

* The Farm *

Taking Care of Small Grain.

There has been a tendency generally among our farmers in the last two years to let their grain stand and thresh it out of the shock. They claim it saves time and money. We do not claim that all our farmers do this, but it seems that debts have compelled them to dispose of their grain as soon as possible. This is really the cause that has brought around this custom. All who have ever noticed find that grain is in much better condition when it has been stacked and thoroughly dried out, coming out in much better condition than where it has stood in the shock and bleached out by the weather and rain.

There is always a dust that nothing but the straw can take out of the hulls or shuck. We have often heard the remark, "I cannot see why my horses cough so badly; I have been very careful about not feeding them too much hay." The cause was in the oats. If grain could all be carefully stacked and not threshed till it is thoroughly-dried out, and not put on the market in poor condition, we would not have such breaks in the market that we now have. There is another fact that we are afraid of that is often overlooked in stacking, and that is stacks and ricks are often too small. If a person has grain enough to make good sized ricks, it should be done for this reason if for no other. When your rick is finished, it is settled and is not so easily moved by the wind or wet by the rain, and you do not have so much grain exposed to the weather. We have dropped these thoughts because we think they are overlooked in the rush that harvest usually causes, it coming so close to corn-ploughing.—Nebraska Farmer.

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Bran For Cows in Summer.

There is more advantage in feeding bran to cows in summer than the immediate gain from keeping up the milk flow at the time. If a cow is kept at her best in summer she will give more in fall and winter also, provided the summer milk product, has not been allowed to decrease her flesh and vitality to too great an extent. In other words, if judicious feeding of cows while at pasture is practised they will give more and better milk all the year, and can be profitably milked nearer to the time of calving. This has a very great effect on the milking character of the calf which the cow is then bearing.

It has always been noted that no deep milking breed of cows has ever been developed except where there were warm and moist weather during most of the year, causing the production at all times of excellent food. Undoubtedly the increased use of ensilage in this country will improve the milking qualities of dairy stock, or will at least prevent it from deteriorating. But with improved milking capacity must also be developed the ability to eat a greater amount of nutritious food at all seasons of the year. The breeder of good stock, especially for the dairy, must always be a good feeder, by which we mean that only that he must give enough, but he must have skill to select the kinds of feed best adapted to his purpose.—American Cultivator.

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The Importance of Cultivation.

The season of 1897 will probably go on record as the wettest of the century. The excessive rains, here in this section of New England at least, have drowned out many crops of low flat lands, and even on soils that are well drained or sloping so that the water runs off freely, there is a sickly plant growth, such as to cause a very serious falling off, if not an entire failure, of many of our staple crops.

Many farmers have become discouraged long ago, ceasing cultivation. This has certainly been a very great mistake, for if in every crop, where it is possible to get a horse and cultivator between the rows, the ground had been stirred every time there had been any sunshine, it would have loosened and warmed the soil and stimulated a far better grow than has ever been had. I am sure that many of the tobacco fields in the Connecticut valley could have added 50 per cent to their short crop by an expenditure of \$10 or \$15 per acre in daily cultivation, even though some of the bottom leaves had been broken off in the operation.

In the peach orchards I usually cease cultivation the latter part of July, for whenever there is a fruit crop upon the trees the branches begin to bend at this season and are daily growing lower, so that to work horses among them knocks off considerable of the fruit, but the packed soggy condition of the soil this year has forced us to continue the cultivation, and so through what sunny days we have had in August, even down to the picking of the ripe fruit, we have two pairs of horses and the cutaway harrows working in the orchards, and I am sure for all the fruit that has been knocked off we have added to the size of what was left ten times the value of that lost; in fact, it has seemed to me that without this continuous stirring and warming of the soil each sunny day, it would have been impossible to have secured anything like satisfactory fruit.

We want culture in a dry time to help retain moisture in the soil, and in a wet time it pays to stir the soil for the sake of drying it out. This rather contrary proposition is well understood by intelligent farm observers, but not so much practised as it ought to be.—[J. H. Hale in Hartford Courant.

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Keeping Butter.

For keeping butter for winter use, where cold storage cannot be had, no plan is as sure to result favorably as immersing the pound prints in strong brine, and if a trifle of salt petre is added to the brine the plan will appear to be safer. Butter will not absorb salt from the brine; hence the plan of the little muslin wrappers, or (better yet) the little paper box which encases the pat of butter like a close fitting envelop and prevents the butter from getting bruised in the bath. We think we have before recommended the sterilized brine, simply strong brine boiled; and after cooling, placing these pats of butter in it and keeping in a cool place, and taking up the butter only as wanted.

When one has a very cold room of uniform temperature, butter can be packed in close-fitting small packages, and closely covered after placing on the top of the butter either closely fitting layers of butter paper or a paste made of very wet salt spread evenly over the surface before putting on the cover closely. The facts are that nothing very new has been discovered about the keeping of butter not known to our mothers, and while cold storage is the best, it is only at the command of comparatively few; so the old stand-by receipts have to be brought out and again presented to public view.—County Gentleman.

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