes more and more important. While straw and prairie hay, where obtainable, can be utilized to good purpose in carrying stock through the winter, everyone recognizes the value of some additional food of a more succulent nature. For this purpose there is no crop that yields more abundantly or that furnishes succulent food in as convenient and easily-handled a form as corn; but corn is looked upon as a very doubtful crop in most of the west. The Experimental Farm at Brandon has had most satisfactory results, and here and there throughout the Province individual farmers have obtained equally satisfactory returns. The seedsmen also tell us that every year there is an increased demand for seed corn.

Another advantage of growing corn is that it can be used as a cleaning crop and all the work done with horse-power. Sown late (May 20th, Mr. Bedford recommends), it gives great opportunity for killing several crops of weeds by harrowing the land at frequent intervals, just as the seeds germinate. It can be sown with a shoe drill in rows three feet apart (by stopping up the intermediate drill spouts) and cultivated with a weeder till three or four inches high, after which a horse hoe can be used till the corn shades the ground. In cultivating corn, care should be taken not to stir the soil deeper than three inches, so as not to disturb or cut the corn roots. Such cultivation given to a crop of corn not only cleans the land as well as a summer-fallow and makes available additional supplies of plant-food that but for the cultivation would have remained locked up, but it firms the soil, leaving it in excellent condition for a wheat crop. With a rich, deep soil, thorough cultivation, seasonable planting and a selection of suitable varieties, there seems no reason why corn should not be a much more popular crop in Manitoba. A few years ago it was considered a doubtful crop in Minnesota and Dakota, but of late has been growing rapidly in favor, and its northern limit is continually moving northward. The varieties recommended by Mr. Bedford are: Pearce's Prolific, North Dakota Flint, and Longfellow.

Other crops can be utilized to furnish a welcome addition to the straw and hay roughage. Barley can be sown late, leaving time to clean the surface soil of many annual weeds, and, when cut green, will make excellent fodder, at the same time taking off most weeds before they mature seed. The millets may also answer a good purpose, but require more care in curing and feeding, as there is always more or less liability of getting foul weeds in the seed.

Summer Fair Dates.

Edmonton Summer Fair	July 1 to 3
Calgary	July 10 to 13
Yorkton	July 15
Wawanesa	July 18
Carman	July 18 and 19
Carberry	July 18 and 19
Virden	July 18 and 19
Portage la Prairie	July 23 to 25
Brandon	July 23 to 26
Minnetonka	July 30
Winnipeg Industrial	July 29 to Aug. 3
Oak River	Aug. 6
Neepawa	Aug. 6 and 7
Qu'Appelle	Aug. 7 and 8
Moosomin	Aug. 9
Regina	Aug. 13 and 14
Hartney	Oct. 2

A Prolific Flock.

W. R. Barlow, Kelowna, B. C., writes under recent date: "On any of your subscribers beat the record—twenty-six ewes I have had this spring bring three lambs, and only lost three these being from three different sets of triplets."