

Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto.

Marketing-Poultry

Many farmers to-day like to ship their poultry to market instead of selling it to the poultry buyer in their own town.

The buying public in all the larger cities, especially, grow more discriminating every year, or at least they become more particular, and any poultry offered for sale must be nearly perfect in dressing and conformity.

As a general rule home-dressed poultry does not sell as well as city dressed, for the reason that the scalding is imperfectly done and the chickens have a spotted appearance which hurts their sale. The retail dealer, therefore, wants to buy them at a discount of two to five cents per pound as compared with city-dressed stock.

In shipping dressed poultry see that it is thoroughly cooled before shipping and wrap the head of each bird in a piece of paper to prevent any blood from dripping on the other chickens. Pack in barrels or boxes and ship by express or truck.

In shipping live poultry, the following precautions should be observed:

Do not ship any culls, thin stock, or diseased chickens. They are not saleable, and you only pay express uselessly.

If you are shipping enough stock to do so, grade your poultry when putting it in coops for shipment. Heavy springs in one coop. Heavy hens in another, and light stock by themselves. Do not crowd too many birds in a coop. One dead chicken pays the express on another coop.

In warm weather especially, many coops arrive at market with two to five dead in each coop because the shipper has crowded too many in a coop.

Always weigh and count your poultry when you ship. Do not guess at

either the weight or number. If you have to make a claim against the express company or you have a dispute with your commission man, the number and weight are very essential to a satisfactory settlement in either case.

Ship early in the week. The markets in the big cities are practically over by Thursday noon and unless there is a short supply, Friday is bargain hunter's day.

Shrinkage is a big factor in shipping and should be taken into consideration when deciding whether to sell at home or ship to the nearest big market. The average shrinkage on chickens is from five per cent. on aged stock up to ten per cent. on young chickens. If you feed heavily before shipping, the shrinkage will only be that much heavier.

Turkeys shrink from ten to fifteen per cent. and ducks shrink the most. The shrinkage on these seldom runs less than fifteen per cent. The most popular breeds of chickens are Plymouth and Barred Rocks and Rhode Island Reds. These, if in good condition, always command the best prices. Leghorns, Black Minorcas, Anconas, and other under-sized breeds are not wanted except at a marked reduction in prices, generally two to five cents per pound under the first mentioned breeds.

If they can be obtained, one-trip coops are the most desirable to ship in. They weigh about twelve pounds. Slat coops weigh thirty-five to forty pounds. At the present express rates, it costs twenty-five to thirty cents more to ship a slat coop than a light one and you then have to pay twenty cents for the return and you do not always get it returned.

In shipping for any holiday market ship early. Prices are more likely to be lower the day before a holiday as every one is filled up by that time.

The Farm Wood Lot

According to the 1910 census the value of forest products produced on the farms of the United States east of the Great Plains was close to \$200,000,000. In 1913, over 100,000,000 cords of wood were burned on American farms or sold off the farms to town and city dwellers. Throughout Eastern Canada the value of forest products sold on the average farm is probably greater than in the United States.

Except in the more thickly settled sections of the country lucrative employment is found for farm labor and teams during the winter months cutting and hauling logs, ties, pulpwood, pit timber and cordwood. Even in the thickly populated portions of the Eastern Townships of Quebec where the farms have been cultivated for well over one hundred years, it is quite common for farmers to handle from 100 to 200 cords of firewood in a season. This year stove and furnace wood is selling for from \$10 to \$14.50 per cord. This will give an idea of the important part the farm wood lot plays in helping farmers through periods of depression or financial difficulty.

In many sections considerable revenue is derived from the sale of maple sugar products.

Forest areas conserve moisture for springs and wells, act as windbreaks, make the landscape more attractive and utilize land unfit for cultivation. Every farm should have at least enough home grown timber to supply fuel, fence posts and lumber for repairs to farm buildings.

A little care given each year to fire protection, proper thinning and utilizing of the timber would nearly double the yield from the average woodlot. Instead of slashing half grown trees of the useful marketable varieties for home requirements, if the less valuable varieties, windfalls, and trees showing signs of insect damage and rot were used, the remaining trees would make more rapid growth.

Open spaces should be avoided as much as possible because once a grass sod is formed the growth of the trees is checked. Tops should be lopped to ensure more rapid decay and to lessen the danger from fire. The main idea is to keep a blanket of leaves and wood on the forest floor to hold moisture and encourage the growth of the young trees.

