# PRACTICAL FARMING

### DISINFECT THE STABLES.

The fact that regular disinfection of the stables is not a common practise in Canada is sufficient evidence that we as farmers are not thorough or do we appreciate the importance of the health of our animals. As in other countries, disease of animals is responsible for the loss to farmers of many millions of dollars annually. Such diseases as tuberculosis, abortion, scours, blackleg, glanders, hog cholera, etc., take enormous toll from our revenues. Again parasites such as lice, ticks, etc., each year cause the waste of enormous amounts of expensive feed to say nothing of the losses in production of milk, meat, and young stock. Farmers of Canada, it is your duty and your best business to stop these losses. Don't wait till animals die of disease or are emaciated and hairless from parasites before discovering trouble. Diseases are spread more rapidly when animals are confined in winter quarters.

One of the most important factors in cheap and healthy wintering of animals is clean quarters and no quarters can be kept clean and free from disease and parasites without disinfection at least twice annually.

The basis of disinfection is direct contact. Disease germs under a layer of manure, straw or dirt, cannot be killed by average disinfection. Hence the first step is the thorough cleaning out of the barns, scraping (and washing, if possible), all walls and floors, and sweeping dirt, dust and cobwebs from walls and ceilings. Wood floors should be repaired and earth floors renewed with a layer of clean soil.

**What Disinfectants to Use**

1. Sunlight. This is the cheapest and one of the best. Every stable should have at least 6 sq. ft. of glass per mature head of horses and cattle, and one-quarter this amount for calves and mature hogs. Sunlight induces cleanliness, health, comfort, and greater profits.

2. Whitewash. A good whitewash applied hot to ceilings and walls covers and kills germs and parasites. Add drug disinfectant, such as carbolic acid, if barns have housed diseased animals. Apply with spray pump or brush.

3. Drug Disinfectants. All floors, gutters, and mangers should receive extra care. Disinfect by soaking thoroughly with one of the coal tar distillates such as kreso, wescol, zenoleum, creolin, etc. etc., applied in water solution 3% to 6% varying with strength of disinfectant. Apply with spray pump or sprinnler and brush in.

The Health of Animals Branch, Department of Agriculture, Ottawa, can supply free instructions in selecting and preparing whitewash and disinfectants.

Thoroughness in the above disinfection is most important.

The intelligent stockman intent on maintaining healthy stock finds it wise to disinfect mangers and feed passages more frequently. A light spraying monthly will suffice.

Practise proves that disinfection is cheap insurance and an investment yielding a high rate of interest. If Canadian farmers unitedly will but realize this, our animal disease and losses therefrom would decrease 20% per annum.

### The Care of the Fall Litter.

The measure of the swine feeder's ability may well be taken by his success in handling his later summer and fall litters. Here the percentage of culls and unthrifty pigs is usually high, particularly with the late fall litter obliged to winter in cold or worse damp quarters. Generally speaking, no young pigs should arrive after September, unless the feeder has exceptional facilities for winter swine raising.

To ensure strong fall litters the sows should spend the summer on pasture with as much range as possible. Clover, alfalfa, rape or grass may be utilized to the exclusion of meal for the first two months, provided the pasture is abundant. For the duration of the gestation or carrying period, the use of a little meal, once daily, will be amply repaid. Shorts and bran, equal parts, with a handful of oats per sow, fed a few pounds daily, is recommended.

One very fertile cause of unsatisfactory fall litters is found where the sow has produced a litter in the spring, been heavily milked, and bred in a thin weakened state, and at the same time properly nourish the litter she is carrying. Ordinarily, breed the sow a few days after weaning. If she is much pulled down in flesh delay breeding even at the expense of a later fall litter.

When the sow farrows, if in August, September, or later, observe the following facts:—

1. See that the youngsters have exercise and plenty of it, right up to snowfall.

2. They must have a warm, dry place to sleep. One thorough chilling, such as may be contracted on a wet, cold fall evening, where improper shelter and little bedding are supplied, will ruin the sucker or weaner, for good and all. Given a dry floor, well bedded, the fall has no terrors for the little pig.

