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## Farmers' Department.

### ROTATION OF CROPS.

MOST valuable essay on the above subject occupies the leader in THE AMERICAN FARMER for 1st November ultimo. Thirty-six years of such observations, by experts who are also veterans in relation to agriculture, should loom up as an oasis among the experiments of the multitude, or even all of our agricultural colleges and "stations" whose existence can hardly occupy a moiety of that period. Some of the results confirm the doctrines I have been advocating for many years, and the demonstrations of a rotation of corn, oats and wheat as to the phosphates which were applied exclusively to the corn in this series, precisely as Lawes and Gilbert applied phosphate alone, to the first crop exclusively in the rotation embracing nine years. They used super-phosphate, whereas in following the pure impalpable dust of phosphate of lime ("floats") was alone used, but most liberally applied on top of the hills of corn. Though not repeated on the subsequent crops of the rotation, the remarkable effect on the wheat this year can only be accounted for by assuming that all soluble or super-phosphates are diminished in efficacy in proportion to the rain fall.

The contrast in the result upon the wheat, with that of Lawes and G., is more remarkable because clover was interposed as a fallow immediately before the wheat in this rotation (of turnips, barley, clover and wheat) in England; whereas corn, oats and wheat without fallow (or clover), all united in, recording better results from the less soluble phosphate, as all that was applied to the hills of corn remained in the surface soil in the same molecular form as it exists in all virgin soil. All super phosphates must either be displaced by the rain from the surface soil, or from therein compounds of alumina and iron which are practically worthless as compared with phosphate of lime. The acid reaction of the super-phosphate, and the sulphate of lime (plaster) which it necessarily contains, deceive the farmers as to its value, as both stimulate the plant, though both are worthless as to the grain; whereas the plant cannot use the phosphate until it matures and much of it is lost (to the soil also) before that time, and must be reapplied every year to each crop separately, or twice to each crop at intervals, as is customary at Norfolk where soluble manures are used exclusively in the cultivation of truck.

Moreover it is demonstrated by frequent experiments that I have made with various super-phosphates as a top-dressing to wheat in the spring, that the crop may be doubled thereby, though the phosphate was drilled as usual previously when the wheat was sown, and in much larger proportion than any two crops derive from the soil.

Last year the estimates were made both as to wheat and oats on two farms, as the wheat followed the corn in one case, whereas in the other the oats followed the corn, but in both cases the phosphate was applied exclusively to the corn preceding these crops. The average weight of the heads of wheat was increased nearly ten per cent. (9.9%), but that of the grain thirty-eight per cent. The heads of oats were increased in weight more than nine and a half per cent. (9.5%), and the grain more than thirty per cent. (30.3%). This year (1889) the wheat crop that followed both corn and oats was estimated. The weight of the total crop of straw, etc., was increased more than thirty-two per cent. (32.9%), the increase of the grain alone was more than seventeen per cent. (17.6%); but the most remarkable fact was the increase in the specific gravity of the grain (or weight per bushel), which was more than five per cent. (5.4%). As all other results might be attributed to accident or to the cures attributed to quick medicines, the empirical and annual drilling of super-phosphate only proves by its success that a deficiency exists in the soil, and when it fails that deficiency has been supplied; if it is demonstrated that only one-third of the deficiency is supplied, the loss to the farmer is not only with regard to the part of the crop he might have secured, but also as to all other manures which he may have applied; so also the seed, labor and rent, being the same whether he got fifteen or thirty bushels.

The above experiments were made on fields of my next neighbors, where super phosphate, etc., had been applied, no doubt, for many years previously as usual, and where the whole field was manured and cultivated alike, thus proving in both cases, and in all of three consecutive years, the proportion of loss sustaine

ed by a failure in the proportion of phosphate, this element being removed from the soil in every crop, and also from the farm, whereas other elements are restored in the manure of the barn-yard or by capillary attraction from springs below the surface soil derived from distant mountains or other elevations.