It is bad practice to allow sheep or cattle to pasture in the woodlot, because they destroy the young growth which should come on as soon as the heavier timber is removed.

Of the hardwood trees the hard or sugar maple is the most valuable. Besides supplying sap for sugar making, the wood is valuable for fuel, the manufacture of agricultural implements, furniture, hardwood flooring and distilled products. Other valuable hardwoods are birch, beech, brown and white ash and elm. Basswood and poplar grow more quickly than other deciduous trees and are useful for reforestation. Among the conifers spruce is the most important wood, supplying the bulk of the timber and rough lumber for building purposes. Besides, it is useful for pulpwood and pit timber. Pine is not often found in farm woodlots, but is useful for manufactured lumber. Fir and hemlock are used mainly for building lumber and pulpwood. Cedar makes the best shingles and is also used for telephone and telegraph poles, cross-ties and fence posts. Tamarack, although not a common wood, is very durable and is valuable for fence posts, ties, mine and crib work timbers.

Wherever there is plenty of moisture a second growth usually springs up where the heavy timber has been removed. Because of their rapid growth the spruces, firs and poplars often supplant the original hardwood forests. Fully stocked with trees an acre of soft woods will grow at the rate of one to two cords per year, will supply posts or pulpwood in 15 to 25 years and saw logs in 20 to 40 years. Hardwoods grow at the rate of one-half to one cord per year, a cord being equal to about 500 board feet of raw lumber. By proper management rocky, waste and swampy land, if allowed to grow up under forest, may be made to yield a worthwhile income.

Mack Says Straw

I have been trying of late to teach the choreboy the value of straw for the stock. Straw under foot, I mean. Straw on the farm is one of the things we like to be extravagant with.

You know how good it feels to crawl into a nice, clean, comfortable bed. It feels the same to the cattle. They will lie down a great deal if they have a comfortable bed to lie on, and it is then that the feed they have eaten is getting in its good work.

Robert Mackie, the faithful Scotch herdsman down at the college, said to me soon after he took charge there, "You kin na hae thim contented if they ha'e to sleep in the fith. Neither kin they do well, if they are not contented and comfortable. If I ha'e to be short on hay then I would rather be short on straw underfoot, that is what we like. And the cattle lie down, chew their cuds and grunt, as much as to say, 'So mote it be.'"

The practice of thrift gives an upward tendency to the life of the individual, and to the life of the nation; it sustains and preserves the highest welfare of the race.

Hogs

The matter of mineral elements in the hog's ration is important, especially in our north country where, for months at a time the ground is frozen so that hogs cannot root in it.

The exact proportion of the ingredients used to make up a mineral mixture, however, is not so important. The object should be to see that mineral elements such as the hog's system demands for proper development, and such as are not provided in the food in sufficient quantities, should be available in some other form.

In ashes, salt, lime and sulphur will be found most everything that is needed. Some bone meal, or ground rock phosphate, will help and should be added, if it is available. Charcoal is good, so is soft coal, but charcoal is simply an aid to digestion and soft coal is valuable mainly for the sulphur it contains. The four ingredients named, along with charcoal, can be secured anywhere and cheaply, and we will do well to supply them.

As a guide to follow the following formula is good: Wood ashes, one bushel; charcoal, one bushel; rock phosphate, one bushel; salt, one peck; lime, one peck, and sulphur, one peck.

The Dairy

Here is my method of breaking calves to milk.

Put the heifer in stanchions with her left side next to a partition. Put on halter with long tie-ropes, bring head to right as far as possible, put the rope around right hind leg from the rear and let it come out under rope around leg. Put leg in right position to milk, draw rope tight, and tie securely to something behind heifer. Sit down and milk. The heifer can only move her leg up and down. Usually in from one week to ten days the heifer stands like an old cow. I have seen men lick a heifer in breaking them in. Always try kindness first. It is not necessary to misuse a heifer if broke in this way.

Dairying will grow as a basic farming industry because it makes possible great savings in the production of nearly all farm crops.

The "Cheap Feed" is Often Expensive

In buying feeds, as in buying fertilizers, too little consideration is given to the actual feeding contents of the bag that holds the contents. Too often the main consideration is the price per ton. Buyers need to keep in mind the fact that when they buy digester tankage, oil cake, cottonseed meal, etc., they buy protein that will balance up the carbohydrates carried by the home-grown portion of the ration.

