

Soils and Crops

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LAMB MARKET NOW IN STATE OF RADICAL CHANGE.

In the new conditions of the Canadian market there is no place for the buck lamb.

Seventy per cent. of the male lambs that come to the Toronto market are bucks. This in the past has had the effect of discouraging the eating of lamb by home consumers. Farmers alone can remedy this. They can do so by the simple process of castrating and docking male lambs. If they fail there is not the slightest doubt that there will be a glut of buck lambs in the fall of 1923 with a serious break in prices.

The causes that have brought about the radically changed conditions are not hard to follow. It will pay producers to understand them.

After the first of August all buck lambs develop an odor and a strong taste. When consumers get this meat served up the appetite for lamb is lost and consumption generally is greatly discouraged. This fact seriously influences the average price paid to farmers for live lambs.

During the past few years a new situation has arisen which will undoubtedly further affect the buck lamb. Many farmers, especially in Western Canada, have taken to feeding lambs for the winter market. The slaughtering of lambs at inspected packing plants in the first three months of this year were 28,150 as against 13,000 in the first quarter of 1922. The result is that fall lambs, which used to be stored to supply a winter retail trade, are no longer needed so largely. Buyers state they must henceforth refuse to take the risk of buying large numbers of lambs and putting them into storage as they cannot compete with lambs that have been grain-fattened coming on the market in the fresh state during the winter.

The great bulk of Ontario lambs are fit and come to market during September, October and November. Except for those that are unfinished that is as it should be; most Ontario

lambs would be too heavy if held longer and fed. For ewe lambs and the few wether lambs that offer a very considerable export trade, has been built up, and there is a growing demand for this prime stuff in the United States. Canadian lambs of this quality hold their own in the American market, and often indeed sell at a premium. But the surplus has largely been cold stored and used in the domestic market for the winter trade. This prevented the farmer's price from being smashed to pieces every fall during the big run, and supplied the retail trade when lamb was scarce. To-day with the advent of the Canadian grain-finished winter lamb, the demand for this stored product has fallen off. Buying firms will no longer be able to take the risk of putting these lambs into storage. Furthermore, in the interests of increased consumption at home, it is better all round business to supply the consuming market with fresh lamb from ewes and wethers of good quality and appetizing taste.

Farmers and buyers alike are facing a serious problem in working out what is to be done with the great rush of lambs in the fall. It may be faced with confidence if all lambs are docked, properly finished and marketed at the right weights, and if the male lambs are castrated. There appears to be no reason why the export trade in Ontario lambs should not be further extended so as to take care of all that fall surplus. But it certainly cannot be done with buck lambs.

The indications are that very much larger numbers of winter fed lambs will be on the market next year. Packers can no longer afford to take bucks at the same price as ewe and wether lambs and unless other outlets are found, bucks will be heavily discounted in price in the fall of 1923. This is the timely season for farmers to take action. Proper treatment now will avoid serious loss next fall. After this plain intimation from those who know the meat trade, farmers alone will be to blame if they lose heavily by their own neglect.

POULTRY

Spring and summer are the hardest seasons in which to produce quality eggs, and a producer of such should have very little trouble in getting a few cents more per dozen. A few cents more, when eggs are clean, plentiful, makes the grand total amount to a real significant figure; and remember these few cents are all profit, because it costs no more to produce a good egg than it does a poor one.

The great trouble with eggs during the warmer months is the fact that the eggs start to incubate, and then the embryo dies, spoiling the egg. An egg actually starts to incubate before it leaves the hen's body and instances are on record of fresh-laid eggs being unfit for human consumption. One instance in particular is well worth relating.

EGGS INCUBATED IN HEN'S BODY. A friend of an exhibitor at a poultry show remarked that he hadn't had a real fresh egg all winter, so they went out to an exhibition pen and secured an egg that they actually saw laid. The friend was elated over his fresh egg and took it home, but much to his disgust the egg contained a chick embryo.