D. STEWART, M. D.  
Port Penn, Del. Dec. 25th, 1889.

### POULTRY YARD.

THE PROFIT IN EGGS.  
F. J. Marshall, in Poultry Monthly.

BY THIS I do not mean by selling them at what many call fancy prices from one to three dollars per setting; but selling at market prices. Now to begin with I wish to say a few words in regard to procuring them we surely cannot expect a profit from them. So, in the first place, we must procure the breed or breeds best adapted to our wants. I am asked the question, over and over again, what breed would advise us to keep on the farm for eggs and general usefulness? I might be expected to jump at the matter in a hurry, and say, by all means keep Leghorns, for they are regular egg machines. But let us consider the matter a little first.

As a rule, under ordinary care, the Leghorn will commence laying about the first of October, will lay two months, when the cold weather generally shut them off, until about the first of March, when they begin and lay quite steadily until about the middle of July, when they begin to moult. Thus in the 12 months we get eggs, say seven.

The Plymouth Rock pullets will begin laying about the first of November, if spring hatched, and will usually lay reasonably well all winter. When warm weather comes they increase the number for about two months, when they become broody and will hatch and rear a brood, which usually occupies two months, when they will begin laying again; thus in the year we have them laying about eight months; perhaps not quite so many the month as the Leghorns, but more during the high prices of winter, but with the addition of a fine brood of young ones.

From about the first of July to the first of October we pack our eggs to set in winter when prices are better, for by this scheme we more than double the summer price of eggs. Yes, we will tell you how we pack them; that will not take long, and we will not charge you anything for the receipt either. At the great egg show at the city of Birmingham, England, about two years ago, eggs were taken from their packing having been put up a year before, and out of over 25 different receipts, those taken from coon salt were the nicest, and took the prize as such. We get a barrel of nice fresh salt, the dryer the better, and have it handy to our packing vessel or barrel. We usually get small barrels, about half size, put a layer of salt on the bottom, about two inches deep, and then place the eggs down in this, in circles, small end down, just far enough apart to not touch, until the bottom is covered; then cover these up with salt nicely, putting enough over them to prevent the next layer from pressing down on them. Put in the next layer in the same manner, and so on until the barrel is full. Cover with salt about two inches deep, and keep them in a cool, dry cellar; take them out next winter when the price suits you, wash and wipe them, and they are ready for market. Gather them fresh every day, and pack them at least every three days, and you will be well pleased with the results: In this way you can make a nice thing of your eggs.

Recently the writer enumerated twenty plants as adapted to the Southern farmer, and the list is repeated below for the contemplation or criticism of those who are beginning to realize the very great need of a change in our system of farming and of relegating cotton to an humbler position in our farm economy than it has held in the past.

For nearly a score of years we have been able to see only the hand of God in the spontaneous spread of the Bermuda grass and Japan clover over our fields and forests. Through them nature seems to have pointed the way, though we have been slow to heed the suggestion. Until recently the royal plant—Bermuda grass—received perhaps many more curses than blessings, but the future will doubtless multiply the latter and raise the plant to the position of prominence that it deserves as the chief among a score of valuable plants adapted to the needs of Southern farm life in the new era of stock and grass, to which we must inevitably come sooner or later.

CORN IN NORTH CAROLINA.  
Nashville Argonaut.

