

Talks to Small Farmers.

No. 7.—Making the Most of Your Stock—Some General Suggestions Looking to the Increase of Farm Profits in Cash and Happiness.

Messrs. Editors: In all farming there should be as much live stock as can be kept on the farm to advantage. However, I confess that I am not qualified, either by sufficient experience, or otherwise, to give specific advice along this line. From week to week others are giving in The Progressive Farmer needful information about stock. You will, my dear small farmer, do well to consider their advice and put it into practice as far as you possibly can. I prefer a good permanent pasture for stock to fencing and pasturing the cultivated fields. But your own situation and conditions must help you determine which is the better plan in your case.

Getting Most Value From Manure.

What I do insist on is a proper care and use of the manure. Manure is of untold value to any farm. Manage to keep all stables well littered with straw or other material. Manure is best kept under feet of animals and well trampled by them till it can be put on the field. The place I have advised for it in the rotation considered, was on the land to go in corn. The summer manure you cannot put there. This you may use in any way you find best. Part or all of it may be used on the truck patch, the garden, and the orchard. It would be an advantage to use some, at least on poorer places, for the peas and the wheat.

Scatter all manure as evenly as possible and avoid leaving it in hunks over the field. Used broadcast it will help more in building up land, and this is the safer way in case of drought. Used in rows, if season is good, may bring a larger crop for the one year than broadcasting would. This latter is more the case with some plants than with others. In truck raising it is worth while to remember this fact. Usually I prefer scattering broadcast.

Use a Manure Spreader if You Can.

If manure will not go over entire field it is better to use it on poorer parts to even up the land. If field is uniform in fertility put the manure spread on one part one round of rotation and on other part next round. But make an effort to have manure for entire field each round. If you can get use of a "manure spreader," by all means do so. It helps by saving labor and by scattering better than can possibly be done by hand.

Don't Undertake Too Much.

Now, I will give a piece of advice I do not look for you to follow. I have not yet been able to follow it myself. But let us "try, try, again," as the little old song says. We should not undertake more than the labor at our command will justify. It pays better to do well what we undertake than to undertake what we can only half do. And being overcrowded may make farm life burdensome where it might be a happy occupation. Particularly, better not have too many of what I may call side-shows. You must have some truck, some fruit, some poultry, but beware of enlarging in such things till your attention is diverted too much from your general farm work. Leave specializing to others, unless you choose to make general farming a secondary matter. And then I predict that if your specialty pays you well, your general farming will pay you poorly in proportion. As well give up general farming if you are not going to give it the attention and time it really needs. If you can have

other things on hand that will not hinder you in general farming, well and good. They may be made helps. Indeed, they may be diversions and restful to mind or body, or both. In this way they may be contributors both to your profit and pleasure.

Don't Neglect the Beautiful.

However, on the other hand, I would have you plan to have some leisure for even the ornamentals of farm life. Have flowers around if any of the family is fond of them, as all should be. Encourage reading in the home. Do any like music? Let it have its place. Encourage exchange of visits with neighbors. Let the youth and the children go some. Let them bring friends to their home. Make life joyous for all. This all is correct theory, no doubt. Let us try more and more to practice as we theorize along these lines as well as in things we think more needful. Take also time to help the sick or those in distress. At any rate, have sympathy for the bereaved. Never get too busy to spare a few hours now and then for such things.

Be Systematic.

By planning properly you can have time, perhaps, for more than you would think. Therefore, plan your business carefully. System in everything will help you much. This is one reason for these talks. I want to help you to systematize. Sometimes alternate plans are in place. I mean when plans cannot be followed, or miscarry, be ready or speedily get ready with a substitute plan. But always have some general plan or system, and if you cannot always follow it entirely, get back to it upon first opportunity.

About That Rotation.

As to the rotation I have given, it may at first seem unsuitable for you. Consider it well, and if you cannot adopt it, then study out your own plan. I can say advisedly that I have only given what I have after much meditation. There are difficulties in the plan. I have only outlined it as probably the best (all things considered) for the very small farmer. But even he may wait to compare it with my next outline of a rotation plan before settling finally for any system. For a slightly larger farm, I greatly prefer a four-year rotation, such as I am intending to indicate in my next talk.

Sylvan Retreat, N. C.

Planting Strawberries—Fall vs. Spring.

