

[CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 1.]

Of course thousands of acres of strawberries are annually grown with success which are not preceded by a cow pea crop. Here I simply state the ideal condition which should be approached as near as practicable. For strawberries can be successfully grown to follow cotton, tobacco, potatoes and any trucking crop. They can even be grown after corn, though more fertilizer will be needed, as corn is a great exhauster of fertility.

We very often have severe freezes to interrupt our winter planting, but the cold does no harm whatever to the plants set, the strawberry plant being perfectly hardy except in the far North, where the thermometer drops considerably below zero. North of Mason and Dixon's line it is better not to plant from November 15th to March 1st, unless the newly set plants can be at once covered with straw or litter. If this is done, planting may be done anywhere unless the ground is not actually frozen.

O. W. BLACKNALL.

Vance Co., N. C.

**SMALL FRUITS THE MOST PROFITABLE.**

Small fruits are more profitable than the large ones, but they require more labor and study. The great trouble with small fruits is the marketing, which at the best is slow work, and it requires so much hand labor that profits are badly cut into. In spite of this, however, I believe that it will pay better to plant more small fruits each year where the farm is located within a reasonable distance from a city market. My experience has been that the demand is always greater than the supply (except during a few days when everybody is rushing fruit to market), for raspberries, currants, handsome cultivated blackberries, ripe gooseberries, and strawberries. The supply of the latter is always the greatest because more people are engaged in raising them and the strawberry has come to be recognized as our National small fruit. Still, I do not believe strawberry culture is being overdone in any locality. So long as these berries sell for from seven to ten cents a box we can make good profit in raising them. The few berries that retail for only three and four cents a quart in the city are the ones that every grower ought to be ashamed to send to market. They are the poor, insignificant, half wild berries that ought never to have been shipped to the city, or else they are the remnants of a lot that was unfortunately delayed in shipment and decayed.

Strawberries require more work than any other crop of fruits, and next to them I think the raspberries should come. In order to raise good raspberries it is necessary to give good culture, good pruning and good attention right through the season. Then the picking time tries the soul of man. They are the worst berry to pick on the farm unless it is the blackberry. I do not envy the pickers of either, and if we could only find some way to harvest the crop at half present cost of labor we would find these fruits much more popular among growers. The initial cost of boxes and crates also make small fruit culture an expensive labor, and although these different obstacles prevent many from entering into the work of raising them. But those who want some specialty in farming that will pay fair returns on the labor and investment cannot do better than to study the work of raising small fruits. When I say study, I mean that one must learn all there is to know from books and periodicals, and then study from nature or actual experience. This latter is what most beginners would like to skip. They would like to secure the success without paying the cost of it. But there is no way to do this in any calling in life. We must give our time and labor to learn that we have been all wrong in our theories and ideas and then begin all over again. It is hard sometimes, but I see no way around it.

S. W. CHAMBERS.

The recent report in this paper of the wheat crop of Mr. N. Glenn Williams, of Yadkin, shows that North Carolina is not such a poor wheat State after all. His crop was 5,659 bushels, and the average 28½ bushels to the acre. That was a fine outcome and Yadkin is not accounted a particularly fertile county. The result proves what may be had from the soil of this State under good cultivation.—Exchange.

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**Live Stock.**

**OUR AMERICAN MERINOS.**

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. One is scarcely conscious of the revolution that has come over the sheep industry in this country unless he has followed more or less closely the development of the American Merino in the past ten and fifteen years. We heard much about the poor quality of the Merino twenty years ago, and were told that the fine fleece that came from abroad—England, Scotland, New Zealand and Australia—would outsell our Merino wool in any market. The Merino was not considered a fine breed of sheep at all, and it was furthermore claimed that it never could be made such. The revolution in the industry has completely changed all this. The American breeders have quietly improved their Merinos until today they produce not only the heaviest yield of fleece, but as fine as almost any sheep in existence, while at the same time their carcasses are excellent for mutton. These qualities make the American Merino the equal if not the superior of any breed in the world for general purposes.

We have seen in the same time the decline in New Zealand and Australian flocks. The English markets have demanded mutton from the colonies, and the sheep breeders of Australia and New Zealand have striven so hard to meet this demand that they have depleted their flocks and steadily reduced the quality of their wools. It is said today that it will take Australia ten years to recover her lost prestige in the wool markets of the world. Not only will the number of the flocks have to be increased, but the quality of the wool-producing animals be improved. In this country we have seen a steady improvement in the quality of the fine wools, and today the breeding is all going along this line. We are not sacrificing wool for mutton. If we did we would make a mistake. We hold the supremacy in the wool markets of the world, especially in the finer grades, and we cannot afford to lose it. If we continue to make these conditions more emphatically favor us we shall not only control the markets for fine wool, but attract more foreign buyers here than ever before. To some foreigners the idea of America controlling the fine wool markets of the world seems ridiculous, for London has held that plum so long that it must belong there by right of inheritance. But it would not be the first industry that we have revolutionized and taken from the more conservative foreigner. What we need now is the same steady improvement in breeding, selection and care of sheep that we have maintained in the last ten years. The result of that will be to make our wool product more valuable than ever before, and give to us a paramount influence in the sheep and wool industry of the world.

E. P. SMITH.

**SHEEP OR WOOL; OR BOTH.**

The Michigan Experiment Station has issued a valuable bulletin on the "Production and Marketing of Wool," in which some season remarks on the question of flock raising are dealt with. We make the following extracts therefrom:

It is doubtful whether the time will ever come when the keeping of sheep for the production of wool alone can be made profitable in Michigan or in many localities in the United States.