INDIAN corn is by far the most valuable grain produced in the United States. It is not only used throughout the South for bread, but is practically the only grain used in the United States to produce beef, pork, and to feed stock of all kinds. The consequence is that the successful raising of corn and the profitable raising of stock always go together. In 1887, North Carolina produced 35,530,000 bushels of corn, and in 1888, about 40,000,000 bushels. The yield in North Carolina is larger than in any State on the Atlantic and Gulf coast except Texas, which has an area of territory four times as great as ours. The value of the other crop for 1887 was \$21,139,000, and in 1888 a good deal more. While these results are exceedingly gratifying, they by no means indicate the capacity of the State for the production of this valuable grain. The most valuable corn lands in the State are the bottoms upon our rivers and streams. These lands are not only exceedingly fertile but retain their fertility and never require manuring. Thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres of these bot-

### STOCK FARMING IN THE SOUTH—HAY AND PASTURE GRASSES.

AMUEL A. COOK, in the Southern Farmer, gives the following on the grass question, which was referred to in our last issue:

When a section of country has reduced the productive capacity of its soils from a long cultivation of crops requiring clean culture, and a consequent destruction of the humus in them, the invariable resort has been to grass, and clover and stock. There is no other system by which the worn and gullied fields can be restored to a normal fertility. It is useless for us to turn to any other crop that requires clean culture—that is to make specialties of any of them. Our cotton and corn are not to be replaced by tobacco and sugar cane. We have only the usual resort in such cases—to restore our depleted uplands to a condition that will justify any further farming of them) and that is grass and stock.

If any country is blest in the way of climate and the possession of numerous suitable plants for the production of hay and stock of all kinds, it is certainly our own country east of the Mississippi river, and between the 30th and 35th parallel of latitude (and particularly so between the 30th and 33d) embracing nearly all of the south Atlantic and Gulf states. This territory is contiguous to good harbors, and with the best facilities for the rapid transportation of its products to the countries Europe and the East; with a genial climate where the crudest sheltering is sufficient even in the dairying business; where pasture can be secured at least nine months in the year, and where green food of some kind can be cut every month in the year; where stock of all kinds are as free from disease, when properly treated, as anywhere in the world; and with all these advantages, what other conditions need, or can be named, to make grass and stock farming the most promising occupation that our people could engage in, either exclusively or shared with a reasonable culture of our chief staple crop. Let us grow some cotton to insure ready money for the time and to furnish through its seed the most valuable flesh forming food and fertilizer for grass than we can possibly get, but let us cease to make a specialty of it. In that shape it cannot serve us well. The demonstration of this is complete.

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### WHY THE FARMERS OF TODAY SHOULD IMPROVE ON THE PRACTICE OF THEIR FATHERS.

EV. E. P. Powell preached a Thanksgiving sermon to farmers, which was published in the Independent, and from which we quote some practical and suggestive passages:

#### THE MAIN THING TO REMEMBER.

The lessons that we have learned and are learning are first of all not to rely on a single crop or on two or three to enrich us in farming. The old routine of wheat, corn and potatoes, or oats, potatoes and corn, controlled all farming in the Eastern States up to a very recent date; while in the west it was impossible to induce a farmer to put in any crop but corn or wheat or possibly both. We know the result both east and west. Exceptional years of over abundant corn or of wheat reduced the tillers of the soil to desperate straits, almost as surely as a failure of the staple. In the Eastern States farming passed nearly fifty years ago out of the era of exchanges into the era of middlemen and markets; farms grew less and less self-supporting, and mortgages loaded them down. There was less home production of clothing and soap and candles and shoes and carpets; there was far more to buy, but no more to buy with. An off year, bad for corn or for potatoes, created a debt, and it was impossible to recover lost ground. Farms passed into the hands of Irishmen, who succeeded no better in the long run, and are now falling into the possession of a third class, mostly Germans.

#### PLANT A LITTLE OF MANY THINGS.

But the lesson is being learned still very slow that we must grow a larger range of crops. Each farm should include not only an orchard, but a small vineyard or berry garden, or both; and attention should be paid to other crops suited to the locality, such as, it may be, Lima beans, and wax beans. I have nine acres, over half of which is tree and flower lawns. From the rest I have sold this year of berries, currants, grapes, apples and pears and beans over six hundred dollars' worth, besides having a complete home supply. The grape crop was almost a failure and lessened the income \$300. This same piece of land with traditional tillage of potatoes, corn, and oats and grass would have starved one. I can not enter into minutiae concerning my work except to show that it is needful in these days to have a large variety of crops. Something is sure to fail each year. Had I this year relied on grapes I should have been in a bad plight. Apples are few, but brought a high price to compensate.

