

MISTAKES IN BREEDING AND FEEDING PIGS.

The pig differs from all other kinds of stock in its inability to control heat. The horse controls it by sweating, cattle, sheep, dogs and poultry by opening the mouth and lolling out the tongue; but the hog does neither, but wets the skin artificially by rolling in the mud. This peculiarity does not arise from a dirty propensity, but from necessity, for really the hog is one of the most cleanly of animals, his instincts rising higher than any other in regard to self help. But the mistaken idea that he is a dirty animal, deserving of very little consideration, results in great loss to the owner. Give him a chance and he will make a bed that many a tramp would envy, but is too lazy to make. Cleanliness, with a dry warm bed, is hog nature; and the farmer who keeps hogs and don't conform to this law in their nature must suffer the consequences in his pocket.

It is a mistake to suppose the same amount of food will produce the same amount of pork in cold weather that it will in warm, for the reason before stated that part of the food is used in keeping up the heat, therefore it is a mistake to put off fattening hogs till the cold weather has set in, as is frequently done. Hogs will utilize milk, whey and other slops, but to get any benefit, they must be warm, as if very cold there may not be enough of food to do the heating. Any breed of hogs that is very active is bad, all their running and chasing about is at the expense of food.

It is a mistake to keep pigs more than ten months before they are made into pork. To kill at from eight to ten months they should be forced along from the first, bearing in mind that it is much cheaper to put on a pound of flesh on a young growing animal, than on a full grown fat one. In the case of beef it is supposed the extra quality makes up, but I don't think the quality of pork increases after it is ten months old.

THE BEST GRASSES.

At the present time, when the permanent pasture question is engaging the attention of the leading Canadian agriculturists, we present our readers with a short description of the principal varieties of grasses used in agriculture, which we hope will not be without interest to farmers who intend laying down land permanently to grass. The prevailing practice sanctions the use of nothing but red clover and Timothy; with an occasional addition of alsike clover and orchard grass. These are unquestionably among the best for the Canadian climate; but it must be borne in mind that the family of grasses is one of the largest and most varied in the botanical world, and from among the hundreds of cultivated varieties it would indeed seem strange if only some half-a-dozen were of any agricultural value. Many prominent farmers have concluded that a number of other sorts are equally as valuable for permanent pasture or hay as the popular sorts; and it is the more extensive cultivation of these varieties which we advocate. For several years a well-known seedsman, Mr. Wm. Rennie, of this city, has been testing the qualities of different grasses, clovers and forage plants, on his farm in Markham, and he informs us that he finds many sorts quite equal to any of the varieties which have heretofore been cultivated to any extent in this country. The following list contains descriptions of the most promising varieties and those which have proved to be valuable as hay or pasture grasses.

AGROSTIS VULGARIS (*Red Top*).

A popular variety in the Eastern and New England States, where it is extensively sown in connection with Timothy for hay crops. Will grow luxuriantly on almost any soil, and for permanent pasture is one of the best of American natural grasses. Flowers in June and attains the height of about eighteen inches.

AGROSTIS ALBA, OR STOLONIFERA (*Creeping Bent, Florin, Rhode Island Bent, or White Top*).

A variety differing principally from the above in having a white flower, and being of a more creeping or stoloniferous character. The preceding is recommended in preference to this for all purposes except producing lawns, for which agrostis alba is particularly adapted.

ALOPECURUS PRATENSIS (*Meadow Foxtail*).

is a spreading perennial found in all the best natural pastures in Europe. It is one of the earliest of cultivated grasses, flowering in May, and grows to greatest perfection on well-drained soils of medium texture. Is valuable chiefly on account of its permanent nature and producing broad, long, soft and slender root leaves which are eaten with avidity by all kinds of stock, and which, when cut or eaten down, immediately grow up again. The seed of this grass is very light, weighing only from six to eight pounds per bushel. Meadow fox-tail must not be confounded with the annual grass-weed which grows so extensively in the neighbourhood of farm buildings.

ANTHOXANTHUM ODORATUM (*Sweet Vernal Grass*).