3. Start the pigs to eat when two or three weeks of age. If two or three sows farrow at nearly the same time and if they are acquainted, place them together with their litters. Make a hole in the fence and give the little ones the run of the barnyard or adjoining field or paddock. Provide a small self-feeder where the sows cannot reach it, and keep a mixture of shorts, 2 parts; ground corn, 1 part; ground oats, 2 parts; before the little pigs at all times. Skimmilk in a trough, similarly situated, will also prove popular and highly beneficial.

4. Mangels or sugar beets fed tops and all will be relished by the sows, as well as a few cobs of corn daily. A meal sop containing if possible, milk in some form with a mixture of shorts, ground corn and ground oats should be fed twice daily. Feed for milk.

Winter Care of the Fall Pigs.—The winter quarters for the three or four months pigs must be dry above all things. A low sleeping berth built in an open shed covered over with straw and kept well bedded, with dry straw, provides comparative warmth, dryness and fresh air. Access during the day time to a shed in which they may root in straw or litter after a few handsful of oats or whole corn, is highly to be recommended. Either the self-feeder, or trough may be used to advantage. Ashes, sods, earth, etc., should be constantly accessible.

If any one feature should receive emphasis over all other in connection with the rearing of fall pigs, it is that of dry quarters.

### It Pays To Care For Farm Tools.

Farm machinery represents a financial investment. Taking proper care of it results in a monetary gain; leaving it exposed in the open at all seasons of the year must mean economic loss, not only to the farmer but to the whole country. It is generally recognized by authorities on agriculture that, if exposed in all sorts of weather, farm machines depreciate more than they do from fair wear and tear. That is to say, the farmer, who is careless in this respect pays for more than twice the number of implements than he actually requires. At the same time great manufacturing plants and small armies of workmen have to be kept busy replacing these losses, which, in thousands of instances, are purely and simply the result of carelessness and neglect.

To house implements properly, it may not be necessary to have a special implement shed. Many farmers can utilize an unused barn floor, or a part of some other building. Poultry or other live stock should never be allowed access to the building, or part of a building that has been set aside for machinery. On most farms, however, a special implement house is desirable. A suitable building, if carefully planned to conserve space, can be built at a reasonable cost. Plans can be obtained from the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa.

Before implements are stored for the season, they should be carefully cleaned and oiled. It is a good plan, after removing all dirt, to wipe the entire machine with an oiled rag and to grease all wearing parts with tallow or axle grease. Further, it pays to renew the paint on the machinery at regular intervals. Paint of good quality, applied to well-cleaned surfaces, is an excellent protection, as well as improving the appearance of the machines. Then, too, it is an advantage to attend to all necessary repairs during the winter when the machines are not required. This will save much time and annoyance in the busy seasons.

To sum up: Proper care of farm machinery necessitates a suitable building where the implements will be protected from the sun, wind, rain, snow and live stock, when not in use. In addition, it should be kept clean, well oiled (painted, if necessary) and in good repair.—A.D.

### The Self-Feeder Pays.

With the ingredients of a good ration constantly before them, placed so that they may eat at will, hogs will make gains more rapidly and more economically than when fed by hand. The time needed to bring them to a certain weight will be shortened and the labor of feeding them will be reduced.

Never plant bulbs so they will come in direct contact with manure.

Bee keeping, that is, producing honey, pays better in proportion to the investment than any other rural business. And the value of the bee in the pollination of fruit blooms exceeds its value as a honey producer.

Turnips will withstand hard frost, but alternate freezing and thawing injures them. Gather, top and store the roots in banks or pits, or in an outdoor storage cellar. Do not place them in the storage room in the basement of the dwelling as they give off odors that penetrate throughout the house.

# Poultry

### Winter Care of Poultry.

Housing the flock is an important matter. The house first of all must be reasonably clean and should receive a thorough cleaning at this time, or earlier. If an earth floor is used, the top of the earth should be removed and fresh, dry sand or gravel put in to take its place. If this sand or gravel can be artificially dried, so much the better. New scratching material (hay, straw, leaves, etc.) should be put on the floor and should be changed or new material added as often as is necessary to keep it clean and in good condition. If the house has not been whitewashed this fall, it should be whitewashed now after sweeping down all cobwebs and dirt from the walls and roosts. A whitewashed hen house is not only cleaner, but is lighter and more cheerful for the fowls, an important matter.

