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# FARM AND DAIRY

## RURAL HOME

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### A Lesson in Soil Cultivation

It requires a season like the one experienced in Western Ontario this year to demonstrate where the good farmer has it over the indifferent cultivator of the soil. The success of any crop is dependent upon available plant food and upon moisture as a vehicle by means of which the plants may avail themselves of the plant food. Therefore in the main a successful crop is dependent upon soil moisture more than upon any other one factor. It is to soil moisture that we need to give our best consideration since on soil moisture so much depends. Cultivation is the means at our disposal for determining how much or how little available moisture we will have for our crops.

On the last day of June one of the editors of Farm and Dairy was in the vicinity of Agincourt and spent some hours in looking over two farms one at Agincourt, the other at Milliken, owned and worked by Messrs. W. G. Rennie and Jas. Rennie, respectively, sons of Mr. Simpson Rennie, Ontario's famous gold medal farmer. There was something striking about the crops on these farms, and notwithstanding the prolonged drought, which at that time was at its height, the crops looked remarkably well and were superior to crops on some of the neighboring farms. As to what made the difference we undertook to find out.

#### WHAT MADE THE BETTER CROPS

The soil in the district does not vary materially. All of the farms had received the same sunshine and had experienced the same lack of rain, yet on the Rennie farms were crops better than the common run. We thought the question a matter of fertility; but after considerable enquiry we became convinced that it was a matter of cultivation—a matter of so managing the soil that in addition to maintaining the fertility there would be a maximum amount of rainfall and soil moisture conserved for the use of the crops.

Both of Mr. Rennie's sons are following in the footsteps of their father and are following out the methods which brought him such success and renown as a grower of good crops. That the methods of cultivation as practiced and advocated by Mr. Simpson Rennie are worthy of emulation is perhaps best demonstrated by the appearance of the crops on the two Rennie farms this season and also by the success of their crops in the standing Field Crops Competition. Mr. W. G. Rennie having been successful last year carrying off all of the premier honors.

#### THE SECRET OF COON CROPS

After-harvest cultivation is one of the big factors making for crop success on the Rennie farms. As soon as the crop is harvested the land is plowed lightly, not over three inches unless the soil be hard and dry, in which case it is necessary to plow to a greater depth. This soil is then cultivated from time to time until late fall, when it is again plowed, this time to a depth of seven inches and sometimes deeper depending upon the crop that is to follow.

This after-harvest cultivation affords an excellent opportunity to destroy weed life, and

what is still more important it conserves the moisture already in the soil and leaves it open and mellow so that all the rainfall is readily absorbed and conserved for the use of the crop the following year.

#### THE ROTATION ON THESE FARMS

A six-year rotation is followed by both of Mr. Rennie's sons. Sometimes when pasture is required this is lengthened out by one year. The crops follow one another in the following order: Peas after sod, then oats, barley or wheat, matured and followed by roots and rape, then oats, or barley seeded down with clover and timothy, which is left for two years. All the grain is fed on the farm save what little fall wheat is grown, and any that is sold is more than replaced by the extra feeding stuffs that are purchased. An article giving in detail a description of these farms and the methods thereon will be published in an early issue of Farm and Dairy.

### Minor Points About Fitting Cattle

The finer points in fitting animals for the show ring, such as polishing horns and braiding tails, must not be neglected if first honors are to be ensured. An animal carefully fitted will, with the most of judges, take precedence over an animal shown in a rougher state even though the sec-

#### A Word of Appreciation

Editor, Farm and Dairy,—Quality is what counts these days and I must congratulate you for having superior quality in everything that goes into Farm and Dairy. Then, too, its timely suggestiveness and the condensed, intensely practical, helpful, nature of your articles makes your paper invaluable to me and the members of my family.—C. H. Porter, Simcoe Co., Ont.

ond animal possesses greater merit. As competition becomes keener the smaller points become more important.

At a leading western fair two years ago two Jersey cows were closely matched for first place. The cow that took first money was shown by an Ontario breeder. His animal was perfectly fitted. The animal taking second place was really the letter individual of the two. She had not been fitted. Manure was clinging to her flanks. A little attention to details on the part of the western breeder would have given him first place.

As the number of pure bred herds increases and competition becomes keener, decisions, of necessity, must be given on points of very fine distinction, and therefore the importance of fitting must continue to increase.

Attention to minute details in fitting may not add to the intrinsic worth of an animal; it adds immensely to its appearance, however, and to its chances of success in the show ring. Would-be exhibitors while at the shows should note carefully the attentions given the cattle by any of the prominent breeders.—"Herdsmen."

I have had very satisfactory results by adding alfalfa leaves to the grain ration for hogs.—John Clark, Grey Co., Ont.

### Dairying Brings Prosperity in P.E.I.

Frank Glydon, Prince Co., P. E. I.

Twenty years ago only two or three factories in Prince Edward Island were making butter and cheese and that to a very limited extent. Circumstances forced us farmers into dairying. About that time the farms became exhausted to such an extent by the growing of cereals and sending them away to the neighboring provinces that farming became unprofitable and discouraging to the youthful generation of our province. We were annually losing a considerable number of the prime of our young manhood.

The government was quick to see the trouble and decided to establish a cheese factory on the cooperative system at New Perth, Queen's County, and pay the manager of the factory for a limited time. Other parts of the province soon became enthusiastic over the matter and formed cooperative factories nearly all over the Island until they were almost crowding each other out. We farmers became educated to the conservation of our soil by keeping more stock and feeding the products of our farms at home instead of sending our raw material to the neighboring provinces to build the farms there.

We farmers have awakened to the possibilities of our soil and the conservation of our farms has been taken up in earnest. One travelling through our farming sections where dairying is most practised will see a marked improvement in the farms and people. We are happy and comfortable.

We have proved that our farms can be restored to their former fertility by feeding the products of the soil on the farm and at the same time we can increase our own wealth. If our own farmers will only continue in the business, which has lifted many of us from poor circumstances to prosperity, it will only be a few years until more of the world will envy the name long ago given to our province, the "Garden of the Gulf."

### A Silo Worth \$100 a Year

Wm. J. Gould, Lambton Co., Ont.

I find the silo a most profitable investment. The silo method of feeding, even at the extra expense, is greatly in advance of the old method of feeding dry fodder corn. Our silo is of wood, 14½ by 30 ft. The staves are on a 2-ft. 9-in. cement foundation. The cost was in the neighborhood of \$125, not including my own labor.

I can safely say that I can feed one-third more stock than formerly, as I can mix cut straw with the silage, but not with corn fodder. The stock looks more thrifty and the milk flow has increased. Before I built the silo I wintered only one milk cow each year, as I did not consider winter dairying profitable. This same cow doubled her flow on silage. I now keep four winter cows and had I more help would keep 10.

I find it hard to place a money value on my silo. I once heard one of the best farmers in Lambton Co., Ont., say that he would not be without his silo for \$100 a year, and after having used one I am about of his opinion.