

# \$500 More a Year Farming: How to Make It.

## XIV—By Making Hay a Money as Well as a Feed Crop.

**T**HERE are certain small sections, more or less widely separated, in our territory which have hay to sell, but as a whole, we are large buyers. It is true, that the number of farmers who buy hay is rapidly decreasing, but the larger part of the hay consumed in our cities and towns is still shipped in from other and distant States.

Why do our farmers not supply the local demand? There can only be two reasons. We must either have demonstrated that we cannot produce it profitably at the prices which other sections produce it for, plus the heavy freight charges; or we must have other crops which we grow at a sufficiently larger profit to make the production of hay undesirable.

Let us examine these two propositions more carefully. Are we able to produce hay as cheaply as the great hay-producing States? If we are, then any farmer may have for his profits for producing sufficient to supply the local demand, the profits now made by the Northern producers plus the freight rates. This should net him a handsome profit.

What is the chief factor in determining differences in the cost of producing hay in the North and the South? We can procure the same machinery, use the same methods and employ as cheap labor; therefore, it seems the chief factor which of necessity affects the cost of production is the yield per acre.

During the ten years, 1898 to 1907, the average yield of hay in the States of Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana was 1.40 tons per acre; while during the same ten years the average yield in North Carolina, South Carolina, Alabama and Georgia was 1.52 tons per acre. We produced considerably more hay per acre on land the selling price of which was less than half as much, yet they found it profitable to produce 11,773,000 tons in 1907, while we produced only 448,000 tons. Not only do we produce more per acre, but we get more for it per ton, owing to the fact that we have a market for more than we produce, right at home.

### Some Startling Statistics.

**T**HE YEAR-BOOK of the U. S. Department of Agriculture for 1907 gives the average value of the hay crop for the last ten years in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia as \$19.98 per acre. How does this compare with the other crops which we grow in preference to hay? The only figures which we have found for all crops, including hay, are given for 1899 in the last Census Report as \$10.97. That is, the average value per acre of all our crops is \$9.01 per acre less than the value of our hay crop grown on each acre. This seems almost incredible, but facts are stubborn things, and in this case the experience of those farmers who have tried hay as a money crop supports the Census figures.

SOME FIGURES FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT.

States.	Production of Hay in thousands of tons—1907	Yield of Hay per acre in tons—1898-1907.	Value of Hay per acre —1898-1907.	Value of all crops per acre—1899.	Hay crop—per cent. of all crops.	Excess in value of Hay crop per acre over average value of all crops per acre.
North Carolina	190	1.57	\$19.71	\$11.04	.9	\$ 8.67
South Carolina	92	1.42	17.46	11.99	.5	5.47
Georgia	166	1.57	22.76	9.88	.6	12.88
Average		1.52	\$19.98	\$10.97	.66	\$ 9.01
Iowa	4,900	1.53	\$9.21	\$8.67	6.2	\$.54
Illinois	3,730	1.33	11.87	10.17	5.3	1.70
Indiana	3,143	1.35	12.03	10.28	4.2	1.75
Average		1.40	\$11.04	\$9.71	5.23	\$1.33

### Will It Pay to Feed Marketable Hays?

**A**T PRESENT, there is no denying the fact that any marketable hay will bring more money when sold on the open market than when fed to almost any sort of live stock. That is, with good grass hays, the feeding value plus the manure value, is not equal to what they will

generally bring on the market. The legume hays—red clover, alfalfa, lespedeza, cowpea, etc.—have both higher feed and manure values, but usually a lower market value than the grass hays. This seeming paradox is due to the fact that the grass hays, while having less feeding value, are more suitable for feeding driving horses or those doing fast work, and these are the kinds of animals for which hay is chiefly bought. The legume hays are too loosening in their effect on the bowels, and probably should not constitute more than one-half the hay ration of any horse.

In those sections of our territory where hay farming has been practiced by a sufficiently large number to more than supply local demands and necessitate the shipping of the product, it is still a fact that the hay farmers are the most prosperous in those sections. If this be the case, when the local demand is supplied and the price necessarily reduced from 25 to 50 per cent, it seems reasonable to conclude that those sections where a strong local demand in excess of the supply forces the price of hay up to \$15 to \$20 a ton, which is the condition in most of our territory,

### This Week's Guide Post to "\$500 More a Year."

**T**HE GREATER part of the hay used in our cities and towns is shipped in from the North, yet the three States of North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia average more hay per acre than the three States of Iowa, Illinois, and Indiana, which produce over twenty-five times as much.

By growing two crops of hay per year, as we can do, any land in fair condition should be made to produce three tons a year, and these hay crops will yield as large a profit as cotton making a bale to the acre.

