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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE.

171

and select from them to make good the place of those found unprofitable.

Such a course, persistently followed for a number of years, would make first-class milkers in our dairies and be more profit for the owners, while the herd would gain a character and reputation in the district for quality. Much can be done to improve the dairy stock by holding over the offspring of these cows which have proved themselves first-class milkers, and breeding only from those with a view of getting into a permanent strain of milkers as far as this can be done in a limited time.

But it does not always follow that a heifer whose mother was an excellent milker, will in turn inherit her mother's good qualities in this respect; but when the descendant of a celebrated line of pail fillers, the probabilities are altogether in her favor that she will possess in a high degree the good qualities of her race. By following such a line of policy as indicated, and taking care to secure males of noted milking stock, our dairy stock may be greatly improved, and, to say the least, far superior to the bad selection of farm stock, bred with no reference to milking qualities. — *Farmer (Eng.)*

KEEPING FERKIN BUTTER.

The dairy product of butter, outside of the districts of country around our cities and large towns available for daily marketing, must necessarily be put up, or packed in tubs made of white oak, holding 25, 50, or 100 pounds weight. The packages are known in the market as tubs or firkins. The value of this butter depends upon the care taken to free it from the buttermilk, and the knowledge and taste required to flavor it, by the proper use of salt, and the neatness with which the whole process of making is characterized.

The consumers are obliged to pay from twenty to forty cents per pound more for butter brought to their cities and large towns weekly than the average market price in our country, made and packed butter—this, too, when its intrinsic value is no more.

This is owing entirely to the want of proper knowledge of the mode of preservation after it comes into possession of the family by whom it is used. The country-cellar or spring house is kept in the dairy cellar or spring house from the date of making until sent to market, retaining all the qualities as when first made.

This is done by excluding the air by the simple process of keeping the package covered with brine made of pure salt, strong enough to float an egg. When sold, and as soon as it is to be delivered, the brine is to be drained off entirely by reversing the package and leaving it bottom up for twelve or twenty-four hours. It is then headed up, and goes to market without brine. The consumer is interested in getting possession of his supply as soon after it leaves the dairy cellar as possible.

He should first take out the head, driving the hoops back to their place, and then make a brine of pure water and salt, and keep it covered until the last pound is used. The butter kept just covered is easily cut out of the size required for use, and if then held under the hydrant or pitcher, and water poured over it freely, it will be fit for the table, and the last pound will prove as good as the first.

No fear will be entertained that the brine will impart its taste to the butter. The office it performs is to prevent the air from contact with the butter. The writer knows that firkin butter has been kept a year by this simple and inexpensive process as sweet and with all the flavor it possessed the day it was made and packed. — *V. E. Piddlet in Country Gentleman.*

CURING AND PRESERVING MEATS.

An interesting paper on this subject was read at a meeting of the Princeton, Farmer's club, by Mr. R. Guild, and by a vote of the club, on motion of ex-Gov. Olden it was forwarded to the *Country Gentleman* for publication. He begins explaining and enforcing the superiority of well-matured meat over that of younger animals, and the necessity of cooling off the animal heat promptly and completely, before any further steps are taken. He then explains the use of salt in the preservation of the meat, showing that as little salt should be used as is consistent with the preservation of the meat, and that in the curing of dried meats brine should be altogether excluded. He then continues as follows:

What is known in commerce as the "sugar cured hams" are packed in bulk with ground salt at such time, or from time to time, as convenience may dictate; the time they remain in bulk is also governed by convenience. They are at length packed in hogs-heads filled with what is called sweet pickle—composed of salt, saltpetre, and molasses. Many of them are shipped from the west in this condition, are shipped here and sold for Jersey hams. The consequence is, there is little uniformity in their quality. Some of them are very good; others over-salted, hard and tasteless.

