Alfalfa in Alberta

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE :

It is of great interest to many of your readers to know whether alfalfa can be grown in Western Canada, so I will give you my experience. I live in Eastern Central Alberta, 140 miles north of the Canadian Pacific main line and 115 miles east of the Calgary and Edmonton Railway. I broke up some upland prairie (sandy loam with clay subsoil), with pea vines and wild vetch on it in the spring of 1906, and sowed oats in it. I back-set it in the spring of 1907 six inches deep and planted potatoes in it. During the winter, from 1907 to 1908, I scattered fresh manure from the barn thickly on it and plowed it under in the spring of 1908. Then I harrowed it thoroughly. I secured some nodule-forming bacteria from the Ontario Agricultural College and innoculated Turkestan alfalfa seed. I broadcasted this at the rate of fifteen pounds to the acre, on the 19th day of May, 1908, and harrowed it lightly with the teeth well slanting back.

It came up well and made a very thick stand. I cut it before it came to bloom and left it where it fell. Last fall after freezing weather I scattered well-rotted manure over it. At the warm spell at the beginning of April the new sprouts were one and one-half inches high, but the cold weather the middle of April froze them down again, so it looked as if the after-winter had killed it out completely. After the warm weather came all the plants sprouted again and a thick stand.

After last winter's experience, which was a hard one, I believe alfalfa can be successfully grown in Western Canada, as the first winter is the most critical in the life of the alfalfa.

O. HAHN.

Killing Canada Thistles

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE :

I have noticed in the columns of your valuable paper enquiries in regard to the best method of killing or getting rid of Canada thistles. As I had on my farm some two or three small patches and was very anxious to get rid of them I made enquiries as to the best way of killing them and was advised in various ways. Some told me to allow the thistles to grow until the stalk becomes hollow, then cut and let them remain in that way for a time and later plow and cultivate. Others advised that after cutting the thistle in the stage already mentioned I should leave until late in the fall and then plow. This would leave the roots exposed to the frost and kill them.

I have found all to be of no value — only a sure and good way to improve the growth of the thistle.

The following may be of some value and I would advise any person to try it if only on a small patch and be convinced : When the thistles are first appearing above ground in the spring, or, say about this season of the year (June 10), plow, being careful to see that you are not allowing the plow to run too wide. The share should cut and turn thoroughly. Then harrow and leave in this condition until you see the thistles appearing again. Plow and harrow again.

Follow this up for one season and I think Canada thistles will disappear. I have found it to be sure death. Do not stop with two or three plowings but every time they appear above ground turn them down.

Manitoba. E. S.

Would Insure in all Circumstances

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

While perhaps it would not be advisable to actually advise everybody to insure their grain under all circumstances, I think it would be more to the point to suggest that every man look into the matter of hail insurance for himself and give it careful consideration, go into the pros and cons and study the matter thoroughly. I think that after a man has done this he will not want advising, but he will straightway hunt up a good insurance company and take out a policy, as soon as he can. To begin with, he will know that for a small sum he has provided for his seed and his bread and a little surplus of cash besides for the next year to come. Should the hail happen his way he will feel a certain relief of mind that the wife and bairns will not go hungry if he manage well. This surely should be reason enough for a man to insure and castle up his premium, and if he does not get the hail he will be as merry as a lark. He will not grudge that small premium, but rather will he consider how wonderful it was that such a small sum expended would relieve the tension on his mind, when those black and streaky clouds were passing overhead.

I say by all means insure if possible at all. I do not know of any exceptions that would alter my opinion. There are districts which have not, I believe, ever had hail, but they never know when they might get it. We might look into the working of the plan, say of a district that had no hail for 25 years and got it on the 26th. We will give a man say 100 acre crop a year for an example, put the premium high say 20 per cent. that is $20 per year, which in 26 years would be $520 paid out. Of course the interest on this would amount to quite a sum, but I think we should put the interest against the security the man had for all this time. Now we will give him a yield that is lighter than the average, say 15 bushels per acre of all grains combined, that on the 100 acres equals 1500 bushles, which when the yield is light the price would be pretty sure to be high but we will put it at 50 cents per bushel all round which makes 1500 bushels at 50 cents or $750.00. If this crop is clean hailed out, a total loss he gets $500.00 from the insurance company, lost $250.00 on the crop. But he has got back all he paid the company less $20.00. If he had not insured he would get back nothing total loss $750.00 or whatever the crop yielded. Got to turn round and hustle seed and bread and horse feed and such for another year. No hail insurance bank to draw from. No doubt that man would scratch his head and vow to insure after this. I would not think he was much of a business man or a farmer if he didn't and I myself would not like to wait for such an emergency to turn up before I applied for hail insurance.

