

"Unquestionably the most extraordinary circumstance in connection with the color question is the rapid advance of the chestnut. The prepotency of this color is extraordinary, and it seems as though it will be an exceptional occurrence to meet with a horse of any other hue in the course of fifty years or so. Yet it is remarkable that chestnut is not generally the most popular color, neither is it regarded as being the most serviceable by those who are compelled to get all they can out of their horses. For this reason one rarely sees a chestnut in the employ of the London General Omnibus Company, a most extraordinary fact, considering the prevalence of the color. The general belief that a chestnut sire and a chestnut dam will never throw anything but chestnut stock, although other colors will produce a chestnut foal, rather tends to discredit the theory that the color of the unborn animal is regulated by circumstances which arise after its conception; but, beyond the undeniable fact that chestnuts are multiplying upon all sides, little that is positive can be written. It may be noted that thirty chestnuts have won the Derby in 119 years, and only twenty four the St. Leger, and yet the chestnut thoroughbred is as much in evidence as any other color."



Sheep on a Hundred-Acre Farm

During the past couple of years a number of articles have appeared in *FARMING* on the subject of sheep-raising. These have aroused fresh interest in this important branch of farming, not only among farmers who keep sheep, but among those who do not. Of date February 18th, Mr. Robert Hodgson, Mitchell, Ont., writes us as follows:

"I have never kept sheep, but am thinking of doing so, and would ask, through *FARMING*, how many you would recommend to be kept on a farm of one hundred acres. My farm is in a high state of cultivation, and well under-drained with tile. During the last few years I have read a number of articles in *FARMING* in which the writers claim that sheep do well on weeds. My father always taught me that growing foul weeds of any kind took nourishment away from the crops. His faith was so strong in this direction that he did not allow weeds to grow on any part of the farm, including the bush. Since his death, four years ago, I have farmed in the same way as we did when working together. I state these facts so that you will know the condition of the farm, and also that you will not be advising me to feed them on weeds, either in part or whole."

As Mr. Hodgson's question is an important one we decided to get the views of a few of our most successful sheep-raisers in regard to it and other phases of sheep-farming, and have pleasure in being able to give our readers the benefits of the experience of the following well-known sheep farmers:

Mr. Richard Gibson, Delaware, Ont.:

"Replying to your favor of 21st containing a series of questions—I would say that whatever I may write in answer to them must be accepted as applying generally, having no foundation upon which to base literal answers.

(1) The number of sheep that could be kept on a hundred-acre farm in a high state of cultivation and well under-drained with tile. If the farm were to be cropped to its full capacity for carrying a flock and a succession of crops provided that would be at their best, each as required, a flock of 700 sheep could be kept.

(2) But it is not likely that a farm would be entirely cropped to produce sheep food. There would be on an ordinary 100 acres, say, 40 acres in grain, then there would be cattle and horses, so that perhaps there might be only 25 acres for sheep. A farm as described ought to pasture 7 sheep per acre for 6 months, say 100 head. There will then be 12½ acres to produce ensilage, cabbage, roots, etc., for winter feed. Six acres of ensilage, 4 acres of clover hay and 2½ of roots will supply ample food for wintering the flock of 100.

I recall to memory a 500-acre farm in England that carried about 1000 sheep, 50 head of cattle, 20 horses and some 200 acres grain crop for sale.

It may be taken for granted on good grazing land that seven sheep are equal to one cow. Again it may also be taken that on poor lands sheep will luxuriate and revel where cattle would starve, as for instance, on rough rocky lands or where weeds and briars hold sway. A bit of brush, a tender weed, the heart of a burdock or blue devil, would be a choice morsel to the one, but to the other as wormwood and gall.

(3) The most profitable way is to simply keep the number that the farm will provide suitable food for. A hungry sheep at night is an unprofitable sheep, hence the capabilities of the farm are about in ratio to the ability of the owner to cultivate such crops as may be not only required the year round, but especially to provide feed during the usual periods of scarcity.

(4) "Cost of keeping a sheep well for a year": Pasture per month, 20 to 25 cents; winter feeding, three pounds clover hay per day for each 100 lbs. live weight may be taken as an outside estimate. Four lambs, weighing 100 lbs. each, would require one ton, worth at present in London market \$5, so that on that basis it ought not to cost over \$2 per head to winter on hay alone, but that is not altogether advisable, so we may use ensilage as part ration; one acre ought to provide sufficient to satisfy fifteen sheep per winter; cabbage, one acre, will feed ninety sheep thirty days. In England we used to allow one acre of swedes to 20 to 25 sheep per winter. Prof. Craig, at Madison, Wis., in his experiments in feeding lambs, found they consumed grain to the value of eight to eleven cents per head per week. I don't think ordinary sheep of commerce cost the average farmer more than \$2 per head per year."

Henry Arkell, Arkell, Ont.:

"In answer to your question of 'how many sheep could be profitably kept on a 100-acre farm.' In my opinion from 60 to 70 sheep could be kept without interfering with the general rotation of crops, and it would be very helpful to the enrichment of many a Canadian farm.

"A sheep could be kept well on a mixed ration of a little grain, roots, hay, and pea straw for the winter months for from 50 to 60 cents per month. During the summer months they could be pastured for, say, 20 cents per month.

"Keeping sheep in hurdles on the ground in summer is certainly the most profitable way of feeding sheep and thoroughly manuring the ground. Give them a fresh piece every day. But one drawback to that system in Canada is the excessive heat in the middle of the day, when it is of great benefit for the sheep to have some shade. The least trouble is to let them have a run of pasture, but not to keep them on it too long at a time. Sheep never want to be kept long on any single run. A change is what they like and thrive on. They must also have access to fresh water all the time. A pasture field of red and Alaska clover and alfalfa is the best. The latter has proved with me to be just the thing. It stands the drouth well, and sheep are very fond of it, but it must be kept fed down, and not allowed to become rank.

"A great many of our Ontario farmers seriously stand in their own light in not keeping sheep. If one kind does not do well with them another will, and, as I said before, nothing enriches land like a band of sheep, and land enriched helps the farmer."

John Jackson, Abingdon, Ont.:

"In answer to your enquiry as to how many sheep can be kept on a good farm of 100 acres without interfering much with other farm operations, much would depend on the kind or breed of sheep kept. Some kinds require double the food that others do. It may be thought by some that a sheep is a sheep, but size and make up have a good deal to do with the amount of food required. We keep nothing but pure Southdowns. On a farm of 110 acres, clay land, we keep five horses and about fifteen head