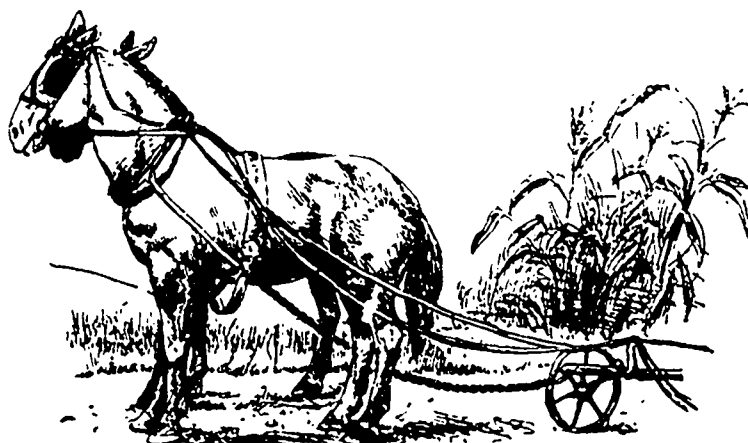


did a lady in Spencer, N.Y., stating that she hatched Leghorns in February of last year, that they laid in August, and in cold weather moulted a few feathers and stopped laying until spring. It is not understood by some that in order to have the best winter layers the different breeds do best hatched at certain times. The large breeds should be hatched earlier for winter layers, as they are longer maturing than Leghorns.

The Soiling System

The "soiling" system of stock-raising is becoming more common among American farmers, and it might be profitable for some of our smaller Canadian farmers to try it. Where the system is properly carried on it is surprising the number of cattle that can be well kept on a comparatively small farm. On this subject Mr. Waldo F. Brown has the following to say in one of our American exchanges:

"What is meant by soiling is cutting the green food and feeding it to the stock instead of pasture land. On small farms, which the owners wish to stock heavily, it is often practised with great profit, as it enables the owner to carry double the amount of stock which he could to pasture, does away with fences and so save and apply all the manure so as to get the greatest amount of good from it. There is no doubt as to the profitableness of the plan under the conditions named, and if I had a small farm I should certainly adopt it. There are some objections to the plan



Harness for Orchard Work.

which seem formidable to one who has never tried it, but which in practice give little trouble. These are: First, keeping the cattle clean; but this will be easy to do if a well-graded yard is provided and a little care taken to keep it clean. It is best to provide portable mangers to feed in, as they can be moved to a new place when desirable. I would not attempt to keep cows in the stable during hot weather, and when they are eating succulent food; they would be sure to get soiled so that it would be disagreeable to milk them. The best form of manger to feed in is six feet wide and ten feet long. Use posts at the corners of 2 by 4 studding, and make a floor two feet from the ground, bolting on a 2 by 4 studding around the top, which should be one foot from the floor. Six dehorned cattle (and I would have no others) can eat from one of these mangers. We find it profitable to give green food to hogs and confine them in the hoghouse and a small feed lot. Many object to the labor of cutting feed and taking it to the stock all summer, but I have found it much less than I anticipated, and by a little wise planning it can be done in a short time. If there is much stock to feed the cutting should always be done with the mowing machine, and enough cut to last three days, and with many kinds of feed there will be no need of cutting more than twice a week, as a little wilting will not hurt the feed at all. Perhaps the most serious difficulty is the providing of green food through the early spring months, but it is not very expensive to give extra grain feed for five or six weeks in the spring, or to save some of

the best hay to feed them, as no hay will be needed through the fall and early winter. In my latitude we can begin to cut clover before the end of May, and a plot of rye will furnish feed ordinarily by May 1, and then this can be plowed down to grow a full crop of sorghum, which is the best possible soiling crop. We begin feeding sorghum in July, and not only feed it until winter sets in, but pack the large, juicy canes in the barn and feed them through the winter, and this plant alone will give succulent food for more than half the year. On most farms the best plan is to adopt partial soiling, as this will enable you to pasture through the spring until the soiling crops are ready to cut, and you can remove your inside fences.

If this rule is adopted, about one-third of the farm should be put in permanent pasture, and there is no other grass equal to blue grass for this purpose, as it starts early and will bear trampling and close grazing better than any other grass, and is very nutritious, and cattle will fatten on it quicker than any other feed. This pasture may be heavily stocked early in the season, and then, when the soiling crops are ready, they can be fed on the pasture or taken to the feed lots, as is thought best. In a drought, the cattle can be fed on the ground and will not waste anything. In the three years of drought (1893-95, inclusive) I fed from August 1 to Thanksgiving in this way, and do not think more than 100 pounds of feed was wasted in the three years. I have now practised this partial soiling for six years and am so well pleased with it that I would not have my division fences put back if it would cost me nothing to do it.

A low wagon or sled can be used to draw the feed out to the cattle, and when they are fed on the pasture one feed a day is all that will be needed. It is best to always feed at a regular hour, as the cattle will eat and then go and graze, while if the feeding is deferred later they will wait for it and be restless. When I first began feeding sorghum green to stock I sowed it broadcast and used a bushel or more of seed to the acre, but experience has shown that it is better to plant it in rows and cultivate it and only use a small amount of seed, as the cane is much sweeter and a greater weight can be grown to the acre, and when we cut it by hand, as we often do to feed a few cows, it is much easier to handle. It also makes much better hog feed when grown thin on the ground, and I have found this crop especially profitable for them. We want to sow thick and cure as hay for feeding to horses and for late winter feeding of cattle, but prefer the large, juicy canes for the fall and the first half of winter.

Another crop which is excellent for feeding green during the fall is sweet corn, and if one is near a canning factory or a city market it will pay to grow it extensively, as the ears can be marketed and a large amount of excellent feed furnished. It is best to plant a succession of plots, so that there will not be too much of it at once, and I find in this latitude that it may be planted on rich, well prepared land as late as July 4 and will mature before frost, and the price of and demand for roasting ears is usually better in October than earlier, and if it so happens that frost comes before it is mature enough to sell, it does not hurt it for feeding, and it can still be made profitable.

On farms where the plan of pasturing is followed it is rare to get through a year that there is not a time when the pastures are short so that the stock are not doing as well as they ought, and this is likely to be the case late in the season, and the wise farmer will be prepared to feed his stock under these conditions, and so keep them thriving, and when an acre will give full feed for a month to thirty cattle, it certainly will pay to be prepared to furnish this feed. Another point of great importance is this: Our closest observers and experimenters have reached the conclusion that the great cause of loss of hogs by disease is the feeding of corn, a rich, heating food not well balanced, without furnishing a bulky succulent food with it, and that the health of the animals and the power of resistance to disease will be better if bulky food is given with the corn, and at the same time the cost of the product lessened, and there is no feed I know of that can be grown so cheaply for this purpose as sorghum. Five or six pounds of seed