This fibrous rooted perennial grows to the height of about eighteen inches, and flowers in May. It is perhaps the only variety which is fragrant, and to its presence many of our best pastures and meadows owe much of their charm. Sweet Vernal will thrive and produce a considerable bulk of herbage on light loams or soils of a medium texture, but on black prairie soils it soon dies out. The seeds are quite nervous and when spread out on a cold board, or on a layer of cloth, have the appearance of being animated. Owing to the extreme lightness of the seed—ten pounds per bushel—it should be sown with heavier seeds of other varieties.

DACTYLIS GLOMERATA (*Orchard Grass or Cooks-foot*).

This is one of the best and most widely cultivated of all grasses. It grows rapidly, obtains the height of from three to four feet, and its power of enduring the cropping of cattle commends it highly to the farmer's care. It blossoms about the same time as common clover, and earlier than Timothy, consequently it is well adapted for mixing with these varieties of hay crops.

FESTUCA GRASSES.

The Fescue family of grasses comprises a number of the most valuable species in cultivation. They have been grown successfully for nearly two centuries in England, and their cultivation on the continent dates to a period even earlier.

FESTUCA DUMIBOULA (*Hard Fescue*).

is one of the most valuable and important of the Fescue tribe of pasture grasses, and its presence in hay is generally indicative of superior quality. It comes very early, retains its verdure during long continued drought in a very remarkable manner, and is one of the best of pasture grasses. All kinds of stock eat it with avidity, but especially sheep, which always thrive well on the succulent herbage it produces. The plant grows about fifteen inches high, and will succeed on almost any good soil. Does not arrive at maturity for two or three years, after which it forms a thick bottom. *Festuca Ovina*, or Sheep's Fescue, is also a valuable variety. In the renowned natural pastures of South-eastern Russia, the sward is largely made up of this grass, and the hillsides on which it grows are, in the summer season, covered with flocks of sheep driven thither by herdsmen from all the surrounding country. It grows from six to ten inches high, in dense perennial rooted tufts, forming excellent pasturage for cattle, and particularly sheep. It flowers in June and July. In produce it is inferior to some others, but deficiency in quantity is more than counterbalanced by its excellent nutritive qualities.

FESTUCA PRATENSIS (*Meadow Fescue*).

This is the most popular of the Fescue tribe and deservedly so, as it is one of the earliest, most nutritious and productive of our natural grasses. Both in its green and dried state, it is eagerly eaten by all kinds of stock. It is especially suitable for permanent pasture purposes, and is more adapted to moist than dry soils, but it constitutes a very considerable portion of all high class pastures. The hay from it is plentiful and of excellent quality. There are several other varieties of Fescues, but the foregoing are the most popular. *Fescue Elatior* or Fall Fescue, is similar to Meadow Fescue, but taller and specially adapted to moist soils. *Fescue Rubra*, or Red Fescue, is a creeping rooted variety, specially suitable for sowing on loose dry soils, and for its endurance throughout severe droughts.

PHELUM PRATENSE (*Timothy*).

The well-known Timothy grown for hay by farmers in Canada.

POA PRATENSIS (*Kentucky Blue Grass*).

This variety is also known as June Grass, but differs slightly from a native Canadian grass which is frequently known by that name. It should form a portion of all mixtures for Permanent Pasture, and although it thrives best on dry soils, it is also adapted to moist situations. It requires several years to become well established in a pasture, but when well-rooted will yield an abundance of excellent feed. All kinds of stock eat it with avidity. It should also be included in all mixtures for lawns and pleasure grounds.

POA NEMORALIS (*Wood Meadow Grass*).

Grows from one and a-half to two feet high; has a perennial, creeping root, and an erect, slender, smooth stem. Its chief value is in that it will produce a good crop in moist, shady situations, where it frequently grows quite tall. Cattle are fond of it; it is succulent and nutritious, and is perhaps the best variety for sowing in orchards, under trees, and shaded situations, either for hay or pasturage, and for parks and pleasure grounds.