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Timely Farm Suggestions

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Velvet Bean the King of Summer Soil Builders

FOR soil building the velvet bean is the king of Southern summer legumes. Much is written about the early maturing varieties, but these do not make nearly as much growth as the older, longer growing sorts, and consequently probably gather much less nitrogen from the air.

The chief value of velvet beans is for soil building and for grazing and, when these are the aims, I believe the old tried varieties, which make a tremendous growth but may not mature seed except in the lower third, or at most the lower half of the Cotton Belt, are most valuable.

Feeding Value of Cowpeas Compared With Corn

A READER wishes to know the value of a bushel of cowpeas for feeding when corn sells for \$1 a bushel?"

As we have often stated, feeds so unlike each other cannot be compared satisfactorily. The following table shows the digestible nutrients in one bushel (60 pounds) of cowpeas and one bushel (56 pounds) of corn:

	Cowpeas 1 bu. 60 lbs.	Corn 1 bu. 56 lbs.
Digestible Protein.....	11.04 lbs.	4.20 lbs.
" Carbohydrates.....	32.70 "	37.97 "
" Fat.....	.66 "	2.57 "
	48.00 "	44.74 "

Giving a value of three cents a pound for digestible protein, one cent a pound for digestible carbohydrates, and 2.25 cents a pound for digestible fat, a bushel (60 pounds) of cowpeas would be worth 69.10 cents and a bushel (56 pounds) of corn would be worth 56.35 cents.

If cowpeas are worth 69.10 cents a bushel when corn is worth 56.35 cents a bushel, then when corn is worth \$1 a bushel cowpeas would be worth about \$1.22½ a bushel.

It is probable that these relative values are not far from right, and yet, neither feed being satisfactory when used alone, no comparison is satisfactory. The relative values of these feeds will also depend largely on the other feeds used with them. It is also certain that when used together, say one pound of cowpeas to two pounds of corn, the value of each will be much greater than if fed alone or if used in combination with any feed which does not properly balance the nutritive ratio.

At the present low price for cowpeas and with corn at \$1, it will probably pay much better to feed a mixture of cowpeas and corn rather than corn alone.

In fact, with cowpeas selling for present prices, it will probably pay to feed them to hogs in combination with corn regardless of the price of corn, unless the hogs have a good pasture or some other source of protein can be furnished cheaper than in the cowpeas.

Registering Livestock

A READER asks: 1. "Can a grade of any breed be registered? 2. Can an inbred animal be registered? 3. Is there a poultry record association, and if so what breed or breeds are registered?"

1. An animal not pure-bred is not eligible to registration. No grade, no matter how high or how many crosses of pure blood it may contain, is

eligible to registration. In other words, an animal is not eligible to registration until its sire and dam have been registered. In founding any pure-bred registry, of course, foundation animals must be accepted, and in some cases animals of a certain number of crosses were registered, but now or when well established they are not eligible to registration unless sire and dam are both registered.

When one desires to register an animal he should write to the secretary of the registry association of the breed to which the animal belongs. For these registry associations and the postoffice address of the secretaries, see page 12, February 12, 1916, issue of The Progressive Farmer, our latest Reference Special. If our readers would keep this single issue of The Progressive Farmer and refer to it, it would answer a large number of the questions about which they write.

2. In so far as we know, there is no restriction placed on inbreeding by the registry associations. Inbred animals may be registered, if sire and dam are registered and the pedigree is established according to the rules of the Association.

3. There is no registry association for recording the pedigrees of any pure-bred poultry so far as we can ascertain. Of course, some breeders keep the pedigrees of their birds and by means of trap nests records of egg production are obtained and kept, but there is no recording of the pedigrees of poultry as with cattle, horses, hogs, etc.

WEIGHTS OF ANIMALS SOLD

The Seller is Morally Bound to Make Good All Statements in Regard to Weights

"SHOULD the seller of livestock be held strictly to the accuracy of his statements regarding the weight of animals priced or described?"

The following cases have recently come to our notice:

A bull calf described as weighing 550 pounds or more was shipped two months later and weighed 343 pounds.

A pair of mares were described as together weighing 2,500 pounds, and when they reached their destination they weighed only 1,960 pounds.

A pair of gilts were described as weighing 240 pounds each, and when shipped to destination only weighed 145 pounds each.

We could continue these illustrations almost indefinitely from our experience, but these three cases will serve for our purposes of illustration.

I hold that there is no excuse for such mistakes. If the weight of an animal is stated there are just two safe courses to pursue. One is to make the estimate so low that it is certain to be within the limit, and the other is to weigh the animal and give exact weight.

In the case of the two mares, which fell short 540 pounds of the described weight, the shipper stated they were very gaunt when received by the purchaser, and would soon regain their weight. It is bad enough to overestimate the weight of animals when describing them, but it is adding insult to injury to try to tell a man who knows something about livestock that a pair of small mares will lose 540 pounds in shipping. Such an explanation is simply a reflection on the intelligence of the one making it. No horseman should guess a pair of mares weighing 1,960 pounds at 2,500

pounds; nor should any hog man guess gilts weighing 145 pounds at 240 pounds. The true explanation is that some men have formed the bad habit of over-estimating the good qualities of anything they are trying to sell.