Wool growing upon such a basis must, in the future, be confined to localities remote from the great meat-consuming centers, where farmers are unprovided with rapid transportation to these centers, or where the cost of transportation of mutton would be so high as to render the carcass of little or no value.

A moment's consideration would suggest that wool growing under such conditions could only be made profitable upon cheap lands where the herding of large flocks would be possible and where the climate and other conditions would be favorable to the development of sheep and the healthy growth of the wool fiber. We can conceive how present conditions might be so changed as to render sheep husbandry profitable, if the wool product only were taken into account. It is not probable, however, that we shall ever see a repetition of conditions which existed earlier in this century. It is not probable that the price of the finer grades of wool will go so high that the breeder, even of that class of sheep, can afford to entirely over-

look the ultimate value of the carcass for the flock.

We expect to see in the future more than in the past, two classes of sheep raisers throughout the United States. One class will keep sheep for the primary object of producing mutton, with wool as a secondary or incidental product; the other will aim to produce wool first and mutton second. Whether the production of wool or mutton should be the aim of the breeder will depend upon his personal preference and upon his capacity. Some sheep raisers will prefer the mutton breeds, others the Merino. The great mass of sheep owners will vacillate from breeding grades of the one to breeding grades of the other as conditions favorable to the production of wool or mutton at the time seem to render the one or the other most profitable. It is not hard to see that the ranchman who can run large flocks of sheep in bands, and who has at his command an almost unlimited grazing ground, can produce wool more economically than the general farmer who keeps a flock and looks upon it simply as an incidental contributor to his income.

The owners of small flocks then, soonest feel the effects of depression and are most apt to quickly dispose of their flocks after one or two unprofitable years. These facts should forcibly impress upon the minds of flock owners, the desirability of choosing one or the other of these lines of sheep husbandry and adhering to it year after year. Not until the wool growers of this country are content to do this will the sheep industry, viewing it either from the purely wool-producing or the mutton-producing standpoint, ever take its place in the front rank of the great sheep-growing countries of the world. We believe future conditions will bear us out in the statement that there will be very few years when the man who has a flock of either mutton or wool sheep of good quality, who pursues careful and painstaking methods in handling them will fail to secure a net profit.

There is a promising outlook for the American farmer who economically produces wool and mutton. I doubt if we shall again see the time when the flock master can secure a net profit from his flock unless he makes a thorough study of the industry, knows what he is trying to do, and how he is to accomplish his ends, and is willing to settle upon a policy of breeding and rigidly adhere to it. May I venture to suggest here that one of the greatest sources of loss to the American farmer has been his vacillating from one line of breeding to another, from one rotation of crops to another, and from one system of farming to another. Use all the means at hand to decide the wisest line of sheep husbandry to pursue under your conditions, and then do not deviate from it without the best of reasons. Remember that a constant, persistent and settled policy is best.

**The Dairy.**

**UTILIZING DAIRY WASTE.**

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. Dairymen who have an eye to all the profit in their business that is obtainable, seek to utilize the sweet skimmed milk, sour milk, butter milk, or whey, that results after the various modes of lactal manufacture. To utilize it with profit does not mean that it is to be treated as unclean "swill," and dumped into a sour barrel from which unfortunate pigs and calves are fed. Any variety of the dairy waste above mentioned, if stored in clean receptacles and fed judiciously and comparatively fresh to growing calves, will result in the upbuilding of the dairy instead of the opposite.

Pot-bellied, hide-bound scrawny animals, follow the feeding of fermented or excessively sour and ill-smelling dairy swill, which has no legitimate place except in a sewer.

Butter milk is best fed if diluted with sweet skimmed milk or sweet whey. It is too rich for growing animals if fed alone, and stunts them rather than accelerates development.

Keep your storage barrel for dairy waste in a cool ventilated spot, and take no half way measures when you daily wash and scald it. The precautions outlined in this article are by no means unnecessary, if one wishes to get all of the good there is out of milk and its products.

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of dairy farms, and on only a small per cent. have I found proper attention paid to the cleanliness and sweetness of the so-called "swill barrel." Yet through this same barrel passed the bulk of the food given to the young dairy recruits, the calves, upon whom the maintenance of the farm's income depended.

Remember, that calves or pigs do best when given good dairy slop as an auxiliary food. It should be auxiliary to grass, upon which the animals may run with perfect freedom. To pen them up during the summer season and feed them exclusively on liquid food, is to secure imperfect physical development and extra paunch growth. By wisely preserving and feeding the dairy waste, five dollars extra per cow can be added to the income of every farm.

GEORGE E. NEWELL.

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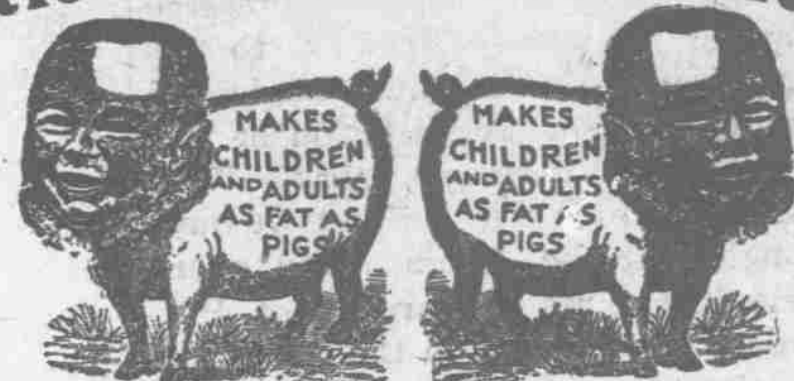
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