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CONTROLLING OR WEEDS

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D. G. MacKAY.

Wonders Oat Sheaves

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he horse, upon which
consequence, as here
very nearly balance

nevertheless, there are few points to be advanced
in favor of the sheaf.

You have a uniform allowance, tied in a neat
bundle, to be fed the year round, which is easily
handled, and there is no danger of an over or
under feed being given; no matter how windy
and wet the weather may be, or how tired and
out-of-sorts you may feel. Cut at the right shade
of greenness, just when the top oats are turning
color, the horse will eat all the sheaf, and there
is no waste—no old stubble or such litter mixed in
with it; weeds are also scarce, as a good crop of
green oats will smother them out—quite the
reverse sometimes happens with timothy hay.
Another advantage is that the horse will start
eating as soon as he gets his sheaf and not stand
waiting for his oats. Sheaves well cured and
clean make a splendid and safe fodder for brood
mares and young colts, on account of their strong
nourishing properties. In winter, there is no
better or cheaper food for idle horses than the
green oat sheaf, when fed alone. Horses are
kept in good condition, while they are more
easily handled than those fed too many oats,
and are not so liable to stock in the legs. After
being off oats all winter and then coming on
about a month before the spring opening, gives
the horses a healthy and vigorous lift for the hard
work. Besides being a handy and convenient
feed for winter, oat sheaves are also very con-
venient for away-from-home work, such as wood-
hauling or road work. These are the most
important advantages regarding feeding.

We shall now consider the advantages gained
to the land. The land on which you grow the
two crops should be about the same; fairly strong
to ensure a good crop. But if, as is often the case,
you sow on a piece of dirty ground infected with
wild oats, false flax, skunktail or couch grass,
what are the results? In the green oat crop,
with a proper method of handling, these weeds,
especially the wild oats, may be almost com-
pletely eradicated. (This is a fact we have
proved by a unique method which we are fol-
lowing by the aid of the green oat crop. We
believe it to be one of the most effective methods
ever used in combatting this weed. It entails
a certain amount of extra work, but the results
are worth it. Some other time, I will describe
these methods.) Now for the grass crop. The
grass seed (timothy) is sown a year in advance
in a nurse crop. Two seasons' hay crops are
taken off. This gives the land three years with
no cultivation, making an excellent breeding
ground for the above mentioned weeds, except
the wild oats. These lie buried in the soil and
generally make their appearance in the succeed-
ing wheat crop. The land after hay is left the
stronger. But, if you were to grow two succes-
sive wheat crops after the hay and compare
them with the two wheat crops following the
two green oat crops, there would be, taking
everything into consideration, no very great
difference in the profits obtained. Our method
of working the green oat ground will also stand
proof for this.

Let us consider the benefits reaped by the
farmer. All those advantages already mentioned,
of course, sum up to him; but there are other
advantages besides those coming to him through
the horse and the land. Principally, they may
be found in the outlay and returns. We will
presume that the farmer is to grow the seed;
were he to do so, the cost would be about the same
in either case, for though the grass seed is the hard-
est to grow, it leaves the land in the best shape.
Some might contend that getting two crops at
one seeding is an advantage in favor of hay.
But this advantage is made insignificant when you
consider the facility with which oat seed is grown,
the minimum amount of work in sowing and
harvesting the two separate green oat crops in
comparison to the work done on the hay crops,
and the need of cultivation to keep down the
weeds. (I would consider the extra cultivation
obtained in preparing for a second green oat crop
a benefit rather than a loss, even were it only to
clean the ground and preserve the moisture.)
Allow me to contrast the work in the two crops.
In the seeding you sow the grass seed, in the calm
of the early morning, or hunt the neighbor for
a drill with a grass seed attachment, by which to
sow it—such an implement, it seems, is very hard
to get hold of, in this country. A green oat
crop is sown similar to any other grain crop, only
late in the spring after the principal rush is over.
It is also cut before the harvest rush comes on and
is stacked shortly after all the grain is cut. The
work is not nearly so heavy as mowing, raking,
coiling and stacking hay. In feeding, the sheaves
are the handier, especially, if you have to feed

from outside. No worry about the right amount
to feed, as that, by a little thought may be regu-
lated on the binder. Mention of the binder
brings to one's mind the fact that you use twine
in tying oat sheaves. Yes, but it is not necessary
to do so unless you are convinced that the twine
pays for itself, in lack of waste, saving of time,
feeding conveniences, etc.

I shall now offer a few remarks on certain
phases of the rations not already mentioned.
In bulk, you receive more from an average green
oat crop than from an average hay crop. You
can sell any surplus you may have without
the use of a pair of scales. Outside in the stack
the butts only are exposed to the weather.
There is slight danger of rusty or musty sheaves
if you observe the following rules: cut before the
rust comes on, stook in small round stooks and,
as we do, on the plowed ground (part of our plan
in killing wild oats), this lets the wind in under
the stook—no stubble to hinder it. Also the
black, fresh earth will hold and reflect more heat
from the sun than stubble land, making a hotter
and drier curing ground. In decent weather,
sheaves may be cured in this way in about two
weeks.

And, finally, though I truly believe that green
oat sheaves are better than hay, yet a little
experience along both these lines would do no-
body any harm. You may read of this or that
man's experiences, but unless you do a little
experimenting for yourself, you can never find
out the real facts as they exist under your con-
ditions.

Langford, Mun., Man.

JOHN E. SLATER.