Sask. DRAG HARROW.

DAIRY

Making Hard Milkers Easy

One of the trials of the dairy stable or yard is the presence in the herd of hard milkers, which waste time, weary muscles, and dishearten beginners. Jas. Weir, an East Middlesex, Ont., cheese-factory patron, always on the alert for improvements in practice, has made a couple of hard milkers easy by a very simple method, which he passes on to other readers of THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE who may be similarly troubled. He tried it first on an old cow that for years had been a "tough one" to milk, and then on a valuable heifer that he was inclined to part with for the same reason. The trouble he found just at the orifice of the teat,the hole being so small as to let through only a very fine stream of milk. The problem was how to make it larger, without causing some other injury. Grasping the teat firmly with one hand, he pressed the point of a sharp, small penknife blade into the opening, making a slight incision quickly in one side. Often there are just two teats to treat, as the fore pair are usually hardest to milk. He found at once that the stream of milk flowed larger and more easily. Lest there might be leakage at first, or the slit healing up close again, he made a smooth, little pin of wood, with a shoulder, and, after putting on a few drops of some healing oil, he pressed it up into the hole, leaving it there till next milking. The cow is regularly milked, and in about a week the incision was nicely healed, and no trouble whatever has resulted. Mr. Weir does not propose tugging at any more hard milkers, when so simple a remedy is at hand.

A Manitoba Farmer's Views

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

I believe the ideal system of handling cream is the local creamery with the cream gathered from house to house with suitable outfit. However, this is impracticable in Manitoba except in a very few districts, owing chiefly to the opposition of the local merchant. The trading system is his best weapon to fight the mail order house. It seems to be better managed in Saskatchewan and Alberta, owing to government assistance. Many are making good money shipping cream by rail but owing to the trouble this plan is not generally adopted.

An overwhelming percentage of the farmers will continue to make the butter at home. For this reason I will give a few thoughts on this system and will try to confine myself to points that I have not usually noticed in the many good articles generally published. In the first place don't chatter and "fool" while milking, aim to milk at an average of five minutes to each cow. Hang a small clock with second hand over the separator and time the turning. Very many separators are turned "steady by jerks" after the manner a green Englishman turns a fanning mill. After cooling keep the cream all in one tin vessel till put in the churn. Taste the cream and stir regularly while ripening. Learn to know the sharp acid taste of the cream when it is in about right condition for churning. A well kept and aired pantry is usually alright for nearly the whole year, for the hottest weather a well kept milkhouse or cellar is best.

By all means use a thermometer. If I could grow eloquent on any question I would try to do so to impress this all important point. The cream must be kept at over 60 degrees for a day at least, to ripen in cool weather. In summer try to keep it from getting over 60, if occasionally it gets away up for too long keep that churning for threshing when a lot of cooking butter will be needed. Churn at 62 in summer and 64 in winter. These are the highest points, so be careful not to go above them. In hot weather churn and make the butter early in the morning.

One of the worst fetters in this industry is the little pottery churns mostly used. Throw them away as you do an out-of-date farm implement. Never fill a churn more than half full. We use a No. 4 churn that will do 20 to 40 pounds and a No. 1 hand worker. Have a handle on each end of churn so the children can churn if the man is away. Have temperature so that the butter will come in about half an hour. Keep the churn going from 50 to 60 revolutions till the butter gathers to about the size of wheat grains. Then drain the buttermilk off. Put into the churn about the same quantity of water as buttermilk, fresh from the well in summer and about 60 degrees in winter, after a few rapid turns drain off and if the maker is a fairly good hand, better get at the butter worker and finish up as quickly as possibly. Don't humbug away without a proper butter worker if you have three or four cows or more, a week or two's butter will pay for one.

Now for the market, there's the rub. The store man is "awful nice" but he never has the right facilities for handling high-priced butter. Most people are not aware of the cheap produce rate for shipping butter express. To get the top-notch prices get it away the day it is churned. Except on a very hot day it goes first rate by express in the ordinary square spruce boxes, either in bricks wrapped or in bulk. The problem is to find the "one honest man" to ship to. My pet theory is that the government should store it and score it on something like the correspondence school plan.

Under present conditions I would advise those who have higher aspirations than ordinary store price to write the most convenient creamery for storage rate and quotations. He can supply the square boxes and other dairy supplies you need, and you might get him to give his judgment on each shipment and write you hints for improvement.

Man. J. BANSFIELD.

