

News And Views Of And For Canadian Farmers

ALL WORK AND NO PLAY ON FARMS OF OLD SCHOOL.

RAISE THINGS

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Soil Improvement.

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The location and character of the various soil types are established by the surveys and analyses, and the soil experiment fields help to determine the best order of application of the materials needed.—Dr. C. G. Hopkins, Illinois Station.

Measuring Hay in the Stack.

To measure hay in the stack find the distance over the stack, its width, and its length. Subtract the width from the over and divide the result by two. This will give the average height of the stack. Multiply this average height by the width of the stack and this product again by the length of the stack, and the final product will give the number of cubic feet of hay in the usual sized stack. In order to get the number of tons when the hay is stacked with a rounding top, divide the number of cubic feet by 423 if the hay has been stacked for 30 days or less; if stacked for 60 days or more, divide by 493. If the hay is stacked with sloping sides from base to peak, divide the number of cubic feet by 512, which will give the number of tons in the stack.

IMPORTANCE OF GRAIN SCREENINGS

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That on account of the extremely small size of some, and the hard, flinty seed-coats of others, the complete pulverization of all of the weed seeds in screenings cannot be accomplished by an ordinary chopper. That screenings cleaned over a one-fourth inch perforated zinc screen to remove the finer weed seeds (black seeds), may be satisfactorily ground by ordinary choppers, if reasonable care is taken in the separation and grinding.

That feeding stuffs manufactured from screenings, not properly cleaned, sometimes contain thousands of vital noxious weed seeds per pound. Such material should never be fed, as it is liable to introduce weeds that entail the loss of thousands of dollars.

That feedings experiments have proven that the black seeds are useless as feed and expensive as adulterants. Their admixture in any considerable quantity to other feed makes it unpalatable for all kinds of stock.

That screenings without the black seeds may be fed freely to horses, cattle, sheep or swine, but it is more profitable to have such screenings composed not more than 50 to 60 per cent. of the total grain ration. Buckwheat screenings are especially valuable as poultry feed.

That more attention to the cleaning of grain as it is threshed will save the cost of transporting the screenings to the terminal elevators, and will leave the grower in possession of much valuable feed, which, if he does not need for his own use, will find ready sale among live stock men.

That the growth of weeds entails an enormous loss each year to farmers, and while it is desirable to utilize everything in grain screenings of good feeding value, it would be better to burn them, or permit their use in ways that will bring about an increase in the number or distribution of noxious weeds.

LIMING THE SOIL.

Old Problem Whose Value Is Not Properly Realized. The problem of liming the soil is an old one, but very few farmers realize the value that it has to the field products. In the first place, lime is not a fertilizer, as I have heard some farmers say. It may be called a supplementary fertilizer, but that is as close as we can get. We know that it is needed to improve the soil conditions and that is the main idea that should be known by every tiller of the soil.

Lime materials not only furnish calcium, which is essential for the growth of crops, but they have the power of improving the mechanical condition of both the sands and clays. This they do by binding the materials more firmly together. In talking to a farmer the other day about the lime problem he compared the action of lime on the soil to the process of making popcorn balls. The grains of popcorn are held together by the masses and in the same way the lime holds the soil particles in close contact with one another.

In the case of sands, lime thus renders them more compact and improves their water holding power. With clays, the tenacity of which is largely due to the fineness of the particles, the lime causes the fine particles to adhere to one another, and these aggregations make the soil like one composed of larger particles. From this we see that it improves the mechanical condition, renders the soil more easily cultivated, and it is better aerated. Frost and humus also improve the physical state of sticky, impervious soils, but lime is possibly the most potent agency, and it is certainly the agency most readily controlled by the farmer.

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Adding Humus To Soil.

Who has not noticed how loose and mellow the soil is where an old fence row has been plowed up and brought into cultivation, says the Kansas Farmer. The soil was once all like this, but man has destroyed and removed humus faster than nature unaided could replace it. On the old fence row the crop grows rank and green and stands out in marked contrast to the balance of the field. The soil is full of rotted, decaying vegetable matter without which farming is a failure.

There must be a reserve of humus in the soil at all times to keep it in good physical condition, but a large reserve of humus is not sufficient. Soil to be productive, must be full of actively decomposing organic matter. This decomposing vegetable material renders minerals soluble and as it decays supplies nitrogen, so essential to plant growth. This active decomposition and loss of organic matter takes place rapidly when land is well tilled, much more rapidly than it can be replaced without special effort.

The remedy is simply to follow nature's methods—no vegetable matter of any kind should be burned—legumes and other green manure crops must be grown and plowed under, which will keep up the supply of actively decomposing organic matter. Do this systematically and the apparently worn out soil will again become alive and active. It will remain loose and mellow instead of running together and baking, and will pay to be a little thorough in hunting down these animals for there is no lack of thoroughness on their part to damage the chicken flock.—G. M. Drake, Maritime Farmer.

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The Latest Market Reports

Table with columns for LIVE STOCK PRICES and GRAIN QUOTATIONS. Includes sub-sections for Toronto Cattle, Buffalo Cattle, Chicago Live Stock, and various grain prices in Montreal, Chicago, and Liverpool.

Table with columns for GANANOQUE MARKETS and BEANS AT MONTREAL. Includes sub-sections for Wheat, Barley, Oats, Corn, Flour, and various bean prices.

Table with columns for KINGSTON MARKETS. Includes sub-sections for Meats, Fish, and various market prices for different types of meat and fish.

Table with columns for DAIRY PRODUCTS and FRUIT. Includes sub-sections for Butter, Creamery, Eggs, and various fruit prices.