Many feeders, in past years more frequently than now, have used a forty per cent. protein tankage because they could get the former for a few dollars less per ton than the latter. The truth is that unless they got it for two-thirds (or less) of what the sixty per cent. goods cost, they were fooling themselves. The cost per ton for bags and freight was just the same as for the better goods, and it was just as much labor to handle a bag of the forty per cent. Its feeding value so far as protein was concerned, was only two-thirds of the higher grade and higher priced goods.

It always pays to figure the cost per ton of the particular material that is sought in feeds. Do not consider it on the basis of price per ton. Always analyze it into the cost per pound of the particular feeding ingredient needed to balance the ration. That is what counts, and what is bought—not so many tons of feed at so many dollars a ton.

Lice on Cattle

Every satisfactory treatment for cattle infested with lice and other parasites is an application of raw linseed oil. One quart of the oil is sufficient for eight or ten cows. Apply the oil with a brush or rag. Especial care should be taken to make the application thorough on the upper parts of the neck and along the back from the poll to the base of the tail. Attention should also be given to the shoulder tops, the folds of the udder and the escutcheon. Be sure to use raw linseed oil and not boiled linseed oil. The latter will irritate the skin. The treatment should be repeated in about two weeks and thereafter about once a month in the winter.

SMOKE OGDEN'S CUT PLUG



15¢ per packet

1/2 lb. tin 80¢

"A Real Old Country Treat"

For those who roll their own,

ASK FOR OGDEN'S FINE CUT (In the green packet)

IT IS THE BEST

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

JANUAR 21

The Prodigal Son, Luke 15: 11-24. Golden Text—There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.—Luke 15: 10.

Lesson Setting—Our lesson to-day is one of the three great parables spoken with a common purpose in them all. They are the parable of the Lost Sheep, the parable of the Lost Silver, and the parable of the Lost Son. The Pharisees murmured against Jesus because he kept company with publicans and sinners, people beyond the pale of respectability. Jesus' answer is that lost people need saving and saving can only come by seeking. True religion is a seeking, not a separated thing. God is a seeking, not a separated God. It is one thing to keep company with sinners for the sake of the evil in them. It is another thing to seek the company of sinners for the sake of the good in them.

V. 12. Father, give me the portion of goods. By Mosaic law, each child got one portion, while the eldest got two portions. These portions were often distributed during the father's lifetime.

V. 13. Took his journey into a far country. It would take some time to convert his portion into money, but as soon as possible he said farewell to the old home and the old life. In his foolish way of thinking, he wished to see and know and taste life, and that, he thought, could not be done at home. Doubtless the father who saw him afar off when he came back, watched him till he faded out of sight. Doubtless the older son was too busy in the fields to say goodbye. The prodigal went as all prodigals go, with full purpose, gay clothing and jaunty step and light heart. Wasted his substance with riotous living. The prodigal's idea of liberty is license, the unrestrained following of one's desires. He wasted not only substance, but soul.

II. Thinking Home, 14-17.

V. 14. When he had spent all. When prodigals scatter money, they gather friends of a dubious kind. It did not take long to drain the prodigal's purse. A mighty famine he began to be in want. Famine was common then as now, in Eastern lands. The famine aggravated his poverty.

V. 15. Joined himself to a citizen of that country; became the slave of a Gentile master, a great degradation for a Jew, for the prodigal who had parted with money and character still retained his racial pride. Sent him to feed swine; another step downward. He must feed animals abhorred by the Jew.

V. 16. No man gave unto him. He finds the far country not only foodless, but loveless. The hawks or carob pods which the swine ate are all that stands between him and actual starvation.

V. 17. When he came to himself. The first step towards coming to God is coming to one's self. He realizes that his great adventure has become a miserable failure and begins to con-

nect that failure with himself. It is not a failure of money or food or friends, but a failure of himself. The fault does not rest with the far country, but with himself. How many hired servants have bread? I perish. He is now thinking of home. The lowest mental at home has made a better bargain with life than he has. There is more than hunger for bread in these words. There is a great confession of failure and folly on the part of the prodigal.

III. Coming Home, 18-24.

V. 18. I will arise and go to my father. David Smith sees in these words only a resolve for bread only, but it seems rather the first step in an open confession of error. It is his heart, not his stomach, that leads him homeward. Will say, I have sinned. His first words are to be words of confession. How different from the proud words with which he went away.

