

THE FARM.

"Patriotism and Production".

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

You ask in what direction can I safely aim to increase the production of my farm, and second, how can labor and methods be best economized to profit. I would answer, that there are several ways in which many farmers could turn their attention with considerable profit without materially increasing their own labor. I heartily agree with the present agitation for increased production for two reasons, one is that the farmer owes that duty to himself and the other is that he owes it to his country, but I am not in line with the idea that the farmer should work harder because the average farmer is working too hard now. Further, there is a danger that what has been heralded from one end of this country to the other during the past several years, (viz. more stock and better stock, which is no doubt the foundation upon which greater grain production must be laid) may get a serious setback. The danger now is a general call being made for more grain (and stock commanding good prices), that farmers will market their stock and turn their pasture fields into cultivation in order to have more grain to sell. This would in my opinion be a short-sighted policy. In the first place the help is not yet in sight to enable the farmer to crop larger areas and in the second place there is too little stock kept now to keep the farms productive, leaving aside altogether the meat supply which is gradually growing less.

I would say that the delegates that have this important work in hand should take the platform, not to tell the farmer to till more land or to work harder, but should be prepared to show the farmer how he can by more thorough methods, materially increase the production on the areas that he now tills which in many cases can be accomplished with less labor than is now used. For instance, it has been proven both in individual and co-operative experiments that seed thoroughly cleaned will produce a large amount more grain than seed only cleaned through a mill once or perhaps not at all. This can be done now before the farmer gets busy and if through that alone, five bushels of oats per acre increase may be secured, which should be reasonably expected, there would be no less than 5,398,918 bushels increase in oats in the Province of Ontario, and a similar increase could be counted for in all the other grains.

Then thorough cultivation of the soil, making a fine mellow bed for that clean, plump seed, would insure still further increase. In very many instances, many farmers would lessen their labor and increase their production by cleaning away unnecessary fences making small fields larger where they could work three or four-horse implements to advantage, thereby doing away with the time of one teamster.

Another very small matter to the individual farmer, and one which amounts to a very large matter when totalled up, is getting harness repaired, harrows sharpened, and all other farm machinery ready for work before seed time commences. How many farmers you see going to the shop to get some repairs when they should be going to the field to work! The old saying, "The early bird catches the worm," applies to the hustler in the spring time as much as it does to the bird. In short, the far-seeing farmer takes advantage of the slack season in winter, to draw home his tile, gravel, etc., etc., and to draw out the manure so that he will be able to do the largest amount of labor during the rush season in a comparatively short time, and it is all important to get all farmers moving along the same lines.

The man that can be persuaded to give his sheep better care during the winter will produce more wool and to shear them unwashed before they taste grass in the spring, will secure much more wool than the other man which would total one to two million pounds increase in the Province annually. Persuade the man to breed good quality beef animals and to finish them at fifteen to twenty months old and the annual returns will increase by millions. Persuade the dairyman to discard his poor cows and to liberally feed the good ones, and millions of dollars worth of milk, cream, butter and cheese will be the increase. I might go on along similar lines, but your valuable space will not permit. I think I should touch one other matter, viz. that our city and town authorities should do something to compel getting some returns out of the subdivided and vacant lots in and adjacent to their corporation. All such land should be producing and this might be accomplished by taxing any that was kept standing idle at double the amount of that which was cultivated and cropped. Another plan would be to allow anyone that had received charity from the corporation a small plot for vegetables, etc. One thing is sure, a great deal needs to be done and much can be done to increase production without any materi-

ally increasing labor and the best of it all is that while the farmer is doing a noble thing for his country he is at the same time improving his own condition.

Middlesex Co., Ont.

R. H. HARDING.

More Seed to Increase Production.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Canadian farmers are asked upon all sides for an increased production from their holdings. Valuable suggestions as to how such is to be carried out are not given freely, simply because people not holding land in person really are not often in a position to suggest any solution that in the main would be easily understood and acted upon. For the last few years, and especially recently, vast improvements have taken place on a large percentage of Ontario farms, made through and backed up by enhanced prices for all products from the land. Still there undoubtedly remains plenty of room for adding to and increasing these improvements say at least twenty-five per cent.

To endeavor to increase production of wheat, a rush planting of fall wheat took place last fall. A considerable area of this increased acreage did not go into a very good seed bed. The winter so far has not been severe, yet many fields of wheat were under ice fourteen to twenty-one days ago, and all that ice did not go with the slight thaw, consequently it may be reasonable to expect winter-killing of wheat already. Should this be found to be the case, the writer suggests to all farmers who may have winter-killed wheat, to resow on same either barley or oats, and to do the sowing by hand and then thoroughly harrow and roll lightly afterwards. Farmers as a rule are frightened to use the harrow. This is a great mistake; where one plant is lost, at least five will recover by this operation. The reseed-ing to stop loss must be done promptly or not at all.

With regard to barley and oats, spring after spring goes by, and the same quantity of seed is sown per acre, although the fertility of the soil is decreasing. Ten years close observance of spring grain in Ontario, has left one impression only, and that is, farmers sow enough seed, that given every climatic help from sowing time to harvest, may produce a fair crop. But unfortunately, spring weather in Ontario is more often adverse to spring grain than otherwise. Consequently I am suggesting an increase of seed grain per acre for both barley and oats and we may add spring wheat, of not less than half a bushel per acre. And as in the ten years I have not seen a single field of spring-sown grain too thick in plant, if farmers would think over their failures from spring grain, the conclusion must rest with them, that had they not been so sparing with their seed grain, some of the loss, if not all, would have been saved.

