

Farm and Field

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION

The report of the International Commission on the Control of Bovine Tuberculosis has just been issued and gives a lucid account of the investigations of the appointed commission.

Owing to the great economic and sanitary significance of animal tuberculosis to the live stock industry of America, and the many and varied factors which must of necessity be taken into account in formulating successful measures for its eradication, the American Veterinary Medical Association, at its meeting in Chicago in September 1909, appointed the International Commission on the Control of Bovine Tuberculosis. The commission was instructed to study the problem of tuberculosis among cattle and to report at the next meeting of the association upon reasonable and economical practical methods or systems to be recommended to both officials and live stock owners, for eradicating this great scourge of domesticated animals.

The commission has had four meetings as follows:—Buffalo, N.Y.; December 13th and 14th, 1909; Detroit, Mich., March 1st and 2nd, 1910; Ottawa, Canada, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1910; Madison, V.I., June 7th and 25th, 1910; all of which were well attended.

Having made a careful study of the existing conditions of bovine tuberculosis the committee approved of the following methods for instructing the laymen, practicing veterinarians, practitioners of human medicine and health officers, namely:—

By the publication of appropriate articles on bovine tuberculosis in veterinary, medical and sanitary papers and journals.

By recommending to agricultural societies, granges and directors of farmers' institutes and unions and especially those interested in creameries and cheese factories, that lectures on bovine tuberculosis, its nature and control, be made a part of their program and that, so far as practical, demonstrations be held.

That those having in charge the arrangement of town, country and state fairs be requested to provide lectures on bovine tuberculosis, and, if practicable, to hold public demonstrations at their annual meetings.

That a pamphlet dealing with the nature of bovine tuberculosis and methods of its control should be written in language intelligible to the laymen. This pamphlet to have the approval of the commission and the endorsement of the American Veterinary Association and to be published free for distribution.

That departments of agriculture, state veterinarians, live stock sanitary boards and others interested in the official control of bovine tuberculosis be requested to promote as much as possible the educational features of their work, with the object of obtaining support and co-operation from cattle owners.

Pure Water and the Pollution of Waterways

The committee on public health have also sent out their report which contains an instructive address by Chas. A. Hodgetts, M.D., who is medical adviser to the committee on public health of the commission of conservation.

Mr. Hodgetts gives in the course of his address a table showing the mortality statistics of cities of Canada by provinces since 1900-1909. He makes a comparison of this table with a similar one of the European countries, estimating the death rate per 100,000 of population. The countries given are Scotland, Germany, England and Wales, Belgium, Austria, Hungary, Italy, Canada, and the United States. Of these the United States, Canada and Italy have the largest death rate from typhoid fever.

ABANDONED FARMS TURNED TO PROFIT

In driving through the Western country one sees a number of abandoned farms particularly in the lighter districts of the country. In the early days when the seasons were wetter than they are at present and the heavy low lands were subject to frost these light farms gave magnificent crops.

But many of the farmers who owned these light lands were lacking in foresight. They did not realize that by the continual cropping of their lands that they were impoverishing the soil. In a few years they had robbed the land of the humus and the high winds at all seasons of the year then tore the soil to tatters carrying to lodge on other sections the rich black loam. Finally the farmer despaired of raising wheat altogether on his once productive farm and abandoned it to move elsewhere.

Now these farms remain unproductive, hotbeds for crop-destroying insects and blots on the districts where they happen to be.

Though for wheat-raising it would take a long time to work these lands back into a state of fertility, yet, there are other methods of farming them for profit. Many of these farms will still grow good crops of grass and what better industry can the farmer turn his attention to than the raising of good horses. The prosperous farmers of to-day are not those who confine their efforts solely to the raising of wheat, but those who grow stock. The farmer who has four good horses to sell every spring for five to six hundred dollars a team is not distressed even in a year of protracted drought.

These abandoned farms if fenced and sown to grass would make excellent runs for horses. Of course the farmer could not expect to raise a large number of horses on them, but he could confine his efforts to quality more than quantity and thus realize a good profit.

Good farm work horses or drivers will always pay in the West, at least for many years to come. Yearly the horse dealers bring large shipments of farm horses from the East, which they sell to the farmers at a high figure. The farmers who raise these horses in the West get a ready sale for them for native horses are always preferred to imported horses.

The raising of horses requires a little more care than the raising of cattle, but the expense is little more. Horses are splendid rustlers in the winter time and will thrive where cattle would starve. They need a little attention in the winter such as bringing home at night to a warm stable and feeding a little grain, but in the day time it is best for the young horses to be outside especially if the breed is intended for heavy work on the farm, as size and muscle are required and exercise is one of the best methods to produce this quality.

