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# FARM AND DAIRY

&

## RURAL HOME

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### WHAT ARE ONTARIO FARMERS GOING TO DO FOR FUEL?

Professor E. J. Zavitz, O. A. C., Guelph

**Despite Legislation: and Aditition Woodlands are Gradually Disappearing. Parts of Ontario have a Smaller Portion of their Area under Wood than the best Agricultural Districts of Europe.**  
**Suggestions on the Improvement of Farm Woodlots**

THE problem in Ontario of preserving a reasonable percentage of woodland is one that has been discussed for many years. As early as 1890 there were warnings issued to the public that forest destruction was being carried too far in Southern Ontario. Early in the 80's the office of Clerk of Forestry was established, and the reports of this office were continually publishing warnings showing the dangers of denuding the country of its forests.

The Tree Planting Act of those days was an effort in the form of a bonus to encourage tree-planting and protection of woodlands. This act failed to accomplish practical results, and in later years was repealed. A few years ago another act was provided which endeavored to protect woodlands and encourage the farmer to give attention to his wood lot. This act is in the form of a bonus by which a certain amount of woodland may be exempt from taxes. Thus far I believe only one municipality has taken advantage of the act by passing the necessary by-law, and it seems that this legislation will accomplish little.

#### DISAPPEARING WOODLANDS

Despite legislation and agitation, the woodlands of Ontario are gradually disappearing. The country lying west of the proposed Trent Valley Canal system, comprising an area of about 20,000 square miles, contains less than nine per cent. of woodland and some 44 townships within this area have less than six per cent. of woodland. This comparatively young country has less woodland than France or Germany, and many townships have less woodland than that existing in England, which is said to contain about five per cent. of wooded area.

A large percentage of the existing woodlands in Ontario are standing on valuable agricultural soils. The growing of timber on the high-priced land does not appeal to the owner who is looking for direct returns, and the financial argument in the end will do much towards clearing this type of soil. Legislation will never persuade owners to grow timber on good agricultural soil. Where such soils are kept under timber it must be for aesthetic or other reasons. Owing to lack of accurate data, we are unable to compare forest crops and annual food crops on these soils in Ontario from the standpoint of revenue. In Europe, however, we know that annual net revenues per acre run from \$1 to \$12. These returns are of course in many cases for land unsuited to agriculture, but the figures are for highly productive forest lands with a stock of growing timber such as does not exist in our woodlands.

#### WOOD LOTS ON POORER LAND

The production of timber in Old Ontario must eventually depend upon the improvement of woodlots upon the poorer classes of soil and upon

the restocking of waste soils. The improvement of the existing woodlots can be discussed under the following topics:

**Protection from wind:** To produce a healthy, rapid tree growth soil protection is of first importance. The average woodlot is of such small area that winds sweep through, drying out the soil and carrying away the leaves which should go to enrich the soil. This can be overcome by planting a belt of evergreens along the exposed borders.

**Obtaining new and better trees:** Many woodlots have become thin with open spots. These



Evidences of Prosperity in Old Ontario

Mr. Sherwood Colston, Halton Co., Ont., part of whose buildings are here illustrated, says the East is good enough for him. His home and his farm are such that any young farmer might well be proud of and contented to remain with.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

should be filled by planting new material where natural growth fails to appear. Very often the more valuable trees, as ash, oak, and chestnut, have been removed, and the less valuable species have taken their place.

#### IMPROVING STANDING WOOD

**Improvement cuttings:** Improvement cuttings can be made by taking fuel, etc., from poorly shaped or defective trees and by cutting out weed trees, as ironwood and blue beech. This only requires common judgment, and is being carried out in a number of woodlots today.

**Fire and grazing:** It is scarcely necessary to mention that fire should not be allowed to run over the ground, as it is sure to kill the young growth, and injures the older trees. Grazing must be kept from the woodlot if young growth is desired, and on most soils grazing should not be allowed at any time.

A rich, clay loam or a sandy loam make good apple soil. I prefer clay loam myself with an open subsoil, but the apple will do on a variety of soils if it is well drained and given proper culture. There should be no permanent water nearer than eight or ten feet of the surface.—W. H. Gibson, Durham Co., Ont.

### Is Sheep Husbandry Going into Oblivion?

Leonard A. Murchison, Wellington Co., Ont.

A matter for no little discussion and some agitation among us farmers is the prevailing condition in the sheep market. One would almost consider the time and money spent by the Sheep Commissioners in this respect practically thrown away for all the material benefits derived. Something must assuredly be done to relieve the situation and transform the condition of things soon, or else sheep-raising in Canada will have passed into oblivion, where, by the way, our hog business has well nigh gone.

There is something decidedly wrong, somewhere! Who is to blame for this shortage of sheep and the prevailing situation? I do not think the farmer is wholly responsible. Still, those who have not seriously considered the avocation of sheep farming must not go scatheless. There is a great dearth of lambs, to be sure; yet it is, I think, in the Government's place to help things along, to put their shoulders to the wheel.

#### DEMONSTRATION SHEEP FARMS

Could not the Government establish demonstration farms in various parts of the country, where breeders could obtain a practical knowledge of the scientific methods of the industry? Then, again, each Government farm could in a comprehensive manner distribute pure bred sheep, especially rams, and furnish a practical example of the advantages derived by keeping only a certain breed most suited to the conditions in the community in which each farm is situated.

Special amendments might be made to the existing dog laws; as suppression of the evils attendant upon the attacks by dogs would remove the greatest obstacle to successful sheep-raising, and restore a necessary sense of security and confidence to this important industry.

### Care of the Pregnant Mare

Walter Elliott, Halton Co., Ont.

I raise as many as six foals in one season, having them come about May 15, and have always made a practice of using the mares for the spring work. I consider it a great mistake to pamper a brood mare. Tying up in a stable and feeding well cannot but result in weak colts.

Of course, we do not plan to knock our mares around very hard at the spring work. One of the greatest mistakes that can be made is to put mares through snow drifts. This is sure to cause trouble. Heavy backing a/c is dangerous. Straight ahead work on the disc plow or seeder, however, will not damage any mare.

I always try to be with the mare at time of foaling. I have sat up all night lots of times. This is a wise precaution when one has a lot of money invested as horses. We are losers if we do not take care. Even if we do lose a little sleep, the value of a good foal will pay us well for the trouble.

To get the largest possible crop-yield from every acre should be the aim of every farmer.