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Farm Miscellany.

IMPROVED IMPLEMENTS.

Prof. F. J. Merriam, an occasional Progressive Farmer correspondent, has the following thoughtful letter in a recent issue of the Tri-State Farmer and Gardener:

The man who tries to farm nowadays, with a scoter plow is away behind the times, and laboring under terrible disadvantages. He can neither prepare land, nor cultivate it properly, and the result is that his soil will not begin to yield with his neighbors, who have improved implements which to cultivate it, and with whom he must come into competition.

The successful farmer to-day spends a portion of his time with a pencil and paper figuring out the cost of the crops he raises and seeing wherein this cost may be reduced. If he figures correctly, it will not take him long to find that labor is his chief bill of expense and that a tool which will save the labor of a man will very soon pay for itself and bring a handsome return to the owner, to say nothing of the superior quality of work which can be done.

When preparing a piece of land we would hardly know what to do without our big plow with which to break the soil deeply, and our out-way, smoothing harrow and roller, to work it down fine. It is a matter of impossibility to fit land properly without these tools, or others of a similar character, including the Acme harrow, especially an old, or so-called worn-out land. These lands are worn out so far as producing crops with the scoter plow method of tillage is concerned; but respond wonderfully to deep and thorough cultivation. There is an old red hill on our place which has been in cultivation since away before the war. We did not try to do anything with it for several years after we came on the place, it looked so poor and the weeds and broomsedge were so thin on it; but last fall when we had time we went in there with a big two-horse plow followed by a two-horse subsoiler, then worked the land down and planted to oats, using about 300 pounds acid phosphate to the acre, as a fertilizer. The oats were sown rather late and the cold killed them out so badly they did pay to cut. I would have re-sown in the spring, but annual spring drouth usually outs this crop short, and I did not like to risk it, so we waited until May and sowed the land down in cow peas, using about a bushel of peas to the acre. At the present writing, June 28th, the vines stand knee high and are growing vigorously, while the hill looks like anything but a poor piece of land.

When we come to the cultivation, the improved implements cut even a larger figure than in preparation, the one-horse cultivator doing double the work of a scoter and scrape, and leaving the land level instead of in ridges. With this tool properly adjusted we can often take a cotton row at one passage, while twice to the middle will clean most cornrows. I have seen men plowing corn with a shovel plow, going five and even seven times to the row, and in corn that would not make over ten bushels to the acre. What such corn costs the producer if his time is worth anything at all, I should hate to say.

We have done a great deal of work among small stuff this season with a cultivator containing fourteen small teeth. This cultivator takes the ground better than a harrow, and with a dust board or block attached behind, leaves everything perfectly smooth and gives little opportunity for evaporation during dry weather. The horse weeder is also an important implement among young crops if your hand is smooth and free from rocks.

As the month of June has been very wet and grass has obtained quite a start, we are now using the small ten-inch sweep on the Planet Jr. cultivator to clean our corn. The Planet Jr. hand wheel hoe is an invaluable tool among small garden truck, especially where the rows are close together, and it will easily do the work of ten men with ordinary hoes.

It has always been a mystery to me why more people do not own planters and seed sowers. Especially the latter, if they have any quantity of small seed to sow. This tool puts the seed in evenly, any desired depth, and in a perfectly straight row, making them much easier to work out and cultivate afterwards. The first cost of these tools amounts to nothing when we take into consideration the enormous amount of labor they save.

Horticulture.

SPRAYING AND FERTILIZING ORCHARDS

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. In order to get the most from the orchards there is nothing like thorough spraying every season and liberal fertilizing with ashes and commercial and barnyard manures. No surer protection against blights, drouths and other injuries can be conceived. The force of this is not always appreciated. Some times it is necessary to have a lesson brought straight home. Well, if one wishes to learn by experience, take two orchards or two parts of the same orchard, and spray and fertilize one and neglect the other. Keep at it for two or three seasons, in order to make sure of the results. If this does not convince one of the value of spraying and fertilizing, then you are justified in giving up both practices. Some times exceptionally good seasons will not make the difference between care and neglect of an orchard very apparent. When the blights and insects are not around in the orchards much, and the season is well adapted to produce good crops of fruits, even the neglected orchards will show a fair yield; but, then, every orchard in the country is full, and it is no sign of farming that one has raised a good crop.