#### TAKE NO RASH CHANCES.

One more lesson is being learned, and that is not to rush headlong into speculative crops. Take the cultivation of hops as an instance. Several counties in New York have passed twice over through bankruptcy through hops. I mean that the farms that undertook hop growing have passed, on the average, twice under the hammer or are mortgaged so deeply that they will take their second leap very soon. Such a crop that is very taking in this respect, that it brings in, if prices are high, an enormous profit. But prices go from fifty cents down to five, and from five up to fifty. Not one farmer in a score is level-headed enough to keep up with the market. The nineteen in the course of five years are inflated and collapsed and end in being wiped out. Most of them plant when prices are high and borrow the capital to do it with on the anticipation of continued high prices. Down go the figures and down goes the farmer. I instance the hop crop because it has lost New York State millions of dollars worse off than it found it.

#### ABOUT THAT MORGAGE.

We get at these two points in the demands of our modern farming, first to grow a large variety of crops, and not to enter extensively into speculative crops. I presume some would wish to amend my statement by saying the farmer should never live beyond his means, and on no account borrow money. I do not accept the statement. I believe that judicious common-sense farming will pay a mortgage, provided sickness do not interfere, or some extraordinary intervention of nature. I know farmers who are paying up and gaining, right alongside those who are not; and they live better, eat better, dress better than those who are losing ground. The difference is in such principles as I have referred to. I can point you to a father and son on adjacent farms; the former close, penurious, in the old ruts; the latter

### KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

Another lesson that our farmers have to learn is "student farming," "book farming." There is no mistake about it, old boys, you may sneer as you like, we can beat you out and out, and we do it because we make culture a constant study. When the land was new it did not make much difference how potatoes were planted, but it does make a difference now. We have got to know the relative values of level culture and hill culture, and the special values of special uses of manures. Our best agricultural journals, our experimental bulletins, our agricultural colleges, point the way. I am astounded at the ignorance of most farmers on everyday matters. How do you manage to keep the knots off your plum trees? says one. How do you manage to get a crop of apples in spite of worms and moths? cries another. They do not know what a codling moth is. They throw pounds of Paris green on their potatoes where ounces will suffice. The handling of fruit is terribly crude and wasteful. The pork barrel with corn is still the staple diet of very many farmers; and sewers are neglected; and sellars are vile stench holes; the consequence is sickness and doctors bills. Above all men farmers need to study science. If I had as many children as Solomon, they should be taught not so much arithmetic and grammar, but more geology and chemistry. And whatever else a farm-house lacks it should not lack the best journals of agriculture and horticulture.

### STOCK FEEDING.

State Chronicle.

WE HAVE received from the North Carolina Agricultural Experiment Station two bulletins which have a practical value to every farmer in North Carolina. No question is more important than stock feeding, and none should be more carefully studied by those to whom it is a question of dollars and cents. The subject of the first of these bulletins, both of which are the work of F. B. Daney, A. B., First Assistant Chemist, is "Practical Stock Feeding on Scientific Principles. Together With its Relation to Chemistry." Mr. Daney truly says: "If the farmers are over-feeding their stock in North Carolina, it ought to be found out. More than that, it ought to be promptly stopped." In this pamphlet Mr. Daney divides the discussion into three heads. 1. The Chemistry of Cattle Foods, or what are the ingredients of fodders; and, briefly, how they are determined. 2. The value of each of these ingredients in the economy of the animal, and 3. The study of certain feeding and digestion tables founded on the first two, and how to use them in practical feeding.