The supposition in this case was that the hen was about to lay the egg when she was cooped up and sent to the show. The moving frightened her to such an extent that she held the egg and did not drop it until settled in the showroom. The egg within the body of the hen might just as well have been in an incubator. Ordinarily, however, the fresh egg has been within the body not more than twenty hours and the embryonic development has not been sufficient to injure the quality of the egg.

If all eggs could be consumed within a few days after they are laid, quality would not be a factor, but usually they are held around the farm for a week, then around the store for a week, and finally the consumer holds some for another week before he finally uses them. What has happened to the egg during these three weeks? In the spring and summer the temperature is usually well above 65 deg. F. Fertile eggs above that temperature will incubate, and that is just what spoils the egg.

THREE RULES TO OBSERVE. If one wants to produce eggs of quality there are just three rules to follow: 1. Kill off all the roosters as soon as hatching season is over, thereby producing only infertile eggs. 2. Collect all eggs twice a day—once before dinner, as most of the eggs are laid in the morning, and once again in the late afternoon. 3. Keep the eggs in a cool cellar or cave where the temperature is under 65 deg. F. Be sure the place is not musty, however, because an egg will take up odors as quickly as milk.

If one follows the above three suggestions he will produce eggs that will be a credit to him and will at the same time give satisfaction to the consumer. The additional profit from eggs thus

produced will be particularly noticeable to the man who retails his own eggs, because good ones are harder to get in summer than any other time.

Test of Cross-Bred Lambs for Meat and Fleeces.

A valuable breed test in raising lambs has been conducted for several years at the Brandon, Man., Dominion Experimental Farm. High grade ewes, the get of Oxford Down pure bred rams, were divided equally into three lots in respect to age and quality, and were bred to Oxford Down, Suffolk and Shropshire rams respectively. The lambs sired by each ram were weighed in the fall and records kept of their weight. In his annual report the Superintendent of the Farm notes that the Suffolk gave uniformly the heaviest lambs in the fall, and that these lambs were well developed, meaty fellows which sold readily. On the other hand, there were fewer of them than by the other rams, so that their high average weight was partly due to the fact that there being fewer twins, the lambs were better nourished. The get of the Shropshires were distinctly smaller than those from the other two sires. The lambs sired by the Oxford Downs were on the average as good as those sired by the Suffolk, or more so, but were less matured at the time of weighing up and required more feeding to make market lambs of them.

During the last year of the experiment, weights were kept of the yield of fleeces from the different grades. Eight Shropshire grade lambs yielded an average of 6.93 lbs.; 6 Oxford grade lambs yielded 6.50 lbs.; and 7 Suffolk grade lambs, 5.56 lbs. It will be noted, remarks the Superintendent, that the Suffolk cross, which gave the heaviest lambs in the fall, yielded a pound, and a pound and a half, less fleece than the Oxford Down and Shropshire respectively. The Superintendent further points out that in such tests as this the individuality of the rams used enters into the results, and that it is not safe to lay to the credit or demerit of a breed what may be due to the one individual only. The results are given with this reservation. However, an effort was made to have the rams as nearly equal as possible.

The Grading of Eggs.

Farmer, Welland:—Do eggs for home consumption have to be graded or only for export? What are the Dominion regulations regarding eggs? No, only eggs intended for export or for shipment from out of the provinces. The regulations read (1) Canadian eggs for export out of Canada, and eggs for domestic consumption intended for shipment from one province to another, as covered by these regulations, but not eggs intended for incubation, shall be classified, candled, and graded. (2) You can obtain a copy of the regulations in full by addressing the Publications Branch of the Department of Agriculture, Ottawa.



Black and White Costume.

A striking costume that indicates a tendency of the coming summer's fashions. It is in black crepe, embroidered in white, with tight-fitting sleeves.

To Control Apple Scab.

To thoroughly control apple scab, it is regarded by M. B. Davis, Chief Assistant to the Dominion Horticulturist, as necessary to make at least five sprayings. In a favorable season fewer applications may answer, but one never knows in spring what the season will be like. In Bulletin No. 18 of the Department of Agriculture at Ottawa, entitled "Modern Orchard Practice," it is said to be necessary to keep the foliage of the trees covered with spray material from the early part of the season until late in summer. Lime-sulphur wash and Bordeaux mixture are both good fungicides and will control apple scab if properly used.