The farmer who has a wheat farm adjacent to one of these abandoned farms would do well to purchase it and turn a little of his attention to the raising of horses.

KILLING QUACK GRASS

Quack grass, a native of the Prairie Provinces has gotten a hold in the soil of many farmers and is giving endless bother to them.

A field in which this grass has once become established, is absolutely useless as far as raising a crop of grain is concerned. When once in the soil, quack grass is harder to destroy than broom grass, and spreads with greater rapidity.

Numerous theories have been advanced by experts and farmers of the best methods of ridding the soil of quack grass; some of which advocate plowing at certain seasons of the year and others of working the soil into as loose a condition as possible and then pulling the roots out with a spring-tooth cultivator, cutting them off the field and burning them. The latter method was successfully carried out by Professor S. A. Bedford, of the Manitoba Agricultural College, while he was superintendent of the Brandon experimental farm.

On a field of a few acres, digging and pulling the roots off the field can be done to a degree of satisfaction, but the task of cleaning a large field in this manner would be great.

Much depends on the character of the soil in ridding quack grass. Light land is less subject to the grass and is much easier to clean than heavy rich loam.

Dry weather is the biggest enemy to quack grass; if the land is plowed late in the spring and the roots are lured to the level of the sun they will wither up and die, but to plow in wet weather is simply



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to cultivate the roots and render them larger and stronger. Harrowing after plowing is also had as it drags the roots and deposits them over the field where they will quickly take root.

One farmer in the Brandon district had a field of 30 acres in which this grass had gotten a firm hold. He tried plowing at various seasons taking advantage of dry weather periods and sowing barley, but all to no account. Finally the grass got so bad that cropping was out of the question, so he had the field fenced and used the same as pasture. After a couple of years of pasturing the land was then broken up in midsummer and barked in the spring, then sown to wheat. This method proved successful as there is now not a vestige of the grass in the soil.

Why the above method proved successful in eradicating the quack grass can easily be explained. By leaving the field idle for a couple of years the roots of the grass came close to the surface and the plants became weakened through lack of cultivation. The "breaker" then turned the soil over so as the roots were exposed to the sun and the weather being dry they withered up and died.

The best way to deal with quack grass is never to allow it to spread. As soon as it appears in the field dig the roots up and burn them and on no account drag the harrows over the spot as the roots will be carried to other sections of the field.

USEFUL POINTERS

Every day as long as they will come for it plan to feed the lambs some grain. A good way to be sure they will get it, and not the old sheep, is to have a little inclosure just off the sheep pasture, with a small opening between, so that the

little fellows can crawl through and get their rations without being disturbed. But close that opening when you are not nearby to attend to things, lest some sheep try to wedge herself through and get caught.

If you want to know how essential pure, cool water is to profitable swine-raising, feed a hog on a moderate amount of swill and milk just ten hours; then offer it some fresh, cool water by the side of any other kind of rations you can rake up and see how quickly and greedily he will choose the simple water.

A little bit of meal in the manger at milking-time is a time-saver. The cows come more quietly if they expect that meal than they would if a dog were tight to their heels, they give more milk and better milk and they will keep in better flesh.

The farmer who keeps all dust and other foreign matter out of his milk, who cools it properly as soon as he can after milking and who sends it from the dairy clean, pure and sweet is doing more to promote the health and well-being of the community than all the doctors for miles around.

A tuberculosis cow may not give tuberculosis milk, but the germs are sure to be about her and to infect the milk. Then the calves, the pigs and the children will be infected. A tuberculosis cow is worse than none.

The housewife will find churning a most trying and difficult task if the salt-supply of the dairy herd is neglected while the cows are gorging themselves on fresh green grass.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ANSWERS

The agricultural editor of The Grain Growers' Guide would be pleased to hear from farmers answers to the following questions:

Why do you summerfallow? What objects do you have in view and how do you secure them?

Are you troubled with smut in your grain crops? Do you treat your seed? If so, outline the method followed and say whether it is always successful?

How do you dispose of the manure made upon your farm? Are you satisfied with the results (a) upon the soil, (b) upon the succeeding crops? What do you con-

sider would be the ideal way of utilizing it in this country?

Do you practice any kind of seed selection? Where do you secure your seed grain and how do you prepare it for the drill?

Describe how to build an implement shed. Particularize as to dimensions of a building to house the implements on an average sized farm; state where you would locate it, how you would build it, and what would be the probable cost.