The celebrated Burlington hams of the olden times (Newbold, I think, was the name,) were cured in this wise:

To 12 hams, 8 lbs. sugar, 1½ lbs. saltpetre, 5 lbs. fine salt; rub the hams with this mixture, and let them be one week in a cask with the skins downwards; then make a pickle of the strongest coarse salt, of sufficient strength to bear an egg; add two or three quarts of hickory ley, refined by boiling; when cool, cover them.

The receipt of Abraham Hunt, of Trenton, was—For three dozen hams, 3 lbs. saltpetre, 12 lbs. fine salt, 1½ gallons molasses; mix them well together, and rub the hams well; let them lie twelve or fourteen days; then make a pickle that will bear an egg, and cover the hams with it. After laying three or four weeks in pickle rub them with bran and hang them up to smoke.

The receipt I have adopted for my own use is as follows:—For twelve hams, 1 lb. saltpetre, 12 lbs. fine salt, 1 gallon molasses. These ingredients, when well mixed, will have about the consistency and appearance of damp, brown sugar. Rub them thoroughly with the mixture, lay them singly on a dry platform. At the end of one week rub them again; at the end of the second week again rub them and hang up to smoke; let them dry thoroughly, but do not smoke them more than ten days.

It will be perceived that all the foregoing receipts embody the same principles, and differ only in the mode of compounding the ingredients and their application; and I am frequently amused to see some newly fledged agricultural journal publishing a new receipt for curing bacon hams, when in principle if not in words, it is precisely the same that was used more than half a century ago.

In regard to smoking meat, it has been practiced in this country since time immemorial but I do not deem it essential to its preservation. Many persons like a slight flavor of smoke, others do not. Meats cured for the English market are never smoked, and I have known persons to kill-dry their meat as they would their tobacco. It is necessary, however, to have it thoroughly dried. I would not be understood to entirely discard brine. In some cases it is not only valuable but indispensable. The sides, or what is known as mass pork, being nearly all fat, possess neither fibrous nor albumen and consequently cannot be injured either by salt or water, and can be kept sound and sweet an indefinite length of time by simply keeping it covered with pure brine, or, as the gentleman from Wheatland suggested at our last meeting, by keeping it covered with salt, and taking it to the pump now and then and filling the cask with cold water. I would and here, however, drop a caution. All brine requires to be assiduously watched and kept pure. It extracts the juices of the meat; they being lighter than the water saturated with salt, rise to the top, become exposed to the air and soon decompose, thereby contaminating the whole contents of the cask. The following recipe for making brine, is, I think, the best that has fallen within my observation:—

Six lbs. salt, one pint molasses 6 oz. saltpetre; dissolve them by boiling 4 gallons of water. In the pickle, when perfectly cool, keep any sort of fresh meat soaked and closely stoppered. This pickle may be kept pure, and its strength undiminished for almost any length of time, by occasionally reboiling it and skimming off the impurities; but as old brine is an excellent fertilizer, and salt is not expensive, I would recommend that the old brine be thrown on the asparagus bed or compost heap, and freshly made brine be substituted.

Opinions in relation to the best mode of preserving meats after they are cured, are as diversified as they are in regard to the mode of curing. The hams of commerce I believe, are invariably over-cured, and packed tight in chaff, bran, ash, &c. Others, after smoking, immerse them in brine; others again packing them in air-tight barrels. The manner of keeping is not so essential as the time at which they are put up, and hence the necessity of not consuming more time than is necessary in curing. If they are not secured before the fly deposits its eggs upon them, no means whatever will save them, except, indeed, keeping them in a temperature so low that the eggs cannot hatch, or immersing them in brine. For any considerable quantity, I prefer the tight barrel system. But for family use, I have found a rough, swinging shelf, the sides and ends of which are covered with wire cloth (in which the pieces are hung) every convenient and secure against both flies and vermin of every description.

Now, Mr. President and gentlemen, if the foregoing premises be correct, I am led to the following conclusions:—

1. To have cured meats in perfection, no animal should be slaughtered until it has in some degree at least attained its natural growth.