The importance of the early sprays as an insurance against loss of crop, it is claimed, has been neglected and overlooked too much in the past. Not only does the apple scab cause a loss to the grower by impairing the value of the fruit it infests, but it actually destroys a large percentage of his crop before he realizes that it has set. It is the early sprays that save the crop. Some growers delay spraying until after the fruit is supposed to have set, for they claim it is no use to spray if one has no crop to spray for. These men are, in most cases, still waiting for that crop to set. The wise man, however, sprays from the early spring, to make his crop set, and he is now busy preparing for another season.

Apple scab is a disease that spreads by spores so minute that they cannot be discerned with the naked eye. These spores are produced by the scabs or spots which are seen on the fruit and which may grow on the leaves as well. Being so prevalent on

the leaves, they are thus carried over from one year to the next on the old, dead leaves that remain in the orchard. These dead leaves form the source of infection in early spring. When the weather becomes sufficiently warm to start the trees, the spores are liberated from the old leaves and infest the young leaves, reproducing new spores in a very few days. By the time the blossoms are ready to burst there may be many millions of these spores ready to infest them. At this stage the pith, which will ultimately ripen into an apple, is very tender and if attacked by the ravages of a germinating spore, which sends out roots to penetrate its skin, will be killed, and the chances of a crop will thus be ruined. This is how the scab ruins many a crop, and its ravages are often laid down to imperfect pollination or frost. In a large proportion of cases black spot or scab is the true cause of the loss.

It appears that cool, moist weather is the most favorable for the development of scab. As it spreads but little during the late summer, the important sprays are the early ones.

Spraying is powerless to cure the disease or repair the damage which has already been done; it can only prevent the development of the germinating spores, so that this must be borne in mind when spraying.

Fences.

If there is anything on the farm conducive of harmony among neighbors it is good fences; and, as I have been recently constructing some fences, I thought I might have a hint or two to offer in such work, especially in poultry fencing as I have recently constructed one to please the women.

When I was stretching the netting I found considerable difficulty in making it sufficiently tight at the bottom to prevent the fowl from crawling under it. I was about to go in search of a supply of stakes, to which I would have stapled the wire, when I thought of some old tubing lying at the end of the machine shed. I got the pipe, drew it through the individual meshes near the ground, and the result was I had a much neater and a much more effective fence than otherwise would have been effected.

While speaking of fencing I might pass on to your readers a method I have in use for keeping a handy opening in a single-strand wire fence. Often we have to loosen the wires of a fence from a few roots and weigh them down to make temporary opening. This can easily be made a permanent gate that the casual observer would scarcely notice.

Instead of fastening the wire to the posts in the usual manner, staples are driven horizontally on each side of a fence from a few roots and weigh them down to make temporary opening. This can easily be made a permanent gate that the casual observer would scarcely notice.

Many who go to the cities, go from farm to farm.

Figuring that she is cook, nurse, laundress, seamstress, scrubwoman, and assistant hired man, it is reckoned that the average farm woman earns every year \$3,796. But she doesn't always get it.

Walnut Investment

It Pays to Plant Walnuts and Wait Fifty Years.

No Better Legacy for the Farm Lad—The Government Forestry Branch Will Assist—Tree-Growing Requires Little Labor—Black Walnut Trees are Memorials.

"Say, Mr. Forester, if a wee boy of my age were to plant an acre of black walnut this spring would I live to see the trees large enough to be used for the building of a house to shelter me in my old age?" "Yes, my boy, you could plant the trees to-day, and in fifty years time the trees would be large enough to cut into interior finishing lumber for your house." There is some satisfaction in planting a tree and watching it grow to merchantable size.

A WALNUT TREE GROWS FOR MANY YEARS.

