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The Centre Democrat.

BELLEFONTE, PA. AGRICULTURAL. NEWS, FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS.

THE TEST OF THE NATIONAL WELFARE IS THE INTELLIGENCE AND PROSPERITY OF THE FARMER.

Every farmer in his annual experience discovers something of value. Write it and send it to the "Agricultural Editor of the DEMOCRAT, Bellefonte, Penna.," that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.

Hints on Hog Killing.

Skill and practice are needed to take out the intestines neatly, without cutting or breaking them and soiling the flesh. Run the knife lightly down marking the belly straight, cut to the bone between the thighs, and in front of the ribs and below, and split the rear bones with an axe carefully, not to cut beyond them; open the abdomen by running the hand or two fingers behind the knife with its edge turned outward. Little use of the knife is required to loosen the entrails. The fingers, rightly used, will do most of the severing. Small strong strings, cut in proper lengths, should be always at hand to quickly tie the severed ends of any small intestines cut or broken by chance. An expert will catch the entire offal in a large tin pan or wooden vessel, holding it between himself and the hog. Unskilled operators, and those opening very large hogs, need an assistant to hold this. The entrail, and then the liver, heart, etc., being all removed, thoroughly rinse out any blood or filth that may have escaped inside. Spread the cut edges apart by inserting a short stick between them to admit free circulation of cool air. When drippings is over, or the hanging posts are wanted for other carcasses, remove the dressed ones, and hang them in a cool cellar or other safe place until the whole flesh is thoroughly cooled through. Or if, for convenience and easier work, the carcasses are cut up before cooling, let all the pieces lie apart for at least half a day. Removing the lard from the long intestines requires expertness that can only be learned by practice. The fingers do most of this cleaning, safer, and better than a knife. A light feed the night before killing leaves the intestines less distended and less likely to be broken.—American Agriculturist.

Preparing for Spring in the Garden.

Wherever a crop is taken off, it will be a great gain to manure and plow or spade the land, leaving it rough during the winter. All such work as making paths, laying drains, etc., is more advantageously done now than when the press of spring work is at hand. If new frames are needed, or straw mats, or crates for marketing produce, or garden tables are required; if implements are to be made, repaired or bought—whatever can be done in the present months—will save much valuable time in the spring. Now, and all through the winter, add everything to the manure pile that will decompose and increase its bulk and value. Among the preparations for spring is the pricking out into cold frames, the cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce plants from seeds. It is important to set the plants of cabbage and cauliflower down to the first leaf, so that the stem, the portion most readily injured by freezing, may be covered. The sashes should not be put over the plants until there is danger of severe freezing weather. Other frames should be made ready for very early lettuce. The soil is to be spaded and enriched and made ready for planting, and the frames then filled up with leaves. If there are shutters at hand to cover them, all the better. Earth is often wanted for hot-beds, seed-boxes, etc., at a time when the ground is still frozen. Lay in a good supply of fine, rich soil, under a shed, or where it can be had when needed.

The Care of Poultry.

Poultry keeping is much better adapted to women than the milking of cows, which many of them still do, though not as many as formerly. The care of chickens is especially in their line, and many a woman would succeed with poultry who now finds it hard to live by some branch of sewing, or what is about as bad, trying to teach music or write poetry for magazines. Care and patience, united with natural tact, would bring a handsome reward in many cases. The only sure cure for egg eating is the axe. But to keep fowls from acquiring the habit, feed them plenty of cheap meat, and such as comes from the table. They rarely acquire the habit if constantly at large, unless in winter, when insects are gone. But in confinement, with no variety to eat and nothing to do, they both learn to eat eggs and to peck each other for blood and flesh. Feed meat, scraps, crushed bones, grease, marrow, anything coming from animals or birds that they like. And they don't mind chicken meat, either. The study of poultry diseases is not as important as that of animals, because a sick fowl is usually very small, and the time required for proper treatment is often worth more than the bird itself. The aim should be to keep the flock in health, which usually is not at all difficult. Early chickens are easily raised in a warm, dry barn cellar, where there is plenty of fermenting manure to scratch over. Have an opening on the south side, with plenty of light, and then if the place is rat proof, as it should be, they will do better than out of doors in July, when it is too hot and lice abound.

Breeding From Grade Sires.