2. All meats should be promptly and thoroughly cooled before being slaughtered. If in cold weather, by hanging in a cold place at least 48 hours and as much longer as will be consistent with its keeping sound, but under no circumstances let it freeze.

3. No more salt should be used and no more time should be consumed in curing

than is necessary to its safe keeping, due regard being paid to the size of the pieces, the temperature of the weather, &c.; and as little water should be used as is consistent with cleanliness.

4. They should be thoroughly dried before storing away, but smoke is not essential to their preservation.

To preserve them after being cured, they should be stored away in a cool and well ventilated apartment before the fly can possibly reach them. In this climate, I should say not later than the middle of February.

DANGER OF GREEN FODDER.

J. J. Mechi, of London, England, states that a person who was accustomed to supply his teams with green feed, lost two cart horses worth £150. One was found dead and distended in the morning, the other died in the course of the day, and another person lost two cows. Young green tares, especially when cut immediately after rain, are most dangerous, with the ordinary mode of placing them before the mals in unlimited quantities as cut by the scythe. The losses caused by this system in their annual total must be enormous. For thirty years we have avoided such losses by invariably passing all green food, tares, grass, Italian ryegrass, color the green beans through the chaff-cutter. According to the condition of its growth, we mix more or less of fine-cut straw or hay chaff with it. This absorbs its superfluous moisture and prevents flatulence, distensions and death. The same principle is applied to pulped roots—pulped cabbage, kohlrabi, mangel—the latter being more dangerous early in the season unless so mixed. The cost of doing all this is a trifle as compared with the serious losses occasioned by its omission. The value of a single animal would pay the extra cost for several years. In fact, I have long since arrived at the conclusion that the turning out, roaming at large and whole food system will be given up by those who prefer profit to loss. Over-ripe feeds, either tares or clover, which are rough and indigestible; require a comminution. Of course, in such a case, being deficient rather than overfull of moisture, they do not require straw chaff, or at all events, very little of it. If horses are to have water, it should be before eating green tares in a wet state, or after. Bean meal should be intermixed with or attached to the cut food in the manger so that the animal cannot take it unmixel. Our horses coming in from work are not allowed to drink cold water until after having eaten a little manger food.

UNPROFITABLE SHEEP RAISING.

All flock masters have in view the object of making the flock pay, but each goes about it in an entirely different way. One cares well for the flock, and makes them as comfortable as may be at all times; another lets them take care of themselves. These last are usually looking for some better breeds, and imagine their sheep are "run out," or they have had them too long. I have a great deal of sympathy for a flock of sheep in this situation. They are placed very much as the Israelites of old were when commanded to make brick without straw; much is expected from them and very little done for them.

The probabilities are that one-half of the sheep kept in this country are cared for in this slipshod manner. Their owners consider them property, and neglect them in every possible way, only waiting for a chance to sell, in which they do not get as their sheep are not in a condition to attract buyers. When the cold fall rains and snows come, the owners know them to be severe storms, but imagine the sheep can stand it. The consequence is, that when winter sets in the sheep are low in flesh; they are not thought to be doing well, and the owners expect to have some early lambs to sell at a good price, to make up the loss for all former bad treatment and neglect. When the early lambs appear, many ewes have twins; none have nourishment enough for one lamb, much less two; many die from want of shelter. By the time grass comes, the lambs are stunted, and the ewes are poor beyond description; and on many the wool is entirely off the belly and on many the wool is entirely off the neck. Shearing time arrives; the average is from two and one-half to three pounds of inferior wool, the lambs are not fit for the butcher, and the profits from the early lambs vanish. These farmers naturally conclude that the sheep business is unprofitable; they think sheep should pay better. This is the way to dairying would pay.