It is true that a walnut tree will keep growing long after it has passed the half-century mark and keeps on making timber until it is one hundred and fifty years old. However, a nice tree can be grown in fifty years on good soil; yes, large enough to make all the finishing lumber for the interior of a house. Ten acres of land planted under sane forestry methods with walnut will make, in time, a fine tract of valuable timber, which when ready to harvest, would at present prices be worth \$1,000 per acre.

NO BETTER LEGACY COULD BE LEFT TO A MAN could leave no better legacy for his heirs than a block of good timber. The long time between seed-time and harvest in forestry frightens the average mortal, and deters him from planting forest trees. But people should not take the long time view seriously. Generations of humans are yet to be born to live in this country, and since the present generation has largely destroyed the original timber, it is only just and fair that we should provide for the wood and lumber requirements of the future. On nearly every farm there is some waste land or the remnant of a wood lot. It may

be odd, rough spots or sandy hills, areas that have not produced profitable grain or grass crops and which could well be used for the growing of wood.

THE GOVERNMENT FOREST BRANCH WILL HELP.

The Forestry Branch of the Lands and Forests Department are co-operating with four hundred Ontario farmers in which the Forestry officials try to point the way to success in wood lot management. As a result of such co-operation, many walnut, green ash, and red oak seedlings have been given a start toward useful production. A small seed will grow into a big tree. Nature does all the work; man simply plants the seed or the little seedling tree and waits. The young forest is established by planting a tree every six feet, crowding the trees together to force them to grow tall, straight stems. As the crowding becomes too great for thrift, alternate trees are taken out. These thinning can be used as fence poles, rails, gate material, small lumber, such as chair and table legs, lamp stands, curtain poles, etc. So there is a source of revenue after the trees have been planted twenty years that will take care of the overhead expenses incident to maintenance.

VERY LITTLE LABOR REQUIRED IN TREE-GROWING.

With the farm labor situation never satisfactory, and many farmers trying to crop twice as much land as they can handle properly, forest planting should show the way out. If the people of Ontario are to use wood in the house-building of the future, if we are to have fuel for the hearth, a lot of land owners must do some forest planting very soon.—L. Stevenson, Secy. Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.



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Preparing Bacon for Export.

How are "Wiltshire sides" prepared? When a hog reaches the packing plant it is at once sorted into either the scalding class, i.e., for the domestic trade, or into the singler class, i.e., for the export trade. The latter name is used because after the hog has been scalded and dehaired by machine in the usual way, it is drawn up through a large singeing cylinder, within which are numerous high power flame jets. The process not only singes off any remaining hairs but it materially effects the quality of the rind. This is necessary for our export trade because in England it is a widespread custom to leave the rind on bacon until it is actually served on the plate, partly because there is less waste and partly because the practice is thought to preserve the juices and flavor of the bacon better.

After the hogs are singed they are thoroughly cleaned before being examined minutely by Dominion Government inspectors, skilled men who are in every sense independent of the packing company in whose premises they work. They see to it that the product passed is perfectly free of disease and is quite fit for human food. Only such product may bear the stamp, "Canada Approved." Any carcass or part of a carcass showing signs of being unfit is at once taken away and destroyed so that it cannot be consumed. The approved carcasses are split down the back into halves. Then they are sent to the cooling room to be chilled, a process that takes from 48 to 72 hours. The half-carasses are then passed over the cutting tables, the head and feet and a few bones and other parts removed and then only does the product technically take the form of "Wiltshire sides."

The sides thus trimmed go to the pickling cellars, to remain there until cured. On being taken out the "Wiltshire sides" are sorted—of course in respect of any particular breed of hog from which they may have been cut—into the three main classes of leanest, lean and prime; and each of these classes is again sub-sorted, according to weight range. They are then drained for about 36 hours and after a further inspection are packed for overseas shipment. The standard packing is 12 to a box, each box having only the same class, whether leanest, lean or prime, and being limited to the same weight range. Grade and weight are marked on the outside of the box so that when received in England by the packer's agent he knows precisely what it contains. Once in England the "Wiltshire sides" are sold to jobbers and bacon curers who pickle, smoke and otherwise prepare them for the retail trade.