There is no excuse for any mistake about the weight of an animal. Weight is a measurable quality and scales are to be found everywhere. Of course, animals will shrink in weight in shipping, but a 550-pound calf will not shrink to 343 pounds, nor will a 2,500-pound pair of mares shrink to 1,960 pounds, and certainly a 240-pound gilt will not shrink to 145 pounds.

In such cases the seller is wholly at fault, and he is morally bound to make the purchaser whole. In case of a difference of opinion about the quality or value of an animal, the seller and buyer should share equally any risks which are always involved when animals are ordered by mail; but in the case of a definite measurable quantity like weight, there is no chance for a difference of opinion for the question is one of fact. When the shipper so far overstates the weight of an animal that there is no reasonable ground for assuming that the difference is due to shrink in shipping, then he must in justice bear all the expense and inconvenience of satisfying the purchaser, or pay all costs of transporting the animal both ways if it is returned.

THE STOCK LAW QUESTION

There Are Advantages and Disadvantages, But the Advantages Far Outweigh the Inconveniences

A READER says that the question of a "stock law" is up in his county, to be voted on soon, and he wishes us to give the advantages and disadvantages of a law requiring that livestock be controlled. This reader doubts if such a law will be an advantage to his section. He lives in the "hills," but there are swamps both east and west of this ridge or hilly land. To the west there is good grazing and large numbers of cattle go to this section for grazing as soon as spring opens.

The disadvantages of a law which protects the crops from livestock and requires the stock to be controlled are as we see them about as follows:

Fences must be built around sufficient grazing lands or pastures made and fenced for supporting or grazing the livestock kept. Owing to the natural disinclination of some men to work, they refuse to make pastures and consequently less stock is kept, for a time at least.

Another disadvantage often cited is that poor people who own no land and are unable or unwilling to rent pastures are deprived of the advantages of keeping cows and hogs.

We can think of no other disadvantages resulting from the stock law enforcement.

The advantages, or some of them, may be stated as follows:

The livestock are under control or their range so restricted that their breeding, feeding, care and health may be looked after. Disease can never be controlled while livestock or the carriers of disease run at large. Hog cholera, cattle ticks and other diseases and carriers of disease can only be avoided or destroyed when livestock are controlled by the enforcement of a stock law. Better livestock are kept, because they receive better care and more feed and consequently usually yield more profit, except for the feed obtained from the lands of others and to which the owners of the stock have no right. When livestock is controlled it is possible to grow oats, wheat, winter-growing le-

gumes and other soil-improving and cover crops without going to the expense of fencing the cultivated lands.

It is true that every field should be fenced, but if the owner does not want to fence his land in order to profit from the grazing furnished to his own livestock, he certainly should not be compelled to fence in order to keep his neighbors' stock off his crops.

If the cultivated lands are so large in area that their fencing costs more than the pasturage of the ranges is worth then even as a community proposition it is not profitable to maintain a free range. In case the numbers of animals grazed and the free range is large and the cultivated areas small, it will be cheaper to fence the pastures than the cultivated fields, but the best arguments in favor of stock law are not related to the cost of fencing. The more important arguments in favor of controlling the livestock are:

1. Well bred livestock or the improvement of the quality of our animals is impracticable when all livestock run at large.

2. Disease cannot be controlled and cholera, ticks, etc., are much more prevalent.

3. The man who owns the land is able to get the use of it, if he wishes to fence, but if he does not wish to fence it, he can still get the benefit of ownership through the growth of young timber in case of cut-over lands.

4. For a man to get something that does not belong to him, for one to get something for nothing, has a bad moral effect. In free range sections the farmers as well as the livestock are usually poor, and little progress is made.

5. Probably the best evidence of the advantages of the stock law is that practically all sections which have adopted it could not by any sort of means be induced to go back to the old free range conditions.

It is marvelous the opposition to this progressive step when one considers how little can be truthfully said against it. It is not unusual for the most bitter quarrels to occur among neighbors over this question and yet not one per cent of the supposed objections exist or materialize which the opponents of livestock control argue are certain to result.

For a year or two a few less livestock will be kept by the shiftless and stubborn, who think they cannot or will not make fences and pastures, but in a year or two more and better animals will be kept. The stock law is in force in practically all progressive agricultural sections and anything like a profitable or extensive livestock industry is practically impossible and does not exist, so far as we know, where the livestock are not controlled.

GOOD fields of oats are scarce in the southern part of the Mississippi valley this year. The season has been unfavorable, but the most potent factors in bringing about the failure are poor soils and late seeding. Every year adds to the accumulation of proof that the late seeding of oats is one of the chief causes of our low yields, not to say complete failures, through winter-killing. Our soils are generally not in a highly productive condition at best, but those soils of fair average fertility will produce fair crops of oats almost every year if they are sowed in good season.

According to Les Annales, a French soldier writes home, as follows:

"You ask me if I need socks. I am still wearing the pair you sent me last July. I have not seen them since, but I presume they are in a bad shape."