The sun not only lights the poultry house, but warms and purifies it. Therefore the windows should be clean so that the rays of the sun can get in, and the glass should be so arranged that the sun can reach every part of the floor at some time during the day. All poultry houses should be equipped with platforms under the roosts, high enough so that the fowls can use the floor space under them, which means they must be about two feet from the floor with the roosts six inches above the platforms. This enables one to keep the floor litter in the best condition and to keep the house more sanitary, especially if these platforms are cleaned every two or three days.

The care of the flock is important. The fowls may have a good poultry house and plenty of good feed, but if they are fed irregularly or are frequently frightened, the best results in egg production are impossible. Dogs should never be allowed to run into the poultry house and strangers should be kept out of the pens. The caretaker should be friendly with the fowls and should feed at regular hours and do other work in regular order, so as to affect the life and habits of the fowls as little as possible.

It is generally supposed that egg production in winter depends almost entirely on some particular method or trick in feeding. That is by no means true. We must have pullets hatched in the early spring and must give them every opportunity to grow and develop. Then, if they are properly housed and cared for, they will lay if properly fed. In the case of hens (females more than one year old) those which complete their new coat of feathers before the cold winter sets in, and which have not been injured in any way, by disease or otherwise, during the first year, are the only ones which can be expected to lay well during the winter, even when well fed. Egg production is more than luck.

The poultry keeper who provides fowls in winter with the same variety of food they can obtain in the summer on the range, so far as that is possible, usually has good results if other conditions are favorable. There is no one kind of grain which will furnish all the different food elements required, and if only one kind is fed, the fowls eat more than they should in the endeavor to get enough of certain elements of food, and in that way overtax their digestive organs, not only causing lack of production but ill health. The poultry keeper who feeds in that manner loses the price of his feed and the profit he might make from his hens. As already stated, egg production is never a matter of luck.

# Horse Sense

"Where silage is available, it can be used to good advantage as the basis of the ration," states a report on feeding silage to horses.. "For several years the experiment station has fed a number of horses each winter on a silage ration. The horses so fed have for the most part been young animals from two to five years of age. They were carried through a feeding period of from ten to twelve weeks on silage and straw, without grain. A ration consisting of a fair quality of silage without straw was sufficient to produce slight gains in weight, and leave the horses in improved condition at the end of the eleven weeks feeding period. The horses were allowed all the silage they would clean up, and oat straw in excess, the refuse being used for bedding.

"Care should be taken to avoid feeding silage which is very sour, as digestive disturbances are apt to follow, especially when a full feed is allowed. With a good quality of silage, as high as forty pounds per head daily was consumed by horses weighing 1,500 pounds without any signs of digestive trouble. Frozen silage should never be fed.

"In these experiments the horses were allowed to run loose in a shed, with adjoining yards for exercise. They were fed from a common trough and had access to water at all times."

Gooseberries are absolutely dependent on insect fertilization, and the wholesale dropping off of gooseberry flowers, which is frequently attributed to other causes, is usually due to the fact that unfavorable weather has prevented the bees from doing their work.

# THE TRAPPER.

### Trapping For Skunk.

Skunk are usually found around old barns and buildings, hollow logs, old cross fences and cross hedges. When their den has been found, holes should be dug nearby in the paths they are most likely to run over, and the traps placed in these holes. The traps should be covered with dry grass and dust in order that the ground look as natural as possible. Just above the trap hang a piece of rabbit, chicken or bird on which is sprinkled a few drops of the best skunk bait. This process of trapping the skunk has proved its success over and over again.

When the real cold weather sets in or there is a deep snow, skunk generally den up sometimes as many as fifteen or twenty in a hole. When the den has been found, the animals can be easily smoked out and caught, if the right kind of smoker is used.

