

Pedigreed Cheshire Pigs for sale.

We had the advantage of visiting several times lately Colonel Rhodes' stables this winter and took a great interest in the stock kept; specially the pigs, which are most thrifty and in every way good. The sows being fed on prepared food, with ensilage, have an abundance of milk and their young are thereby in the best of condition.

Colonel Rhodes offers pedigreed animals, of the best type, at the very moderate price of five dollars, at eight weeks old, giving to purchasers the choice at the time of their visit and purchase. There is now quite a number to select from, and as the demand is considerable over readers should not delay in making their application for young pigs, where required. Address: Colonel Rhodes, Bergerville, Quebec.

CROPS.

SEASONABLE NOTES.

TOP-DRESSING CORN.

THERE is an unusual amount of interest in the subject of top-dressing corn at present. Correspondents are asking the same question many times over in slightly different form, the point of which is, How are we to top-dress our wheat, barley and oats? We will answer the important question as briefly as possible. First, then, let us pause before making up our minds to throw money about. Our connection lies among farmers great and small, thoroughbred and new-fangled, practical and scientific, town-bred and country-bred, reading and non-reading. We notice that a very large number of good farmers do not top-dress unless the corn is weak. When wheat is strong and abundant on the ground—when there is a good "plant"—we say, Let well alone, and do not increase expenses. When barley and oats come up thickly and prosperously, again, we advise keeping our friend in our pockets and letting well alone. Once open the flood-gates of credulity, and we are positively never done, and if farmers who never read lose much, there is, it must be confessed, some advantage in the fact that they are the less likely to be run away with by suggestions and ideas. We hope this will not be considered too reactionary, but, in sober truth, it requires a great deal of judgment to read aright, and we may call to mind the question once asked by a great man. "Understandest thou what thou readest?"

The fact is there are three alternatives involved in top-dressing corn which should not be forgotten.

- They may do good.
- They may do harm.
- They may produce no effect.

Now if corn looks well, why should we assume fresh risks?

Taking these three alternative separately we feel some confidence in saying that top-dressings will do good when corn follows corn, as when barley follows wheat. (1) The land under these circumstances requires help, and probably the best dressing—that is, the dressing most certain to act—is $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 cwt. of nitrate of soda. If superphosphate is added it should be applied separately, and as soon as possible. The best method is to sow it broadcast over the land before sowing, and

to harrow it in. If salt is added it is best mixed with the nitrate of soda at the rate of 3 cwt. per acre. Let us, however, clearly understand that the effect of superphosphate is less certain on corn than that of nitrate of soda, but as it is cheap the risk may be run. The farmer who has the keenest appreciation of the "main chance" will probably confine himself to the nitrate, and we view the salt as useful if only as a distributant, but in the chances inherent to soil and season, we think it may do good. We are also convinced that in the long run superphosphate applied, as recommended, will also prove a useful addition.

When corn, looks yellow and is thin upon the ground, a top dressing of nitrate of soda or sulphate of ammonia will soon bring back the colour and produce a vigorous growth. When corn is suffering from wire-worm a top dressing of salt and nitrate of soda, followed up or preceded with repeated heavy rollings will quickly produce a marvellous change. In all these cases we recommend top-dressing.

Next as to when they may do harm. When land is in good condition and the crop is seen to be in a thriving state, the line of maximum production may easily be over-stepped. In such cases a top-dressing is liable to produce too much straw, and should a wet summer, or even a "droppy," growing season occur, the crop becomes twisted and lodges. The consequence is a disappointing yield and a thin sample. Top-dressing in such cases also induces blight, and thus the £20 or £30 spent on top-dressing is worse than lost. Top-dressings produce no effect in certain cases, difficult to explain or understand, but we may state, as a fact, that they produce less effect to well-farmed land which has been dunged than upon exhausted soils or those naturally poor. Top-dressings also sometimes produce little or no effect in dry seasons and in dry climates. In the more southern parts of Europe these dressings are less used than in England, and one large farmer in Austro-Hungary declares that artificial manure only produce an effect once in a series of years while oil-cake fed by cattle may always be relied upon to increase a crop, when applied in the form of dung. John Wrightson.

FERTILIZERS (By Prof Kinch.)

During an ordinary four-course rotation there would be taken away about 325 lb. nitrogen, 95 lb. phosphoric acid, and 250 lb. potash, by far the larger quantities of nitrogen and potash being in the seeds and roots. But, assuming that the grain was sold off the land, and the roots and seeds consumed thereon, and the straw also returned, the actual loss would be about 25 lb. of nitrogen, 33 lb. of phosphoric acid, and 20 lb. potash. If the produce were principally fed to milch cows, and the milk sold, the losses would be much higher.

The value of those manures which may be termed direct fertilizers is dependent mainly on their contents in nitrogen, phosphoric acid, and potash. It is not enough, however, that a manure contain these or any of these constituent, they must be in a form in which they are or can become readily available to the plant. One pound of nitrogen in nitrate of soda costs between 7d and 8d. a pound of soluble phosphoric acid in mineral superphosphate costs rather under 2d; and a pound of potash in kainit costs rather less than 2d.

Here we give a table showing the amounts of these valuable constituents usually present in 1 ton of farm-yard manure and in 1 cwt. of a few of the more common concentrated manures which are used to furnish these plant foods to the farmer's crops:—

(1) In the richer lands of England good malting barley cannot be grown, as usual, after roots fed off by sheep.