Should Consider Economy of Feeding Horses

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In taking up a question of this kind viz: hay
or green oats for horses, we have to look at it from
the viewpoint of economy, without losing sight
of having horses fit to do their work when re-
quired. As most horses on farms are idle for five
months of the year, the question will naturally
resolve itself into how to feed horses during the
idle or winter period, and during the summer or
working season. It is, in the writer's opinion, a
ruinous practise to grow oats for hay on any ex-
cept very cheap land, in fact, there is no country,
except this, where it would ever be thought of
unless to feed to dairy cows or something from
which a much better revenue is derived than from
idle horses. Where straw is so plentiful, (and,
in fact, taking the country all over, it is doubtful
if the chaff is all used for feed) what is to hinder
it from forming the bulk of the roughage used
during the idle months? Oats, to make hay, have
to be cut very green, for unless cut in the early
milk stage, they have a way of ripening the straw
and the grain so that you gain nothing. You
are feeding oats and straw without the apparent
results seen by feeding separate. By cutting at
this green stage, the nourishment may, of course,
be in the straw, but I will leave that side of the
question to be decided by others.

Take an average field which, if allowed to
ripen, would yield forty bushels to the acre; by
cutting at the green stage you lose one-half, and
the other half will be very inferior quality. If
any farmer cares to try, he will find by threshing
the oats he will save half of them and still have his
horses fit to go on and do their summer's work.
By sowing a few acres of corn and giving them a
sheaf of that every day, straw for the balance and
by putting a little ground flax into the oats fed,
horses will gain and be healthy, with very little
expense.

During the working season the horse deserves
to be fed well and even if timothy hay is eight
or ten dollars a ton it is better to feed it than sell
it. On any farm that the owner intends to stay
on for any length of time, it is necessary to seed it
down, and the first crop, at least, should be cut
for hay, which can be fed to working horses at a
profit. To sum up, while not disparaging green
oats, which have a place on the farm such as a
change for colts, calves and milking cows, it is
better to thresh the oats for horses, feeding straw
and corn for roughage during the winter, and
tame hay along with the oats in the working
season.

Dufferin Mun., Man.

"RUSTICUS."

Likes Both Hay and Sheaves

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

When I read the question in your paper
"Which is better to grow for horse feed, tame
hay or oats cut green" I settled the question in
my own mind almost immediately, but I always
like to look at both sides of everything. So I
figured this all out and although I am of the same
opinion still, I am open to conviction, but would
like to see the man that can convince me.

Just at this time of year, oat sheaves are about
the best and most convenient feed we can get.
They are very handy to take out of a stack, to
haul, and for use in the stable. They are not
wasteful, especially in a high wind. They are
the best feed for idle horses as they cannot bolt
or waste them, as they generally do with threshed
grain.

Horses that are driving or working steady are
better with hay and oats. They will not scour
so much on the road and do better every way.
Working horses require more grain than idle
ones and with hay a person knows exactly how
much grain he is feeding, which he does not if
feeding sheaves. When working a team hard,
I prefer even straw and oats to sheaves.

But it certainly does not look economical to
feed hay worth anywhere from five to fifteen
dollars per ton and oats that cost four or five
cents per bushel to thresh, when you can feed the
same oats in the sheaf and make use of the straw
which has no market value.

Horses are better with a little hay as spring
approaches and during the rush of summer's
work they almost have to get it. I have seen
horses worked without hay or oats either, but it
does not pay. If a man has hay to spare in the
spring he can generally get a good price for it.

Just now the question of time enters the sub-
ject. From the first of seeding until freeze-up,
the farmer should make every day count. To
plow extra land and sow it to oats takes consider-
able time right in the busy season, but a man can
sow his grass seed along with his barley or other
grain and lose no time or labor. Haying time
comes just before harvest and a man can put up
his hay then, while if he had no hay he would
probably do nothing and lose valuable time.
If he depend entirely on green oats, he would
spend time on them when he should be stacking
grain, threshing, or plowing.

However, I think it is a good plan to stack
up some oats in the fall especially if barn room
is scarce. The sheaves will be fresher than hay
that has stood out in the weather and perhaps
moulded.

I like my oat sheaves ripe enough to thresh,
if necessary, but not ripe enough to shell easy.

Perhaps it is outside the subject to mention
the good that growing hay and rotation does the
soil, but anyway, it would be expensive to use
hay entirely and burn straw.

On the other hand, oat sheaves alone are not
enough the year around, so I say grow both.
A change of feed is a great thing for horses and
you can then feed which you like.

Louise Mun., Man.

ALLAN McEWEN.

"The Real Draft Horse"

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

In your issue of January 27th, I notice the letter of
Mr. Rawlinson of Mayton, Alta., on "Real Draft
Horses." The draft horse of today must have,
besides weight, something to stand on, first good feet,
long sloping pasterns, nice flat bone, good straight
action, keeping the hocks well together at both the
walk and trot. The Clydesdale will hold his own
against all other breeds in these points of the modern
draft horse. Mr. Rawlinson claims that it is the
Shire you see moving the big load in the cities of the
Old Country. I would like to know where all the
geldings bred in Cumberland and Dumfriesshire, and
other border counties, find a market. Mr. A. Foster
of Carlisle, one of the largest horse dealers in the
north of England, has a demand for more than he can
supply in London. I guess they will go down to Lon-
don for "vanners," as Mr. Rawlinson terms them.
I know the class of horses they raise on the Border,
being a Border man myself. A few years ago, when
the Royal Show was held in Carlisle, the agricultural
class for two and three-year-old geldings was con-
sidered by many good judges, to be the best ever
seen in a show ring. The use of such fine breeding
horses as "Lord Lothian" "Royal Citizen" etc., has
made this district famous. The latter horse is now
in British Columbia, but he has left some fine stock
on the Border. The Shire men will have to import a
better class of horses, if they want to get them
popular in the West. The Clydesdales have come to
stay, for they are the horses best adapted for the
country.

Gladstone, Man.

WM. ARMSTRONG.