The skunk furs are always in good demand and there has always been fine profits for the trapper in this animal. Traps should be visited every day if possible, or, at most, every other day, for a skunk caught is liable to gnaw off its foot and get away or have its fur seriously damaged by other skunks attacking it in the trap.

In preparing for the market, skunk skins should be cased pelt side out; all superfluous meat and fat should be scraped off before shipping. Care taken in preparing the skunk for the market will reward the trapper well.

# The Food Board Says

While there has been a numerical increase in live stock in Canada and the United States, owing to advanced cost of feed and the eagerness to realize on the high market prices, there has been a tendency found in all the live stock markets for farmers to ship cattle and hogs before they are properly finished. Loss of weight approximates 10 per cent. Far-sighted live stock men make every effort to finish their cattle before marketing.

Figures showing the enormous deficiency of live stock in the principal countries of Europe most affected by the war—with the exception of Austria-Hungary, Russia, Turkey and the Balkans, reliable figures for which are impossible to obtain—were given out by Chairman H. B. Thomson of the Canada Food Board at a recent Live Stock Conference in Ottawa. These decreases are as follows:

| | Cattle | Sheep | Pigs |
|---|---|---|---|
| France | 2,366,000 | 2,258,000 | 2,815,000 |
| Italy | 996,000 | 138,000 | 354,000 |
| Denmark | 345,000 | 46,000 | 1,873,000 |
| Sweden | 595,000 | | 252,000 |
| United Kingdom | | 2,788,600 | 948,200 |
| Germany | 2,200,000 | | 19,306,000 |
| Holland | | 200,000 | 162,000 |

Leading Live Stock Producers, including the members of the Canadian Live Stock Council and representatives of the Meat Packing industry of the Dominion, in conference at Ottawa as to the best means of meeting the situation presented by the enormous live stock shortage in Europe, drew up a memorandum to the Government in the form of five resolutions which include the following points:—

That a policy of rural credit be sanctioned and supported by the Federal Government;

That steps be taken to establish credits in this country with France, Belgium and Italy;

That a Government agent, preferably Mr. H. B. Thomson, Chairman of the Canada Food Board, in the continuation of his present capacity, be sent to Europe to secure fullest possible recognition of Canadian interests in supplying agricultural products;

That the Government provide necessary marketing facilities, including adequate controlled temperature space in railway cars, storage warehouses, and ocean going vessels;

That the Government give encouragement to a campaign throughout Canada for increased live stock production, in view of the enormous opportunities now presented to the Canadian live stock industry.

In his reply Sir Thomas White, Acting Prime Minister, said many of these points were being provided for and whatever further possible would be done.

### Farmers' Account Book.

"Will you kindly send me a copy of your Farmers' Account Book of which we were told by our pastor?" That is the way a letter recently received from a farmer by the Commission of Conservation reads. It shows how the clergy are seconding the efforts of the Commission to encourage businesslike habits among farmers. The Farmers' Account Book, which contains blanks for a simple but comprehensive system of farm accounts will be sent on request to any farmer who states the number of acres of land he works.

# CO-OPERATIVE TESTING PAYS $50,000,000

By Earle W. Gage

An increased production of thirty per cent. in the average yield of milk per cow, resulting in an added dairy production of $50,000,000, is the result of co-operative cow testing in Canada. Our dairy farmers have enforced since 1914 the strictest economy in production of all dairy products, as a war-time measure, and by weeding out the slacker cows from their herds are not only able to produce more milk with less number of cows, but to secure a higher price for it.

When the farmers looked about them for ways and means of solving their war-time labor and production costs, in no line of agricultural work did they find a greater opportunity to increase production than in the improvement of their dairy herds. The average yield of milk per cow in Canada was at that time only about 4,300 pounds per year. Compare that with individual records of over 25,000 pounds of milk in a year and herd records averaging over 10,000 pounds for each cow down through the herd, and you have a picture of the achievement of these farmers and of the wonderful possibilities for the improvement of the average dairy herd throughout the continent.

Canadian dairy farmers have found the keeping of herd records, more commonly known as cow-testing, the safest and surest basis for that intelligent breeding and selection which, with proper feeding, is sure to result in an improvement in production that makes the difference between the general average yield and those which are at the top.