It is the off season that tells. When all other fruit trees are injured by the blight, insects or dry weather, then is the time that your trees will pay the most if full. It is in the off season that the experienced horticulturist makes his greatest profits. He has fruit to sell when nobody else has, and the high prices he receives for it make his profits large and satisfactory. It costs to fertilize and spray the trees every season; but the work will pay if done thoroughly and economically. The spraying should be so thorough on every tree and on every side and part of the tree that no insect is missed. Only in this way will the tree be absolutely guarded against attack. The fertilizing with ashes and manures should be conducted in the same thorough and economical way. Not a load of either should be wasted. Only so much as the trees and vines need should be used, and some years the soil may get so full that nothing but a little stirring and plowing will be needed. We do not wish to overfeed the soil lest it should get sour. Trees growing on rich soil, supplied with ashes, potash and phosphoric acid, will grow so thickly that they will not be very susceptible to the attacks of insects and blights. They form their own protection in the strong, vigorous growth of root, trunk and leaves.

A. B. BARRETT.

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require a large loft. From five to seven tons of hay may be put in a loft measuring 30x15x6 feet in the square up to the rafters. The ground floor of such a building 30x15 feet—450 square feet. Allowing 9 square feet for each sheep, including each room, gives us room for 50 ewes. In a room of such size the racks for feed should be built permanent to each side wall. With doors in each end of the building a cart may be driven through to remove the manure. Both sides give us 60 feet, and allowing 14 inches for each sheep standing to the rack we have it thus, 60 feet by 12 inches—720 inches by 14 inches—51 spaces, or each room enough for 50 ewes to all stand at the rack at the same time as it should be; in fact there should be two or three empty spaces. There are many styles of racks used, but I will give this, which seems to suit my sheep best, and which I partly planned and built myself. SAMUEL ARCHER. Marion, McDowell Co., N. C.

HANDLING DAIRY PRODUCTS IN HOT WEATHER.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. A good deal of the success of dairying in hot weather is knowing how to handle the milk, cream, butter and cheese so that there will be no waste through spoiling. A successful dairy should have its liberal supply of ice, and the dairyman who fails to make provisions for this is pretty sure to lose in the end. Very few dairies are so situated that they cannot lay in a stock of ice in winter which will meet all their requirements in summer. When milk is first obtained it needs chilling as soon as possible and a low temperature maintained continually. Now, if we can check the growth of bacteria sufficiently the milk and cream can be kept indefinitely. Yet some will have their cream spoiling within ten hours after milking, and they will attribute their loss to bad luck. But absolute reliance cannot be placed on ice. This is not the only way of saving the milk and cream that the farmer has placed at his disposal. Ice is necessary, but there is something else more necessary, and without which even ice is of little use. That other thing is cleanliness. Now, to some the idea of cleanliness acting as a preserver of milk and cream may seem a little absurd, but nevertheless there is nothing so important in the dairy as this. When the cans and milk pails are not thoroughly cleaned and sterilized from the last milking tens of thousands of bacteria will lurk in the cracks and corners, and when the new milk is poured in they will swarm throughout the mass. The bacteria are the direct cause of the milk and cream souring. We chill the milk right after milking in order to stop their multiplication. Heat nourishes them and makes their growth rapid. When the bacteria are left in the unclean milk utensils thousands of them are immediately mixed with the new milk, and they begin to cause the fluid to sour, no matter how soon the chilling process may begin.

There are only two absolute methods of handling the dairy products successfully in hot weather, and by observing them one is almost assured of no loss. The milk should when first obtained be aerated and chilled. This should be done as quickly as possible, and in the most cleanly manner imaginable. After aerating and chilling, the milk and cream should be stored in the dairy where the temperature is kept at a uniformly low figure. Beware of opening the door to this storage room more than necessary. Outside draughts of air will cause a warmer current to pass over the milk and injure it. The next requirement is to see that absolute cleanliness is observed in the dairy, and that every pan, pail and kettle is washed thoroughly in hot water after each milking, and just before using any one of them for the new milk sterilize it. This is simple enough. Put all of them in boiling water, and then any germs, bacteria or microbes of air, dairy room or old milk will be destroyed, making the utensils absolutely fresh and clean. C. S. WALTERS.

As long as mankind shall continue to bestow more liberal applause on their destroyers than on their benefactors, the thirst for military glory will ever be the vice of the most exalted character.—Gibbon.

GIVEN BEST OF SATISFACTION.

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