V. 19. No more worthy to be called thy son. He feels that he has forfeited his place in the home. He has no longer any rights there. Make me as one of thy hired servants. He is willing to accept any place that his father sees fit to give him. It is his father's will, not his own, that is to be supreme. The least that his father will give is more than he deserves.

V. 20. A great way off. His father saw him; because all this time the father had been waiting and watching for his return. The shepherd seeks anxiously for his lost sheep. God must wait longingly for the lost soul. Had compassion. His father's love goes out to his son, ragged, footsore, gaunt and miserable as he is. Ran and fell on his neck. He does not wait sternly for words of confession or turn away. He not only sees his son, but sees through him and reads all the inward story.

V. 21. The son said. He begins his little prepared speech of penitence.

V. 22. But the father said. His father interrupts the unfinished speech. He does not wait till he asks a slave's place, but immediately proceeds to give him a son's place. Bring the best robe. A ring. Shoes. Ah, three things signify a restoration of the prodigal to his filial place in the home. The restoration is immediate. It is complete. It is loving.

Vs. 23, 24. Bring hither the fatted calf. It is also a joyful restoration. There was always a calf fattening for festive occasions. This my son was dead; to all intents and purposes. This saying of the father gathers up the whole parable. A sinful man may forget or despise his sonship. But God cannot forget his own fatherhood nor the sonship of the sinner. His love seeks. His love searches. His love waits. His love has compassion. His love restores.

Application. We have been so accustomed to the title usually given to this "most beautiful and precious of all the parables"

the Prodigal Son—that we are apt to overlook the truth that it is equally fitting, and perhaps more so, to call it the parable of "The Loving Father." The father in the parable well and truly represents the love and longing of a normal human father for his children—of course, there are some who fall below this character. Our Lord takes this tender relationship at its best, and says to us, God is like that, only better: "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" The best of all "good things" is love, forgiving love.

Buzzing Up the Land

That baking, washing, lifeless, unproductive land is the merciless bandit who robs the laboring farmer of every possibility in the way of profits. This bandit can be outwitted. I have done it.

I was helped to do it by an outcast. This outcast is a plant. In the past we shunned it. There was no place in our busy lives for it. But there is such a place to-day, and let me tell you, that plant is none other than sweet clover.

Sometimes a cow or a sheep will not eat it. But they can be trained. That is, however, unnecessary, since the land can be buzzed up to virgin conditions without making hay of the blooming, branching sweet clover. Yes, this can be done while the farmer is gathering in cold hard cash from the land.

Now, you are listening. Well, before you turn your ear, let me tell you to plow that sweet clover under. Use a chain, maybe, or anyway, do anything to get the soil on top. Two or three crops will make land mellow, active, full of vim and pep and ready to do what it did first after the forest was harvested.

Did I forget something? Yes, you remembered it—that cold hard cash. You will need some to start with unless you have about twenty good swarms of bees for every ten acres of this sweet clover. I find that these busy, buzzing brothers are capable of gathering the cold cash from this sweet clover. When honey-making weather is reasonably plentiful a score of healthy swarms will secure within the little cells almost a ton of the sweet nectar. At eighteen or twenty cents per pound—well, figure it. Yes, the total is larger than from beans, or corn, or oats, or wheat.

Of course, you might need a little lime to satisfy the calcium appetite of this vigorous plant. You will have to supply this, if, in days gone by the appetite of clovers has used up the native stores. But lime paves and makes sure and safe the narrow way which leads to production on a virgin soil basis.

Ever-changing humus and home-generated nitrogen must be mined into these emaciated soils. Sweet clover is my prescription. It has the kick. Three doses will bring back the worst cases. You may need to supplement with a little commercial fertilizer. Then let the bees pay the bills as I have done.—Seward Hagerman.

Build Up Your Breeders

Maintain their health—insure the fertility and hatchability of their eggs. It's easy.

Pratts Poultry Regulator

It is guaranteed to put your fowls in perfect condition and keep them strong and vigorous. Makes them lay more eggs—fertilize the eggs that produce big hatches of worth-while chicks.

Your Money back if YOU Are Not Satisfied.

Made in Canada. Sold by Dealers Everywhere.

PRATT FOOD CO. OF CANADA Limited

111 W. Carleton Ave., Toronto

PRATT'S 51st YEAR OF SERVICE

