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SUNNY HOME SUGGESTIONS

We Need More Capital, But We Also Need to Know How to Use It—Very Heavy Meat Hogs Seldom Profitable—Grass on New Land

WITH the coming of the much talked of rural credits—bringing a greatly increased capital to the farms of the land—must come, to the great majority of farmers, an improved system of farm management, else to many the increased amount of capital may not work its greatest good, and to others may prove a calamity.



MR. FRENCH

To the man on the farm—or in any other field of work, for that matter—who is giving constant study to the matter of economy of operation, and putting in practice the things his study indicates make for greater efficiency, more capital means a powerful ally. But to the thousands of men on the farm who have not yet learned that economy of production and distribution are essential to maximum profits, increased capital might,—and probably would mean an enlarged business without an increase of profits,—in other words, just a little more "wear and tear."

To the man who refuses to use judgment in expenditure of borrowed capital, however, enlarged opportunity for securing credit means a serious menace indeed, rather than a blessing. Many a farm have I seen loaded with debts that lasted through two decades, to pay for fancy improvements that, while fine to have and entirely all right for those who could afford them, were not a source of profit at all, but on the other hand their upkeep were a constant drain upon the meager farm income. And only worry and trouble resulted from the desire to pander to the family's craze for style, or even the provider's wish to give his people the comforts that would have come as a matter of course when, a few years later, the increased farm capital had, through increased profits, done its work.

It is the rule at "Sunny Home" that increased expenditure for non-essentials must come from increased profits and not through borrowed capital. We believe in borrowed capital—on a safe basis—to provide for increased profits.

Our territory has produced the usual crop of 400 to 500-pound hogs, and the worst of it is that the growers of these heavy hogs are boasting about the size of them and know little or nothing about the profit or loss their production brought. I believe it to be a safe guess that every 500-pound hog grown in a pen on the farms of the South and fed dry feeds cost the grower every cent he would bring on the market. And my belief is that it is as safe a guess to say that had three 170-pound hogs been produced, on grazing and grain feeds, in place of each 500-pound one, the money they would have brought on the market, would, one-half of it, at least, have been profit.

The small farmer needs to learn—that the stockman has known for years—that the meat-producing animal that is finished and marketed at an early age is the animal that produces the profitable carcass, because of the fact that young growing animals put on more pounds with the same feed than do older, more mature ones.

And the judgment of the individual farmer is nowhere more clearly indicated than in this matter of deciding right about when to turn off his meat-producing animals to secure the greatest net profit. I believe it is perfectly safe to say that under no condition is it profitable to keep hogs in our section after they have passed the weight of 350 pounds gross—con-

sidered relatively I mean, for hardly any condition could be conceived of when keeping hogs above 350 pounds would return as great profit as would a larger number of hogs of smaller size.

And there are times, when grazing crops are poor and grain high, when the 150-pound hog is more profitable than the one of greater weight; while there are other times when a lot of cheap pasture is at hand that hogs may be allowed to make more frame on this cheap feed and then be finished at around 300 to 350 pounds.

Then the sort of market we have must be considered, and it is true generally, I believe, that our Southern markets call for the small carcass. And should our market be located on our own farms still the small hog should appeal to us, because the meat is sweeter and tenderer and more readily and safely cured than that from large hogs.

* * *

There is a lot of mystery about the growing of grass with some of our folks. I couldn't say how many have asked me during the past year if it would do to sow grass on new ground (freshly cleared land). Why, of course it will do. And newly cleared land that is full of humus is just the place to sow the grass. Then mow and graze the land until the bulk of the hardwood stumps have rotted and those of the shortleaf pine also. A friend in one of the hill counties of Virginia cut hundreds of acres of small trees off close to the ground, cut the land with a very strong heavy cutaway harrow, seeded to grass, and harvested thousands of tons of good cattle feeding hay mixed with some sprouts; and after about six years had a lot of land practically free from stumps at no cost for clearing.

Practically all the bluegrass pastures in the sections of the North having natural timber growth were established right among the great stumps after the timber was removed and some of these that I know have never yet been plowed, although having been cleared for 50 years and more.

Grass loves a good square deal as well as does any crop, and new ground conditions provide a square deal for most crops that do not require cultivation during their growth. Millions of acres in the Piedmont South that are almost worthless for farming purposes, because of continuous washings—had they been seeded heavily to grass as soon as the timber had been removed and kept in that condition would have been fairly rich today and have produced profitably all these years.

A. L. FRENCH.

Never Burns Anything That Can Be Plowed Under

THERE'S nothing burned on Rose-dale Farm that can be turned with a two-horse turnplow, and there are some things that we cannot turn that we haul to a poor or galled spot to decay, and after a year or two we have a fertile spot there. We turn cane fodder and such like early in order that it may decay before planting time.

The way we manage cane bagasse is to take a middle burster and lay off rows the width desired for corn and fill furrows half full of the bagasse and list on it, burying it deep. When spring comes we run the harrow over it and plant the corn in the water furrow, or list two furrows back and plant. In cultivating corn we run plows shallow and never plow into the litter, lay by level, and we have a fine crop of corn as the decaying matter gets saturated with water and holds moisture for the growing crop. The bagasse is well decayed by the next year and has never been in the way of the plow.

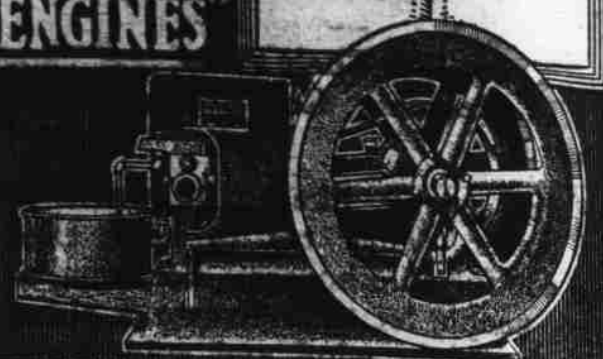
T. E. LOTT.

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