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The Centre Democrat.

BELLEFONTE, PA. AGRICULTURAL. NEWS, FACTS AND SUGGESTIONS. THE BEST OF THE NATIONAL WELFARE IS THE INTEREST 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, Penn'a." that other farmers may have the benefit of it. Let communications be timely, and be sure that they are brief and well pointed.

Summer Feed for Milch Cows. In portions of the country subject to drought, or where the feed in pastures becomes short from other causes, persons who keep milch cows should make provision for supplying other food than grass. Sown or cultivated crops should be ready in case of emergency. If they are not needed for summer food they can be harvested at the appropriate time, and kept for feeding animals during the winter. Calculation should be made to have them in a condition for cutting during July and August, as a protracted drought is most likely to occur during these months. The same is true of orchard grass, if it grows on tolerably damp ground. Millet or Hungarian grass is an excellent substitute for the pasture grasses, if it is cut at the proper stage of its growth. Green oats and peas are good. The food that generally gives the best satisfaction, however, is fodder corn. The sweet is preferable to the ordinary field varieties and is better relished by cows. Some or all of these crops should be planted at different times, so as to have them ready whenever the grass in the pasture begins to fail. As before suggested, if they are not wanted for feeding the cows during the summer, they may be kept for winter food. It is desirable to raise them as near the pasture or feeding yard as possible, so as to save labor in hauling. The use of them should commence before the feed in pastures begins to fail perceptibly. If pasture grass is cropped very short the roots are injured by the heat of the sun, and the growth will be small after rain occurs. By affording feed from outside, the close cropping of the grass may be prevented, and the best conditions afforded for its rapid growth when the soil again becomes moist. Many find it advisable and convenient to give their cows a liberal feeding after milking at night.

After a decrease of milk has commenced, on account of insufficient food, it is very difficult to recover the shrinkage, however well the cows may be fed. This is the experience of almost all dairy farmers. Great pains must be taken to prevent this shrinkage. It is generally advisable to feed some cut food before the pastures begin to fail, so that the cows will become accustomed to eating it. A sudden change from one kind of food to another generally leads to unfavorable results. The change should be made gradually.

Cows, as well as other grazing animals, relish an occasional food of something beside grass, even when pastures are in their best condition. They will eat dry corn-meal, bran, and even old hay, and appear to derive much benefit from them. Milch cows should be fed liberally during hot and dry weather, even if the feed in pastures is tolerably good. They should not be required to walk about all day in search of food. If they are continually on the move their blood will become heated and their milk in poor condition. They should be fed so liberally that they can lie at rest a considerable portion of the time.—Chicago Times.

The Rural World says that it is one of the few facts that are patent to all who know anything of the business that by the creamery system the hogs that may be raised from the skimmed milk, after the cream has paid a higher price than the butter made thereof will pay all the expense of a dairy farm save only the feed.

The Yorkshire swine are divided into three classes—the large Yorkshire, small Yorkshire, and middle Yorkshire. Except as regards size the large and small Yorkshires are very similar, but the middle class may be said to be quite distinct in appearance, shape and quality from the others.

Precautions Against Drought. While we cannot influence the rainfall we can, at least, mitigate the effects of drought to a certain extent by the proper preparation and cultivation of the soil. It is a well-known fact that when the soil is kept in a loose, fine, friable condition it not only absorbs moisture from the atmosphere, especially at night, but allows of the downward course of the water during showers instead of a loss by flowing off, as is the case when the surface is hard. A loose, deep soil also permits an upward tendency of water by capillary attraction, the loose soil thus storing moisture by its greater power of absorption when rains are abundant. We therefore find in time of severe drought that the frequent use of the cultivator, even when the soil apparently does not require working, is very beneficial, the greenish tinge of the growing corn giving evidence that the constant stirring of the soil enables the crop to derive a certain proportion of moisture that it would not otherwise obtain.

The leaves of plants give off moisture very rapidly. When we sprinkle a plant with water the moisture is not absorbed by the leaves, as many suppose, but it arrests, temporarily, the rapid evaporation that constantly takes place, which is greatest when the season is very warm. We may safely compare a growing plant to a pump, which brings the moisture from below and discharges it from the leaves. The moisture is collected by the roots, which spread in every direction, and the amount of moisture given off in a day by a plant, as corn, for instance, is very great. We cannot, of course, water a field of corn, but we can at least lessen the amount of water which it gives off. The warmer the soil the more active the plant in search of moisture. Among the agencies used for assisting to retain moisture is plature, which absorbs moisture to a certain degree, from the atmosphere. Any material that serves as a mulch will impart great benefit to a growing crop, not only by preventing the evaporation of moisture from the soil, but also by keeping the earth cool. The only method known, however, for securing the largest proportion of moisture is, as we stated, the deep, constant and thorough pulverization of the soil.