The other class of flock masters keep as many sheep (or a few less) as they have good feed for in summer, and comfortable accommodations in winter. If the aim is to rear pure bred stock, they select the best specimens of the breed to be found, whether long or fine wool, weeding out all such as do not come up to the standard of what may be called excellent. If on the other hand, it is to be best to breed a practical sheep, one for wool and mutton, and for lambs for the butcher, they select the best natives in the country, ewes of good age, say from two to three years.

IMPROVED FEEDING CATTLE.

The enquiry this year in the west for young short-horn bulls, far exceeds that of any former period. Beef cattle are now commanding a very good price, compared with the going rates during the past winter. It is becoming evident, too, that the demand is increasing for young, well bred and well fed bullocks, in place of the very large and excessively fattened beasts, which have heretofore commanded top prices. The advantages of the short-horn cross, viz., early maturity, which means rapid growth and ability to make flesh at any age, the most meat in the best parts, and the meat in all parts of the carcass of superior quality. These advantages are well established, and admitted in all the leading markets of the world, and the farming public, always conservative about innovations, very cheerfully grant the same thing now, and are acting upon the admissions with becoming promptitude. Those farmers who are first to move in the matter of improving their cattle stock, will be first to obtain more pounds and better quality of meat from a given amount of grain and grass, and prices in the market to correspond with these advantages.

The cattle business is but in its infancy in this country, as those who are familiar with it now, and live to see the cattle stock in the west twenty five years hence will see. Even the uncouth Texan, whose form is a mass of defects, those parts shrunk and diminutive, where the fullest development and the most meat should be, will only be partially recognizable in ten years, and not at all in twenty. Capital and enterprise have gone southward and westward, and capital is too wise to remain more than temporarily in inferior property.

Experts in the manufacture of any leading staple, or useful thing, very soon learn to condemn second rate machinery. The farm beast, bred for its flesh, is only rightly viewed when considered as a mere machine for the conversion of crude grain and grass into human food, and the man who accepts this as true, and all do who act upon the general proposition involved, though not every one works the matter out logically, though the results reached bear the logic out fully, is a wise man in his line of business, and his wisdom will profit him abundantly. — *Farm Journal.*

ARTICHOKES AS STOCK FOOD.

A correspondent of the *Kansas Farmer* relates the following experience with artichokes:

I planted about one-fourth of an acre with about one half bushel, cut very small, dropped in the furrows two feet and a half apart and also the even inches apart in the rows; give them about the same attention as potatoes. Early in September I cut them before frost and used the stalks to roof my stable, thinking they were good for nothing else; but I found it very difficult to keep my horse from eating himself out of doors. He would leave corn and hay for these stalks. I think I had about fifty bushels on the one-quarter of an acre, but they were very small which made it tedious gathering them. I think they were too thick, I shall plant again this year. Top the stalks once or twice during the season, to make them "stocky;" cut before frost, shock as corn, when cured, stack and cut them in a machine, mix with bran, steam or cook them if convenient.

I think they will furnish a large amount of valuable feed. I think the roots or tubers will grow all winter, when the ground is not frozen. Dig in the spring, or turn your hogs in to dig them for you. They are choice feed for milch cows, and, coming as they do early in the spring, when succulent food is scarce, help the yield of butter.

CATTLE DISEASE IN CALIFORNIA.

The spinal meningitis is reported to have broken out among cattle owned by Elmer Fairchild a cattle dealer and farmer of Newton, Conn. Out of eleven large four year old steers, brought from Michigan, seven were seized with the disease a number of days ago. Mr. Fairchild being unacquainted with the nature of the disease, thought the cattle had been poisoned. Two days afterwards one of those affected died, and the following day another died, and a third was seized with convulsions. A post mortem examination revealed the disease to be as above stated. The kidneys were also found to be highly inflamed. The farmers of this section were alarmed for the safety of their own cattle, and the case having been brought to the notice of Mr. Gould the Connecticut cattle commissioner, he sent word that he would soon come and make an investigation for the benefit of the cattle raising interest, and report it.