If a pure blood male can be obtained at a moderate price, such that a single season's service would reimburse his whole cost, it certainly would not be wise to breed from a grade. We admit that it is quite possible for a grade to get better progeny than some pure bloods. It sometimes happens that a half blood has been so strongly impressed by the prepotent blood of its sire that its vital force is entirely controlled by it, and it, in turn, impresses upon its progeny wholly pure blood characteristics. But the progeny of many grade sires seem to take to the scrub side of the blood; and it is this uncertainty that we would have breeders provide against, and, therefore, advise pure-blood sires in all cases where they can be purchased at \$100 to \$200. This can now be done, and, in many cases, by taking calves of a few months old, among the the three or four most widely distributed breeds of cattle—Short-horn, Hereford, Jersey, and Holstein—they may be secured for even less.

A prepotent half blood may, possibly, become the foundation stock for a new strain of blood, even superior to its sire, for, by the best selection, the superior element is constantly strengthened and concentrated, until it wholly ejects from the progeny the scrub blood, and it becomes a positive working unit force; then it can set up as a distinct strain of blood, able to stamp its impress indelibly upon its offspring. This is breeding toward the best—merit being the foundation. But the general breeder is not skilled in such selections, and would make a bad job of it. He should, therefore, always get pure blood, if within his reach, and this will seldom require selection, but give him a valuable grade of stock with-out expert breeding.—Chicago Live-Stock Journal.

Prune the grape vines as soon as the leaves begin to fall. Cut back to three buds and take away all the surplus cane.

General Notes.

Two thicknesses of newspapers make a good lining for apple barrels. Do not overlook the fact that sheep require shelter now as well as other animals.

Rye will grow at a low temperature and continue to grow later and start earlier than most other grains.

Horse radish should be dug and packed away in slightly moistened sand. Small boxes are suitable for the purposes of storage.

Captain R. I. King has about 30,000 head of sheep, his pastures amounting in the aggregate to something over 1,000,000 acres of splendidly watered lands.

Prof. Brown writes, that the best shipping weight for a steer is 1,200 pounds; for a sheep, 160 pounds. Can make the weight of steer at two years, and of sheep at one shear.

If there is a large accumulation of coarse manure, put it where the fowls can reach it. They will only scratch it to fine condition, and be benefited by the exercise.

Trees should be pruned regularly, and not allowed to grow without pruning for several years, with only an occasional treatment. They should receive attention every season.

In the five years ending with 1850 more than 1,500,000 sheep and 200,000 horned cattle were boiled down simply for their tallow in the colonies of New South Wales and Victoria.

E. L. Sturtevant says the great drawback to obtaining satisfactory yields of corn, comes from slovenly culture, not only in operations in the field but from careless planting by the farmer.

The American Garden says that in its natural state the strawberry is generally found growing in deep, rich and moist ground, yet free from standing water, and these are just the conditions of soil that we endeavor to provide for its most successful cultivation.

The Country Gentleman says, the Lombard is the most productive plum known to cultivators, for all localities. Two twigs of that variety sent to that office, which were sixteen and seventeen inches long, bore an even peck of well grown and well ripened fruit.

In mulching, do not put the material on too thick, as two inches are sufficient except on wet soils. It should not be done too early, as it is best to let the ground become frozen first. The object of mulching is not to keep away the cold, but to prevent thawing, which dislodges the plant.

COWS MILK FOR COLTS.—A pleasant note from the Secretary of the Ayrshire Breeders' Association, says that Col. J. E. Russell tried to supplement the milk of the dam of certain of his colts with that of Jersey cows, but found that it did not agree with them generally. He found they thrived splendidly upon Ayrshire milk. One of the colts so reared by him is the famous Parole, whose astonishing performances do credit to both the theory and practice.

PRESERVING ROOTS IN WINTER.—Parsnips, salsify, and horseradish are not injured by hard freezing; all others must be stored for the winter, and a sufficient supply of the hardy kinds should also be taken up. If the cellar is not warm, a supply for the present use may be kept in boxes or barrels, and covered with earth to prevent shivering.

A WRITER says that a year's experience with broad wagon wheels is conclusive as to their value. A 4-inch tire will carry two tons over soft ground with greater ease to the team than a 2½-inch tire will carry one ton. The wheels are not so much strained by stones and rough tracks on the road, and the road is not cut up, but, on the contrary, is packed and keeps smooth.

SHELTER FOR SWINE.—If kept dry and warm, hogs fatten faster, and on considerably less food, than when exposed to inclement weather, and their pork is of a better and more even quality. Well sheltered, they are also saved from various diseases and occasional deaths during the winter. Thus, those who take good care of their swine, are not only treating them with a humanity which is highly commendable, but they add, thereby, an extra profit in rearing and fattening their herds.