A ton of peavine hay has a fertilizing value of \$10. It also has a feeding value of at least \$10 per ton—compared with wheat bran at its ordinary price in the South it is worth nearer \$20—and three-fourths of the manurial value can be returned to the soil after it is fed. This means that, at a low estimate, a ton of well-cured peavine hay is worth \$17.50 to the farmer who has stock to feed.

may engage in hay growing as a money crop with every reasonable assurance of profitable returns.

On all soils in Progressive Farmer territory, where alfalfa does well, there is no longer any doubt but the production of alfalfa hay is the most profitable phase of farming. Four to five tons of hay to the acre, with a ready sale at from \$12 to \$15 a ton is plainly a most profitable business.

Again, those who have rich lands set in Johnson grass or Bermuda, while getting a smaller yield of from two to three tons, still have a crop that will net ten to twenty dollars an acre. The objection to these hay crops is, of course, their nature as weeds and the difficulty of eradicating them.

### Hay as a Money Crop.

**I**N MAKING hay a money crop it is not necessary or desirable, as a general rule, to make it the only money crop. The hay to supply the needs of the South should be grown in a rotation with our regular crops. A rotation of cotton, corn and hay crops would permit of at least one-third of the lands being devoted to the production of two salable hay crops each year.

Where alfalfa, lespedeza, timothy, vetch, Johnson grass, Bermuda or any other hay plant, is already a proved success, there is no need for a change, but over the greater part of our territory there are no regular meadow lands permanently set in hay-producing crops. In these sections the

hay is usually harvested from a special seeding for each crop, and this system fits well into a short, three-year rotation with cotton and corn. In such a system, for one of the two hay crops to be grown during any one year, some winter-growing crop must be used. Of these, we have crimson clover, vetch, oats, wheat, and rye as probably the most satisfactory.

Although not an ideal hay plant, crimson clover has strong claims for consideration as a winter-growing, early spring hay crop, because of its rapid and heavy spring growth and its value as a soil-improver. Its chief disadvantage is that a stand is too uncertain because of dry weather during late August and September when it should be sown. If sown later, it does not withstand the winter freezes so well and does not give as good results generally. If the crimson clover sown in August or September fails to make a stand by November 1st, the land may be sown to oats, wheat, or rye.

Even where crimson clover does well, many advocate the sowing of oats, or wheat, or rye with it when a hay crop is desired. About one-half or one-third the usual quantity of the grain is sown in such a case. By this means the yield of hay is increased, it cures more easily and the quality is better. If desired, hairy vetch may be substituted for the crimson clover in this combination. That is, oats and vetch, or wheat and vetch, make splendid hay, and the yield is large.

As soon as these early crops of hay are harvested the land should be well broken, thoroughly harrowed and sown to cowpeas or millet, preferably the former.

The hays made from these crops will sell readily for from \$15 to \$20 a ton in any of our towns or cities where timothy or other Northern hay is now shipped in and sold. The yield will easily be from three to four tons to the acre from the two crops on fairly good land. The cost of seeding and harvesting the hay will not exceed the cost of making a crop of cotton, and therefore these hay crops will yield as good a profit as cotton producing a bale to the acre.

### What a Ton of Peavine Hay Is Worth.

**E**VEN if the local demand for hay is more than supplied, and the price falls to \$10 per ton, as it probably will in such a case, the growing of these legume hays will still prove profitable if they are fed to good live stock and the stable manure applied to the land.

A ton of peavine hay has a fertilizer value of about \$10. One-fourth that amount, or \$2.50 worth of fertilizer materials, is left in the stubble and roots. This gives a total fertilizer value of \$12.50 to the crop of peas producing one ton of hay per acre, and for that purpose alone it is worth that much. But this ton of peavine hay may be fed, and with reasonable care, three-fourths of its fertilizer value, or \$7.50, saved in the stable manure.

Its feeding value is at least 80 per cent that of wheat bran. That is, five pounds of peavine hay are worth about four pounds of wheat bran. Wheat bran is easily worth \$12.50 a ton for feeding, and cannot be bought in our territory for much less than double that amount; which, on the basis stated, makes the peavine hay worth \$10 a ton for feeding. This means a total feeding and manurial value for a ton of peavine hay of \$7.50 plus \$10, or \$17.50.

While our lands need stable manure so badly, and we spend millions for commercial fertilizers, who will say that peavine, crimson clover or vetch hay is not a good money crop at \$17.50 a ton?

According to the last census each farmer in the NORTH Atlantic States earned \$884 a year, and each farmer in the SOUTH Atlantic States only \$484—or exactly \$500 a year less for the average farmer in The Progressive Farmer's territory than for his brother farmer just north of him. The object of these articles is to set forth the plans by which we may bring up our Southern farming to Northern profits, the next four articles in this series being as follows:

- April 15.—By Raising Your Own Horses and Mules and a Few to Sell.
- April 22.—By Keeping More Stock to Graze Idle Lands and Consume Waste Products.
- April 29.—By Learning the Difference Between Scrub and Good Stock.
- May 6.—By Learning How to Make a Balanced Ration.