There is another fact to be considered. Weeds and grass also give off moisture, and every weed that grows by the side of a plant intended for cropping deprives the desired plant of moisture. Sometimes the weed or blade of grass requires more moisture than the plant, and flourishes, while the plant dies. Clean cultivation, therefore, prevents the robbery of the plant of moisture by destroying weeds and grass. As two plants of the same kind growing together are rivals, the one struggling against the other for supremacy in procuring food and moisture, we should be cautious not to have many plants to the hill. If danger occurs during drought thin out every plant that can be spared in order that the stronger and more thrifty may have better opportunities to mature. A clean surface and deep tillage will often save a crop, that would otherwise be lost during a dry season.

Bones on the Farm. It is well enough to know that bone, when ground fine, makes one of the best and cheapest manures, especially on lands long in use. The needs of farmers with abundant capital are well enough met in the commercial fertilizers. With the Experiment Stations to analyze the samples there is not much danger of adulteration. The high price of this comminuted bone, 2 cents a pound and upward, deters many farmers from using it on a large scale, even where is no doubt that the investment would pay. In a limited way, the small farmer has the means within his reach of reducing several barrels of bone to a fine powder every year. A solution of potash will reduce bone to a fine condition, and make it available for plant food. Most farmers still use wood for fuel, and the ashes from fifteen or twenty cords used in a year, if saved, would reduce all the bones ordinarily within reach of the farmer. The old-fashioned leach that used to stand at almost every farmer's back door for soap making, was a good contrivance

for reducing the bones.

But any tight, strong cask or box will answer quite as well for this purpose. Water poured upon the ashes makes a lye, or solution of potash, strong enough to decompose the bones. The casks should stand under cover, so that the quantity of water applied to the bone and ashes may be under control. The time it will take to reduce the bone to a powder will depend upon the amount of potash in the ashes, and attention bestowed upon the process. It is essential that the ashes and bone should be kept closely packed in the mass, and that they be kept in a moist state, adding water as it evaporates from the surface. The finer the bone before it is packed in the ashes the sooner it will be reduced. The process can be hastened by putting into the mass a few pounds of common potash. But this is only necessary to save time. Ashes from hickory, or any of the hard wood, contain sufficient potash to decompose the bone. When the mass is soft enough to break down with a spade or shovel it can be mixed with land plaster, dried peat or loam to make it convenient for handling. It is a concentrated fertilizer, to be used with discretion in the hill, or applied as a top dressing to growing crops in the field or garden. We are quite sure that any one who uses this preparation of bone and wood ashes, and sees the vigorous push it gives to garden and other crops, will be likely to continue it. But many farmers near seaports and railroad stations use coal mainly for fuel, and will have to resort to a hand or horse mill to use up the waste bones. Small mills are extensively used by poultry men, for crushing oyster shells as well as bone, and the machinery can be adjusted to break the bone coarsely for hen feed. The oil and gelatine of the bones have an alimentary value, and, turned into eggs, pay much better than when used as a fertilizer for the soil.—American Agriculturist.

Farm Notes. One of the best crosses for farm purposes is the Suffolk or Yorkshire on the common large hogs. Ventilation, and plenty of it at this season is very essential, not only in the stables, but also in the barn. The laying hens should have plenty of fresh water at this season, as eggs contain more water than anything else in their composition.

Now is the time to watch the strawberry plants. Keep them clean, do not let the runners have free privilege, and water them occasionally. Giving salt to animals is often neglected, and yet it is as important as watering or feeding, for upon it depends the health and productive capacity of the stock.

A practical poultry man says that ten drops of carbolic acid in a teaspoonful of coal oil, injected into the nostrils of a fowl with a syringe, though a severe remedy, is a sure cure for roup.

The only safe plan for killing weeds and saving labor is to destroy them when they are young. If allowed to grow too large the work will not only be harder but cannot be done effectually.

See that the tomato vines are well staked, and pinch off the shoots occasionally in order to render them stocky. A vine is usually very prolific, and if well managed only a few are necessary for a full supply.

A young Southdown lamb will weigh nearly as much as those of the Cotswold or Leicesters up to the age of three months, and are much more salable. If brought into market early they often sell as high as \$8 each.

Plant some sweet corn for feeding your milch cows in August and September, when the grass is scorched and dry. Plant in drills eighteen inches apart, on old sod turned over. Plant every month up to the middle of July.

The Early Richmond cherry is one of the earliest to come into bearing and usually yields a good crop. The tree grows in almost any location, and the fruit, though acid, is more wholesome than that of many other varieties.

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