This deficiency in plant, in spring grain leads up to far greater losses than a bad yield of grain. Weeds have an excellent chance given them when the grain plant is thin. In the majority of instances where a really full or good plant of grain exists, hardly a weed is to be found when the reaper does its work, every sheaf lying as clean at the bottom as at the top. Increased production, often means simply the difference between a good crop and a bad one, and I will not believe one really practical farmer can be found in the whole of Ontario but who will admit that a really good crop of grain is harvested at less expense than a bad crop can be. In thousands of cases the increase in plant likely to be obtained from an increase of seed per acre would offset over and over again the slightly increased cost.

Haldimand Co., Ont. J. S. TITCHMARSH.

A Saving on Whiffletrees.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Having had considerable experience in ploughing with three, four and five-horse teams, I venture to give others a suggestion we have found very useful. When one has three or more horses in a team on a plough and plough strikes an immovable object, be it a tree root or a stone, one of four things must happen. The plough jumps out, the horses stop, the plough breaks, or the whiffletrees, harness or other connections break. When either of the first two happens no serious results occur, but if either of the latter two results it may mean anywhere from one hour to two days lost time. To avoid this we use a weak connection between whiffletrees and plough. Two or three (according to length of hitch desired) malleable chain belting links answer admirably, and if one should break by striking obstruction a fresh one is put on in a minute's time. A few should be carried in case of need. We find a 77 link right strength for four or five horses, and a somewhat weaker link for three horses. Since using these we have never broken a whiffletree or plough, but always find links give first.

Ont. Co., Ont.

H. W.

How to Make the Best of Farming.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In January 21st issue, I noticed an appeal for articles from farmers to aid other farmers in making a bigger year of 1915, with the meagre supply of farm help available. Farmers should utilize every winter day more fully than they have done in the past. Everyone cuts wood who has it to cut, and advice to lay in a year's supply is almost needless, but what about the line fence that caused you to run last summer through a field of oats with twenty or more cattle clearing out in a hurry. It costs. Haul rails on the sleigh where it is easy loading, and place them along where they can be quickly placed in the fence in April weather. Clean seed grain and select potatoes now. It will save time when planting time comes as well as improve the quality. Haul out manure where it is kept in an overshoot and where level fields need it, but often fields that are hilly are sadly neglected owing to the desire to put it out hence level fields get it all. Implements and harness requires to be repaired fully for constant work. In short, do all possible in the old slack season and what has been the rush season will then be quite pleasant indeed.

Of course, wide implements with more energetic horses are a boon to the man who is short of farm laborers, but as eighty per cent. of our farmers can scarcely obtain them, of all kinds and of greatest capacity I do not feel I should give this point the importance I otherwise would, yet we all have a certain number of old standbys and I might mention to attach a drag harrow behind a roller saves one man and at least one horse. Also to cultivate or disc a field three times three to four inches deep will be better than giving it four cuts, one and one-half or two inches and it will be one day quicker on a ten-acre field.

In haying, I prefer a side-delivery rake as it rakes and tedds it, saving time, besides putting less dust in it, and surely in harvest an eight-foot binder with four horses is ideal. Thirty acres in a large field would be small indeed by sun-down and if our hired friend falls behind some twenty acres at the end of the season as he may if the crop is large and the binder runs well, why haul what is down in first, if the weather is dry and the last field very ripe as is often the case. It will thresh out well, save labor and one-quarter more can be mowed in a barn. I have seen seventy acres hauled in at once in that manner, it needs two pitching on and then it is fully as speedy as out of shocks.

Sometimes threshing twice, once in harvest or stacking before filling the barn extremely high also saves labor.

In the fall, I would prefer to use four horses on a seventeen-tooth cultivator doing a field twice. When all is done then plough. If fields are absolutely free of stones, stumps, etc., why I should say four horses again and a two-furrowed plough. I prefer a single one though as I think better work can be done and quality right here is in the end a labor-saver, as two harrowings on a straight, deep-ploughed field leave a better seed-bed than three cuts on a field poorly ploughed. Then if some is left unploughed till spring, if the field is fairly clean give it two more deep cultivatings, and sow. It will save time and may give good results, especially if it is sandy loam and it is a dry season.

I would say despite great profits in dairying, to keep less cows and produce more beef. Let several calves do as nature would have them and see them tip the scales at nine hundred pounds at twelve months. It would mean less butter, but more of what our kakh-clad boys need to help them storm the heights in the months to come and less labor on the farm. We should keep more sheep and fewer hogs as they need less care at all times, especially in the summer and more mutton is wanted as it is one of the first meats given to our sick and wounded in the hospitals.

If possible, have water pumped by power into house and barn and have all gates sixteen feet wide at least. I believe I spent six hours last summer making my way with wide implements through gates. Barns and houses should be closer together, the difference between one hundred yards and two hundred yards (some are yet farther) will make a half a mile in four trips and yet eight or twelve trips are often made in a day which would mean one-half hour's travel in the latter case.

What hired help we have we should encourage. Most of us have been there and did not the fact that we knew we were pleasing cause us to do more, do it better, and keep physically fit for the whole year round? We should read some books, preferably of a helpful type and a few humorous ones read after work will tend to banish care and worry from our minds and one who worries is about three-quarters of a man the next day.

We should not be over enthusiastic over the cry for increased production from headquarters. We should run our own business. When in the past, farmers have asked anything of the Government, they have been none to ready to help us.

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