Under each head he gives practical and scientific information upon the topics touched upon, and gives a carefully prepared table of feeding Standards showing the amount of food ingredients required per day by horses, mules, oxen, milking cows, sheep, hogs, and growing cattle in all their conditions. He also gives a table of the most common North Carolina fodders. The standards given in this bulletin are the result of practice, and with the exercise of good judgment and common sense will find them of great value.

The prime object of Mr. Daney's second bulletin on "Stock Feeding as Practised in North Carolina" is to give more definite information than is now possessed on the valuable ingredients of various foods, the terms adopted in connection with those ingredients, the relative value of one food as compared with another.

In order to secure the needed information blanks were sent out to representative farmers in nearly every county in the State, and information was asked as to the amount of daily rations furnished to horses, mules, oxen, sheep, milk cows, etc. The answers showed how pre-eminently Indian corn is the fodder of North Carolina farmers. Hay and corn fodder are used interchangeably and oats come next.

Mr. Daney then shows by facts that our farmers spend too much in stock feeding, and says that if our farmers would use a greater variety of fodder in their rations, instead of corn and hay only, or corn and fodder only, as is now the practice, a great waste of food material will be avoided. To other observations and facts, Mr. Daney adds the testimony of prominent and successful farmers in all sections of the State. Prof. Alex. McIver of Pittsboro, thinks that the manure alone pays for feeding of cattle which ought to

### be housed at night.

Mr. A. Graves, of Caswell, advocates regularity in feeding, and says "Corn with a horse is like too much new brandy with a man. It will in a short time burn him out."

Mr. J. B. Oliver, of Mt. Olive, has found from actual experience that three bushels of boiled corn, for fattening hogs makes as much pork as four bushels of raw corn.

Mr. J. C. Cooper, of Dobson, believes corn and cob ground together and mixed with rye meal, oats, flax seed, bran &c., is a good feed for mules, milk cows, and all. For heavy work, he recommends three quarts at a feed.

Mr. C. McDonald of Concord, fed his horses all last winter on clover hay alone, and they were in an excellent condition. Afterwards he fed with 1 1/2 gallons of corn and as much meadow hay as they could eat each day. Under this feed they lost flesh. Then he fed on green clover followed by cured clover. They improved rapidly on clover.

Mr. Daney has given the farmers a valuable lesson. We hope many of them will study it and put it into practice. These bulletins can be had by any farmer upon application at the Experiment Station, Raleigh, N. C. We advise all our farmer readers to get them and study them

### NORTH CAROLINA DAIRIES

Wilmington Star.

THE Asheville Citizen, which is ever alert in looking after the interests of the section of the State in which it is published, is in trying to awaken more interest in the dairy industry in the mountain region in Western North Carolina. In doing so it calls attention to the success which has followed the efforts of Dr. Benbow, who some years ago opened a dairy farm near Greensboro. Last year he churned 11,098 gallons of milk, from which were produced 4,162 pounds of butter. This dairy was located on what was worn out lands years ago, every acre of which had to be redeemed. But industry, perseverance, and good management have done this, and now the pastures which the Doctor's herds graze, can show as luxuriant growth of the various grasses grown, as can be seen anywhere.

But Dr. Benbow's success is not an exception, for there is no portion of North Carolina where the dairy industry has been started and followed with good judgment that it has not proved a success, especially since the breeding of thoroughbred cattle has become more general, and the butter made on them, too, will compare in any of the noted Northern dairies. We saw a few days ago at the grocery store of J. L. Boatwright, in this city, butter from the dairy of J. C. Powell, near Taboro, in Edgecombe county, as sweet and beautiful as ever came out of a churn. It was put up with as much care as the finest toilet soap, cast in moulds, each cake weighing a pound, with the name of the dairy imprinted upon it, and neatly wrapped in fine tissue paper. It was nice enough to be placed upon exhibition at a world's fair.

We speak of this because it shows a pride in his work which is to Mr. Powell's credit, while it also shows the North Carolina dairy under good management can hold its own with the dairies of any other State. In time, with the progress that has already been made, this will become a great industry in this State.

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