

Harold Good Triples Silage Tonnage With Rye Sod-Seeded in Alfalfa

York Countian, Helper

By ERNEST J. NEILL

Highrock, Pa. — Balboa rye seeded in alfalfa sod has tripled silage yields on the southern York County farm of Harold Good.

Using a method that is gaining broad acceptance in the flat Delta lands of Mississippi and in the fertile farmlands of York and Lancaster Counties, Mr. Good seeds in dry, hard ground during the fall months. Seeds and fertilizers are put in place without destroying the firmness of the soil.

Sod-seeding is somewhat new, but it is producing acres and acres of winter grazing in the south, and tripling tonnage that goes into upright silos in York County.

Generally Maintenance Tool

"It's a maintenance tool generally, unless you have a bound sod condition," one man told of the Pasture Dream that leaves sod intact, resisting erosion much better than most other tillage tools.

Dairymen have found that the first cutting of combinations is not too satisfactory for silage. With Balboa rye, a large, woody, fibrous chop is produced that readily absorbs alfalfa juices, adds carbohydrates to proteins furnished by the legume.

"Fall seeding gives rye a good root system, and by spring it is able to start on a par with alfalfa. Fertilizers are applied — 0-20-20 or 0-14-14 for the alfalfa only, and tonnage returns are astounding," Lancaster Farming was told.

The Pennsylvania State University has been experimenting with the machine that works in unprepared seedbeds, but as a rule they have limited tests to prepared soils.

Chicken Numbers In State at 26 Year Low Point

HARRISBURG — Pennsylvania farmers this year are raising the smallest number of chickens in 26 years, the State Department of Agriculture reported today.

Excluding broiler-fryer chickens, the total of chickens raised this year was given as 22,503,000 or three per cent below the 1955 crop of 23,199,000 head, a Federal-State survey showed.

The 1956 total is 33 per cent below the 10-year 1945-54 average. However, with the reduction in numbers the State still holds its fourth place among all the states in the number of chickens raised on farms, the Department said.

Broiler Output Record

The term "chickens raised" includes fowls intended for replacements in laying flocks, also birds other than those of broiler type that are sold for meat, observers said. Also, laying flock numbers have been declining in recent years as production of eggs per layer per year has been increasing.

Meanwhile, farmers of Pennsylvania have been advancing their production of broilers to meet consumer demand. Output last year reached a record high of 30,318,000, an increase of nearly 2 million in the past ten years.

Placements up 20 Per Cent

The Department reported an increase of 20 per cent in the number of broiler chicks placed during the first seven months of this year compared with the same period in 1955.

Nationally, the number of chickens raised on farms this year totals nearly 472 million, an increase of two per cent over 1955, but 22 per cent below the 10-year average.

Rye Combines Well

Rye alone does not provide too good a silage. It furnishes bulk and a limited amount of carbohydrates. But these combine well with legumes and hold moisture that normally runs away in silage.

Although Mr. Good's results have been very satisfactory, he plans to try oats sometime soon, to see if an oats-alfalfa combination will equal rye-alfalfa. Right now he has two 50-by-14 silos, one is full, the other three-fourths full. Exceptionally good pasture growing conditions this year have reduced the need for feeding silage, but there is an ample reserve for all demands next winter may require.

Mr. Good farms 285 acres in one farm plus another 150 near County farmer who moved across the Susquehanna to start diversified farming operations. Included in his acreage are 35 acres tomatoes, 40 acres or more of corn, 45 of hay, 15 wheat, by. He's a former Lancaster and 15 acres of oats.

"So far this year I've put up 6,000 bales of hay," Harold told, while showing his Lancaster County visitors around his farm. "I'm running a herd of 70 Guernsey cows, milking 40," he continued.

Weeds also Reduced

His procedure of combining Balboa and alfalfa has reduced weeds. When seeding rye, 5-10-10 fertilizer is applied in the sod-drill. Rye application is extra thick.

Silo filling started the last week of May, while other crops were progressing rapidly. On the contoured hillsides were fields of corn being grown for seed sale.

Comparing costs, Harold figures the alfalfa-Balboa combination costs about a third that soybean-sorghum mixtures would require. "You have your permanent stand of alfalfa," he explained, "and the soybean-sorghum planting requires more fertilizer."

Feeding of silage will start when pastures require support, Harold told, but from prospects now, pastures will last all summer. "I believe in this combination of Balboa-alfalfa," he asserts, "and I'm feeding some hay to encourage the cows to eat more grass."

He's producing 4.5 to 4.7 per cent butterfat, marketed for local consumption through Red Lion.

Detasseling of 30 acres of hybrid corn for seed was keeping Harold and his helper, Bill Fansler, a former Lebanon county resident, busy at the time.

No Plowing Required

Reviewing success with the Pasture Dream and pasture seeding, he told, "There is no plowing, and we are able to plant four 20-inch rows simultaneously. There's no land preparation, no cultivation. Fertilization is applied at the same time for alfalfa, and there's a deep placement of fertilizer," the York Countian reports.

"Potash and phosphorous are our greatest needs here," Harold explained, but his program of sod-seeding is combatting this.

"We use a field chopper — direct cut. The alfalfa-oats are not wilted, the crop is blown into wagons and then into silos," this enthusiast said.

Fifteen acres of Canadian Grass pasture are producing well in another new venture for this York County farmer.

Summarizing his program, Mr. Good is sure cereal crop seeding doesn't work too well in the spring. One procedure that has worked well in the Delta Corn is being applied in the productive lands of Lancaster and York Counties.



Tripled silage tonnage is the record stacked up by Harold Good (left) through sod seeding of Balboa rye and alfalfa near High Rock with his helper, Bill Fansler, formerly of Lebanon County. (See accompanying story) (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo)

Silage on the Contour



Ground beneath this sod-seeded Balboa rye and alfalfa has little chance to wash away from the High Rock farm of Harold Good. Silage yields have been tripled, as described in an accompanying story in this issue of Lancaster Farming.

Mississippi and York County



A view of a grassed PDR pasture on the O. A. Hoxie Farm near Port Gibson, oats seeded with an FR model Pasture Dream that is supplying a new means of tripled silage production in York and Lancaster Counties.