

AGRICULTURE.

News of General Interest.

Sheep in Europe.

The future of sheep-breeding in Germany, Austria, and France is causing some comment in the wool manufacturing centres of Europe, caused by a large falling off in sheep-breeding. Prof. Wilkens, who has made a considerable study of the question, reports the decrease in Marino sheep as especially remarkable in Silesia, Bohemia, and Moravia. The total decrease in Austria has been from 5,026,398 head in 1869 to 3,841,340 at the present time, a decrease of 23 per cent. In a few cases we are told there has been a substitution of the English mutton breeds for the Merino, but as a rule the sheep have been replaced by cattle, the increase of the latter having been, in the last fifteen years, from 7,424,365 head to 8,584,977 head, or 15 per cent., as against 23 per cent. decrease in Merino sheep. In Hungary there has been a decrease, on the contrary, in both sheep and cattle; in the former a decrease of 5,037,007, or 35 per cent., accompanied by a trifling decrease in cattle. As the consumption of wool in Europe is enormous, it is probable that the falling off alluded to will be of much benefit to Canada and the United States, and that before long there will be a heavy demand for wool. Canada is well adapted for sheep raising, and as wool is an article that is always in demand, those of our farmers who are prepared to devote more attention to sheep farming will doubtless find it a profitable enterprise.

THE DAIRY.

Sir J. B. Lawes says he does not think the quality of the cow's milk is affected by the amount of water she drinks, but is of the opinion that thin and sloppy feeds may have the effect of reducing the quality of the milk. Dr. Voelcker is of the same opinion.

The importance of having cows calve in the fall so as to have the heaviest flow of milk in the winter, when milk and butter are high, cannot be too well understood. Some farmers value fall calves as highly as spring calves, for the reason that they are ready to turn on grass as soon as it comes in the spring, and so get the full benefit of a summer's pasture.

A writer to an English journal says:—I have been used to the Ayrshire cow in her native country, and now have a herd in the south. I have seen her tried side by side with the Shorthorns and some other breeds, and I have no hesitation whatever in saying that, taking the cost of production into account, the Ayrshire is the best all-round dairy cow in the British Islands.

How milking is done in the Island of Jersey is thus described:—"Tall buckets narrowed near the top, with widened mouths are used. A linen cloth is tied over the top; then a smooth sea shell is pushed down in the depression to receive the milk. The shell prevents the wearing of the cloth by the streams of milk. When the milking is done the straining is also completed.

The rage among the dairymen now seems to be to see who can show the largest two-year-old milk record by one of their choice heifers. It is always a laudable ambition to try to excel; but the forcing of such a young cow to her full capacity, in the attempt to make her attain to a higher record in milk and butter yield, is simply to overtax the ability of a promising young animal and injure her future usefulness. It is a debatable question in the minds of many good stockmen whether a heifer should be allowed to have a calf before she is three years old or not, let alone forcing her to make a big milk record.

The constant use of the blacksmith's right arm makes it the larger and stronger, and by the same physical principle the heifer may be made to develop a larger udder to produce more milk. Rubbing and stretching the udder will increase its size, and frequent milking will have the tendency to increase the flow of milk. Heifers have been brought to their milk by the sucking of their udders by others, and a cow milked three times a day will always give more milk than when milked but twice. When trials for large yields are made, this fact is taken advantage of, and the cows are milked three or four times within the 24 hours.

THE FARM.

A light dusting of salt sown on buckwheat is said to largely increase the productiveness of its grain, making it fill well even in dry weather.

The saying that tillage in manure is most emphatically true in hoed crops after a rain when the ground is moist and

warm. A thorough cultivation at this time is fully equivalent to a dressing of manure of ten or twenty loads per acre.

John M. Stahl reminds farmers that it is not economical to use shrunken grain for feed. The conditions for growth must be very favorable if the crop even comes up to the average attained by growth of plump grain under ordinary conditions.

Many kinds of weeds find their last refuge in fence corners, and hang around the outskirts of fields long after they have been destroyed in the centre, where the plow and cultivator have free course. A farmer who tries hard to free his fields from weeds and is balked by this difficulty soon begins to ask himself whether this offending fence is a necessity. In a great majority of cases the answer to this question will be that it is not.

The N. E. Farmer says the weak point in many farmers is the lack of ability to sell their crops after they have raised them. What the farmers need is enough skill in the way of trade, enough mercantile ability, to enable them to obtain fair compensation for their products, and not to be at the mercy of a few speculators who may combine for the purpose of controlling prices and reaping the lion's share of the profits.

A Monroe county, N. Y., correspondent of the Country Gentlemen says of the year's wheat crop:—"This year's experience with Clawson will be the last with many farmers. No wheat is more easily injured by rains, as the head is open and the berry naturally soft and starchy. The grain shells badly when open-ripe. Yet where the fly has not hurt it, I hear of some heavy yields of Clawson wheat. The best yet reported is 38 bushels per acre. Yet two months ago this wheat promised as well as Clawson, in the same neighborhood, which last year yielded 45 or more bushels per acre."

It is rare to find barley badly stained that will hold out full weight, and it generally presents a somewhat shrivelled appearance. There are two reasons for this. The staining of barley is commonly the result of leaving it until too ripe before cutting. If slightly green when cut, it will bear considerable rain without injury, and the stock will continue to feed the grain until both are dry. The second reason is, that much stained barley has been so thoroughly dried before wetting that the grain absorbs some moisture and slightly swells. When it dries out again the same substance occupies a larger bulk than before, and consequently cannot weigh so much per bushel.