It has been a matter of considerable discussion as to the advisability of planting strawberries in the fall. The undersigned has been practicing this method for several years with satisfactory results, but seeing so much opposition from our Western and Northern growers, I determined to give the matter a thorough test last fall, and set the matter forever at rest so far as I am concerned, and in this immediate section. Realizing all facts are established upon data and evidence, we prepared some six acres of old strawberry land by turning and sub-soiling and planting to second crop of potatoes. The cultivation of the potatoes left the land in fine condition for reception of plants; in fact, it was ideal, had it not been so extremely dry, the dry weather lasting up to the middle of November. Notwithstanding the lateness of the season when the rain came, we commenced to plant the middle of November and completed the work in December. Soon after the work

of planting was completed everything froze up and stayed frozen with intervals of thawing and freezing, when finally the ground thawed out completely the first of March. Observations revealed the fact that many of the plants had heaved and lay on top of the ground, completely uncovered. Knowing if plants should be allowed to dry out they would soon die, we went over the ground and trod upon each plant, and when the land dried out somewhat we took hoes and drew dirt upon the roots and thereby saved almost every plant, demonstrating the feasibility of fall planting of strawberries even under unfavorable conditions. Had it have been seasonable and we could have planted about the first of October as planned, and the winter had have been an average one, the plants would have made some growth in the fall and early winter and have saved any heaving in the spring. This would have saved the labor of tramping the plants back into the ground. The small amount of labor experienced by this extra work is a very small item compared with the advantages of having plants when wanted, when growth starts in spring. The result is, we have almost a perfect stand of strong, vigorous plants, with less cost than any we have ever had. The advantages of fall planting are the absolute safety and more time to spare in preparation of soil for reception of plants, the getting rid of a certain amount of work to help along the spring rush, the early setting of plants, thereby insuring a more profuse development of fruit buds, the basis upon which the planter must base his hope for a big crop of fruit. There is a true saying, "Nothing succeeds like success," and fall setting of strawberry plants with me is a grand success to the extent that we intend to practice planting them whenever it is possible to do so.—W. W. Wallace.

Selecting Cottonseed.

That like produces like, is a law of plant life to be observed in all details. From your best field of cotton select the best portion, and in this choice division mark the most vigorous and productive plants, showing short joints and fruit limbs near the bottom. The entire plant should be an exceptional fruit producer. Seed should be selected from these marked cotton stalks, but the top bolls and the bolls on the ends of the limbs should not go into the lot for seed; they tend to make the cotton later. The bolls selected for seed should be picked by special field hands, sent in advance of the regular pickers. This seed cotton must be stored in a dry place and watched to avoid mixing.

Special care must be taken at the gin, that the gin and floor are free from all other cottonseed before ginning. Store this seed in a dry place.

Where greater length of staple is desired, select for seed such bolls only as show the longest staple. By careful selection almost any desired qualities, or characteristics, can ultimately be secured.—Dr. S. A. Knapp, Lake Charles, La.

Some Easy Winter Gardening.

All over the Southern half of the country it is possible for the farmer to have a supply of "green truck" almost all winter with very little trouble or expense. If he has a hot-bed he can raise a great many vegetables; and with only a cold-frame he can grow the hardier vegetables, such as lettuce and radishes throughout the ordinary winter. A bed with a southern exposure, dug out fifteen to eighteen inches deep, filled with eight or ten inches of soil, and covered with a sash, is all the equipment that is necessary for growing these crops.

A canvas cover may take the place of the glass, although it is, of course, less satisfactory. I have even seen in this latitude, mustard, lettuce and radishes growing in mid-winter with no other protection than a covering of fine brush. This was, to be sure, a makeshift, but it shows the possibility of having these things in the winter when anything green tastes good. Those who like greens should sow a patch of seven-top turnips or Essex rape in September or October. Unless the winter is unusually severe these will furnish a supply of greens all through the latter part of the winter and the early spring.—E. E. Miller, Hamblen Co., Tenn.

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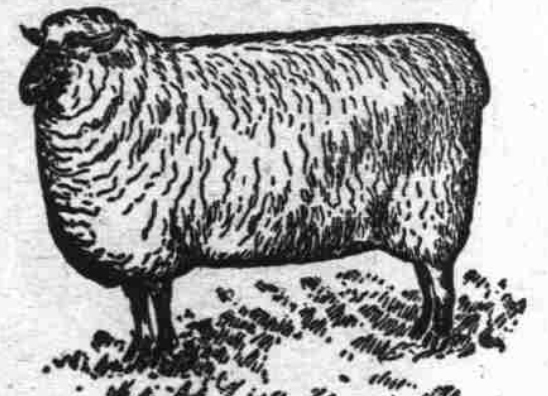
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