That is practically the whole story

of the processing of our Canadian export bacon.

Minerals for Cows.

Cows properly fed require very little in the way of minerals. Practically the only need where clover or alfalfa hay is being fed in addition to grains and silage, is some common salt, possibly a little bone meal or wood ashes, and, if necessary to prevent goiter, a little potassium or sodium iodide.

Plan Green Feed Now.

Stock and poultry thrive on green feed. It is time now to prepare for the crops which will be needed during the summer season. The necessary seeds should be ordered and plans developed for getting these crops in as soon as the late spring will allow.

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THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

TO THE VIOLET.

"Come, little violet," said the sunshine bright.

"Come, do come," added the raindrops light.

"Come," said the children, "do not fear.

Come, little violet, spring is here."

The violet heard and did as they bade.

"If I don't come now," it thought, "they'll be sad."

So I'll brighten the lives of everyone." And it opened its eyes to the glorious sun.

"Come," said a child wandering near,

"Come with me to mother dear. She'll put you in a pretty bowl Not cracked or dirty, but all whole.

"You'll rest upon a table brown. With sides which fold so they'll come down.

So, little violet, do not fear, But come with me to mother dear."

The days grew short, the nights grew chilly;

The frost was on the pasture hill. The birds to the south their way did wing.

Said the little violet, "I'll come another spring."

—Maxine Anderson.

THE BUTTERFLY'S WINGS.

Butterflies are often compared to flowers, because of their wonderful and beautiful coloring, and because they are both summer products.

But there is a still better reason than similarity in color. It may be news to some of you who have not examined these tiny creatures that the male butterfly has a faint, though distinct scent. If you brush your finger over the wing of a common white butterfly, you will find it covered with a fine white dust which gives off a delicate perfume of lemon or balsam. As a rule, the duller a butterfly's color, the stronger his scent, perhaps a compensation from nature. Some of the dull-colored night butterflies or moths have a quite strong odor.

Removal of the dust leaves a noticeable bald spot on the wing; and when we come to examine the dust under a microscope we find it of more substantial composition than we ever could have suspected with the unaided eye. In fact, it is made up of countless scales—the real coloring of the wings—for without the scales the wing is as transparent as that of a wasp or bluebottle.

The scales are laid on the wing in much the same way as the scales of a roof. But in spite of the exquisite shape and coloring, they are so tiny that the scales on the wings of a single butterfly would outnumber all the scales on the roofs of the houses of a good-sized town. When you consider that each must be arranged according to its color, in order to give the wonderful patterns that the wings display, you will obtain some idea of the wonders of workmanship in a butterfly's wings.

Who Uses Most Lumber?

Farmers probably use more lumber than any other group in the country. Although other building materials are trying to push wood out, the use of lumber is a customary building material on farms. This is because the farmer knows wood and understands wooden construction. His father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather, all in their turn, were lumberjacks or jack carpenters. Buildings are as essential to successful farming as are yards to the coal or lumber dealer or shelving to the grocer or dry-goods merchant. A house—usually generous in size—a barn, wagon and implement sheds, hog and poultry houses, silos, corn-crisps, feeding floors and perhaps other small buildings compose the average farm colony of buildings. Paint is not yet universally used over the country, so that replacements are more frequent on the farm.

The effect of the depletion of our forests and the high prices and increasing shortages of lumber and timber upon the farmer is a matter of national interest, because of the close bearing upon the question of the nation-wide supply and price of wood. Hence, the importance of caring for farm woodlots, and of planting more trees on land too rough for farming.

—W. R. M.

She Was It.

A lady once asked a little girl of five if she had any brothers.

"Yes," said the child, "I have three brothers."

"And how many sisters, my dear?" asked the lady.

"Just one sister, and I'm it," replied the small girl.

A lot of work and no play will soon make Johnny a city boy.

All work and no play is too big a price to pay for living.

In home activities the ripping comes before the sewing; in farm activities, the sowing comes before the reaping.

The man who makes pets of his animals is usually a good farmer, because he shows a love for the things about him.