POULTRY

Summer Management of Chicks

The following contributions are published in answer to the question: What is your method of feeding and caring for chickens in summer? First award is given to S. J. Neville, Saskatchewan, and second to Rosamond Grabham, Saskatchewan. As success in chicken raising depends a good deal upon the feeding and management of the breeding stock during winter this phase of the question must necessarily be touched on in discussing the summer management of the young flock, and practical methods are given for caring for the hens during and preceding egg laying, that will ensure the chickens being as thrifty and vigorous as it is possible to have them. A healthy well-conditioned breeding flock is the basis of much of the success of chicken rearing and the season is none too early now to set about selecting the breeders for next season's crop.

An Advocate of Crate Fattening

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

The management of the breeding stock is important if one wishes to produce thrifty, vigorous chicks. The breeders should be carefully selected, and should conform to utility as well as to breed type. If possible, we separate the hens from the main flock early in January, and feed them wheat in hoppers, with water twice a day, warmed in the coldest weather, and any vegetables we have left in the cellar, particularly cabbages or turnips, thrown to them in the afternoon. This ration, with a warm bran mash in early morning, keeps the hens in first class condition.

The cock has been separated from the flock about a month earlier, and is only allowed access to the hens about ten days before we wish to begin saving eggs for incubation, say about the third week in March. The eggs are stored, small end down, with occasional turning for a short time and kept in a room at about forty degrees Fahrenheit only ten or twelve hens are allowed to each cock.

The incubator is started in the third week in April. Under usual conditions an earlier start might be wise, but we find that we get a better percentage of fertility by starting about this time. There is no question of being early on the market, as the demand is always unsatisfied. The chicks are taken from the machine twenty-four hours after hatching, and placed in an outdoor brooder at a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit under the hover. As soon as they will eat they are given rolled oats, or oat chop with the hulls sifted out. Water is given in a fountain and sand on the floor from the first furnishes grit. When the

chicks begin to enjoy life
time outside the hover the
yard. This may be compo
the same size as the brood
come accustomed to going
lost, a larger yard, say a r
After the first week heat is
three weeks later it may
the coldest nights.

At three weeks of age th
small quantities, and at fiv
entirely. If the brooder is
some of the chicks to go un
they are used to that the br
coop, as the machine is need
second having been acc
brooder. When the grass
move to a fresh spot, or enla

As soon as the fowls over t
killed off, the chickens are p
hoppers are then supplied
large and allow for plenty
them to exercise, scraps of
refuse are given them to qua
and in the late afternoon, an
time the whole flock is allow
be kept too busy in the grass
Dust boxes of wood ashes are
vided at the ends with vert
cans of kerosene. Thus ve
roost or to them at night ar

Three weeks before marke
many pullets as we do not w
fattening crates, each comp
half a dozen birds, giving th
about. The crates are raised
floor, and are slatted at the
side in front is placed a
cleaned before every feed. T
day, on a mixture of oat an
with sweet skim milk. Th
just a little less than they w
are kept hungry, and it is su
will want. By feeding in thi
more every day but let them
and the forcing is over. Wa
between meals, but conditio
they will need little water. F
the coops are placed in a co
other fowls. In three weeks
best and should then be ma
simply "cut off the tail close
local customers do not like
dead heads," as one lady exp
we cull the weaklings for ho
best for wintering.

Sask.

Finishes Chickens
Fattening

EDITOR FARMER'S ADVOCATE:

My plan of feeding and car
summer is this: I have the c
on a grass run near the house
ing and this piece of land is er
fencing as I consider a good fe
avoid accidents that may occ
able to stray in, overturn the
chickens. I generally place
neath the coops the first week
legs so that the chicken may
two weeks I feed them ver
crumbs, hard boiled eggs wit
while and clean water always
chicks get older I give them
occasional feed of shorts or coc
frequently and giving as much
a time. I endeavor to give
feed as possible and feed as ea
morning, in fact, it is the first
and I find the chickens are a
twice a week I put out a pan
see they have access to grit a
sulphur if lice are in evidence.
method of raising chicks is m
a mash feed is alright once
chicks get older.

I find I have to be very
feathered chicks in shelter
storms spring up, or they wil
they need a great deal of at
three months old, after that I
oats and barley for feed and pr
bath and clean water. They
themselves. I move the coop
week and also keep the brooc
get their feathers I accustom
hen house with the hens.

I find early chicks pay the b
large enough to be sent to the
station from which I get the
least labor. I put the late hatc
crates, fatten for three weeks
are generally ready for Chris
cubator and broody hens for h
results from both but the inc
getting early chickens. We h
shade and a wire netting feedir
that the old hens may not eat

Sask R