In Canada various plans have been tried since this work was first commenced under the direction of the Dairy Branch of the Department of Agriculture, which in 1904 started on a small scale to promote and extend the work of keeping herd records, resulting finally in 1917 in the operation of thirty-five dairy record centres, each of which was placed in charge of an experienced man who gave his entire time to the work of cow-testing within a limited area, and whose business it was to see that the samples were properly tested. There were also a large number of small associations, or groups, for whom the testing was done by some individual qualified.

In 1917 there were nearly thirty thousand cows under test record in connection with the organized efforts of this branch. There have also been many hundreds of cows tested independently by owners who were not connected with any of the dairy record centres or cow-testing associations, but who have been interested by the general results which they found their neighbors achieving.

Since this work was started the average yield of milk per cow for Canada has increased fully thirty per cent. This means that the total value of the Canadian dairy products was greater by at least $50,000,000 in 1917 than it would have been if there had been no improvement in the herds since 1904. The increase in the yield of milk from individual herds has been much more striking because the general average includes all those herds whose production of milk has remained stationary, or nearly so.

These farmers have not found that the plans for improvement of a dairy herd need be elaborate or expensive, but should take cognizance of the fact that there are good cows and poor cows, judged by their milk production, in all breeds and that it does not follow because a cow may have a lengthy pedigree that her performance at the milk pail is up to the mark; that there are scrub purebreds as well as common scrubs. It requires some moral courage to discard the expensive pure-bred scrub after she has been shown up in her true colors, but it is the right thing to do, nevertheless.

These dairy farmers believe that there is only one true standard, and the test must be production. This is not an argument against the purebred animals as such, but rather an attempt to place performance ahead of pedigree. Ancestry is an important consideration, but unless the record carries with it some account of production, it lacks the only important feature, and the man looking for superior animals gets no information from it that is of real value to him. He may have personal knowledge of the strain in question, but that is another matter. In war times we have learned that the son of the millionaire has no more right to loaf than the son of the farmer, which is equally true in the case of the purebred cow as against the common grade animal.

Any plan which has for its object the improvement of dairy stock must provide for a study, and record, of the performance of the individual cow, as well as deal with the management of the herd, including its care and feeding, and the breeding of animals to replace those which are discarded in the "weeding out" process. Individuality can only be determined by the weighing and testing of each cow's milk.

It is quite practicable for individual farmers to test their own herds, and many in Canada are doing this, but some form of co-operation has been found an incentive to a more workable plan of community effort, thus raising the general average yield rather than the general individual average. The competition for highest average production brought about by co-operative effort, one neighbor seeking to do better than his neighbor, is healthy and conducive to the best interest of all dairy farmers.

The demand for this cow-testing work has been so great that the officials found themselves forced to inaugurate a new system starting with the 1918 work. The dairy record centres were abolished and the services of cheese and butter-makers enlisted, the farmers paying these men, or those qaulified to test the milk, at the rate of ten cents per cow tested. This plan makes it worth the while of the tester, and the rate is not overly excessive for the farmer to pay. Each tester provides his own outfit.

The milk factory is the natural centre of herd record work of all kinds. The samples may be conveniently collected here on the milk or cream wagons, and it is likewise easy to communicate with the farmers who are patrons of the factory. An increase in milk production of the herds in the factory district means not only greater returns to the farmers themselves, but likewise a larger output for the creamery or cheese factory, thus insuring a larger revenue for those who depend upon it for their profits.

### Frostbitten Plants.

Suddenly sometimes the weather changes when it is least expected and many house plants are frost bitten. When plants have been touched with frost take them to the cellar or to any dark cool place, where the temperature is above freezing; cut off all black parts back to where the stem is green and pull off the frosted leaves. Keep the plants in this dark place for a day or two and gradually bring them into the light, not exposing them to the rays of the sun until new growth has started.

Plants frozen in frames as a rule should be left where they are, keeping the sash covered with mats to exclude the sunlight until the frost has disappeared. If continued cold weather is expected the night covering should be increased.


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