THE POULTRY YARD.

If hens are to be kept in winter with a view to profit, they must have comfortable accommodations, where they can be protected from extreme cold, and have a southern or south-eastern exposure, where the sunlight can be admitted.

See that all fowls, young and old, are protected from damp winds. It is now a good time to stop up all leaky roofs and batten up any holes that might cause direct draughts. Good care now means freedom from roup later. When fowls are kept healthy the money return is always larger.

Roup usually comes from exposure during moulting, dampness and bad dirt, poor feed, foul quarters, cold winds, and lice. Late-hatched chicks nearly always invite roup, and it comes and stays unless promptly and vigorously treated. The best possible treatment for roup is prevention. When the bird is once affected something must be promptly done. Frequently the best thing to do is to kill and cover or burn it up.

In summer the drink should be cold. In winter do not give ice water, but add enough warm water to take off the chill. Fowls need water even when they have access to snow. Always have before them lime, in the form of oyster shells and the like, ground fine. Pick up all pieces of broken crockery and it will soon disappear. Whatever the feed, fowls will not lay if warm, comfortable houses are not provided.

If treatment for roup is to be given, separate the diseased fowl at once in a large well-ventilated apartment of dry, even temperature, free from all draughts. Feed on hot bran, mashed and boiled meat and potatoes, steamed wheat, cabbage and milk and bread. Feed sulphur in hot, soft feed, and several times daily take the bird by the feet and with head down dip the head into a solution of salt and water, a big spoonful of salt to a quart of water. Every day the inside of the house should be whitewashed with a strong solution of chloride of lime, into each bucket of which there should be an ounce of fluid carbolic acid.

TRADE AND COMMERCE.

RETAIL MEAT MARKET.

Beef, roast, per lb.	\$0 12 1/2 to \$0 18
Beef, steak, per lb.	12 1/2 to 18
Beef, corned, per lb.	7 to 9
Beef, boiling, per lb.	11 to 12 1/2
Beef fore quarters, per 100 lb.	12 1/2 to 14 00
Beef hind quarters, per 100 lb.	12 1/2 to 14 00
Veal, roast	15 to 20
Veal, chop	18 to 20
Pork, roast	10 to 12 1/2
Pork, farmers' per 100 lb.	4 00 to 4 50
Mutton, roast, per lb.	12 1/2 to 18
Mutton, leg.	12 to 18
Mutton chop	15 to 18
Ham	15 to 18
Breakfast bacon	12 1/2 to 15
Lard	12 1/2 to 15
Lard, per pair	2 50 to 3 00
Sausage	12 1/2 to 15
Bologna sausage	10 to 12 1/2
Shanks	8 to 10
Liver	15 to 20
Kidney	15 to 20
Head cheese	12 1/2 to 15
Heart	12 1/2 to 15
Tongue	12 1/2 to 15
Chickens, per lb (dead)	18 to 25
Geese, per lb (dead)	18 to 25
Butter, per lb.	15 to 20
Chickens (alive) per pair.	40 to 50
Turkeys, each.	80 to 1 00

WHOLESALE MEAT AND CATTLE MARKET.

Milk cows	25 00 to 40 00
Working oxen, per yolk	80 00 to 120 00
Live cattle, per lb.	8 to 10
Cattle, per lb.	5 00 to 20 00
Side bacon, per lb.	9 1/2 to 10
Roll bacon	13 1/2 to 14
Hams	14 1/2 to 15
Pork, per barrel	16 50 to 17 00
Beef, per barrel	14 00 to 15 00

FISH.

Wholesale, per lb.	4 1/2 to 5 1/2
Retail, per lb.	5 to 10

VEGETABLES.

Potatoes, per bush, old	25
New Potatoes, per bush	35 to 40
Beets, per doz	50
Onions, per doz	40 to 50
Tomatoes	10
Dried onions, per lb.	10
Rapishes, per doz bunches	40
Spinage, per bush	1 00
Carrots, per doz	75 to 1 00
Parsley, per doz	60
Sage, per doz	40
Lettuce, per doz	20 to 25
Asparagus, per bunch	10
Rhubarb, per lb.	1 1/2 to 2

FRUIT.

California Pears, per box	6 00 to 8 50
Grapes, per lb	40
Oranges, per box	10 00 to 12 00
Oranges, per box	8 00 to 8 50
Apples, per barrel	5 00 to 6 00
Tomatoes, 10 cents per lb.	5 00 to 6 00

HAY AND STRAW.

Hay	5 00 to 6 00
Straw	2 50
Timothy	7 00 to 8 00

GRAIN.

Oats, per bushel	50 to 55
Barley, per bushel	55 to 65
No. 1 hard wheat	75
No. 2 hard wheat	70
No. 1 regular wheat	65
No. 2 regular wheat	60
No. 3 regular wheat	62

The price of No. 1 hard wheat at different points of the province is as follows:

Morden	73
High Bluff	73
Gretna	73
Portage	73
Brandon	71
Carberry	71
Stonewall	71
Virren	71
Elkhorn	71
Manitou	73
Alexander	69
Waseley	67
Emerson	73
Morris	73

FLOUR, GRAIN, ETC.

Flour, patent	2 30
Flour, strong	2 10
Flour, XXXX	1 70
Flour, superfine	1 80

HIDES.

Green, per lb	6 to 7
Dry	9 to 9

COAL.

Egg, stove and nut, single ton.	10 00
Steam coal	7 00
Lump coal, for house	10 00
Blossburg, single tons	12 00
Saskatchewan	7 00

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