

Farm Thoughts for Farm Readers

FARM HELP.

Paper Read Before the Grain Growers by Hon. R. S. Lewis.

The question of farm labor is one of the most trying and vexatious propositions with which the North Dakota farmers have to contend.

The ease with which the North Dakota farmer can convert the raw virgin soil into ripening fields, and the amount which they can prepare and seed in excess of what they will be able to care for, creates an urgent demand for labor during the harvest and threshing season.

It is unfortunate that the farmers are not able to give a larger percentage of the men, who work for them through the spring, summer and fall, employment during the winter months.

In order to change the present conditions there will have to be a more general disposition, on the part of the farmers, to get into stock, which will necessitate getting out of the wheat business to some extent and raising more corn and feed.

Then again, as to farm help, the class of labor to be had in this state, especially at harvest time, is none too good. The men after the money and are not particular as to the value of the services rendered in exchange for the farmer's coin.

There is another proposition which works a great injustice to both the farmers and the laborers, and that is the uniform schedule of wages paid the men through the working season. You can scarcely get a crew of men together but what you will find, in that one particular crew, men whose services are worth actually double the service of some of the others.

laborer will be contented and you will hear less complaints about the work, and there will be less disposition to roam from one place to another, which is a great annoyance to the farmers during the busy season.

It is as necessary for the farmer to hire his help for a stated time as it is for him to have the proper farming implements and stock to carry on successfully his work. Therefore, when he engages his men, he makes a contract for a stated time. The agreement is entered into willingly by both parties, the farmer, as a rule, acting in good faith and feeling bound by the contract, while the laborer, on the slightest provocation and more often without any, uses every means to violate his agreement.

In conclusion, I believe we should aim to pay good men good fair wages for honest, conscientious service, and as little as we can for poor, indifferent service; work reasonable hours; provide good, comfortable beds in pleasant quarters and see to it that the table is well supplied with good, wholesome, well-cooked food. By so doing, the result will be the raising of the standard of labor, which is so much desired by all farmers.

STOCKMEN TO MEET.

Will Hold Meeting at Valley City and Discuss Some Interesting Matters.

Next week the farmers of the state will have another chance to attend a very interesting agricultural meeting. The Farmers' Institute to be held at Valley City, January 22, 23 and 24 will hold one of its largest meetings ever held in the state on these dates.

On Tuesday the meeting will be in charge of the North Dakota Live Stock Association and an excellent programme on the live stock matters has been prepared. This will be a great gathering of the best breeders of pure bred stock ever held in this state.

The officers of the association urge all of the members to be present at this meeting. The following programme has been prepared for the meeting of the North Dakota Live Stock Association on Tuesday, January 23: Morning Session. Address by President Frank Sanford, Valley City, N. D. Swine Production as a Profitable In-

dustry in North Dakota by E. D. Baker, Fairmount, N. D.

Corn and How to Feed It, A. K. Bush, Dover, Minn.

Business Meeting of the Live Stock Association.

Afternoon Session. The Market Classes of Horses and How to Produce Them, Prof. W. B. Richards, Agricultural College, N. D., and James Austin, Hannah, N. D.

Physiology Involved in Feeding Horses, Dr. L. Van Es, Agricultural College, N. D.

Economic Meat Production, James Austin, Hannah, N. D.

Breeding Beef Cattle, Hon. Wm. A. Harris, Chicago, Ill.

Music. Address by Joseph E. Wing, Breeders' Gazette staff.

Foreign Markets for Our Meat Products, Hon. W. A. Harris, Chicago, Ill.

Care and Management of Beef Cattle. The following paper was read before the Tri-State Grain Growers' convention at Fargo by W. R. Lanson, a student of the Agricultural college, and produced a very favorable impression.

The time to begin the care and management of cattle is when the cows are bred. They should be kept in good condition during the pregnant period. The ideal way is to have them gain slightly in weight from the time they are bred to the time they calve. Breeders recognize this as a very satisfactory condition, as cows in this condition will produce stronger and healthier calves than those that have been exposed to the elements and are unthrifty. In summer good pasture is all that is necessary, but in winter a little grain should be given in addition to a liberal supply of good roughage such as corn fodder, clover, prairie or millet hay. Plenty of exercise at all times is essential to the good health of the cows. A few days before the calves are dropped they should be placed in box stalls. A stall 10x10 is roomy enough to accommodate a large animal. With one to two of these stalls at his disposal a farmer can handle a large herd successfully, as the cows can safely be removed to single stalls twenty-four hours after parturition. If the cows are to be milked, the calves should not be allowed to remain with them after they have taken the colostrum milk. The cows will not fret so much and the calves will learn to drink much quicker when thus separated. If the calves are to be run with the cows all summer it is often necessary to milk some of the cows for a week or ten days until the calves are large enough to consume all the milk. The latter method of raising cattle is probably the easier, but a more uniform and cheaper bunch can be raised by milking the cows and feeding the calves the skim milk into which a little boiled flax seed or oil meal has been mixed.

A number of trials conducted by the various experiment stations have placed the cost of raising calves which run with their dams at between twenty-five and thirty dollars per head when twelve months of age; while those raised on separated skim milk and ground flaxseed cost but twelve to fifteen dollars per head at the same age. The income derived from the sale of the butter should not be overlooked as it comes in just when the farmer needs it most. Anyone can let a calf run with a cow and make a pretty good beast of it; but it requires considerable of skill to milk and feed a bunch of calves skim milk and flax seed in such a manner that

they will grow up a uniform lot of yearlings.

As soon as the calves will eat they should be fed a liberal amount of grain. A mixture of bran, crushed oats and barley, one third of each by weight is good. About the fifteenth of May early calves may be turned into pasture apart from the older cattle; but they should still be taken up twice a day to receive milk and a feed of the above ration. A serious mistake is often made by stopping the milk and feed supply and letting the calves rustle a living as best they may. A properly raised calf should receive milk until it is six months old and grain enough to keep it in good condition until it is a year old. Any other treatment will result in a stunted animal with a very large head and an enormous belly.

Any one who undertakes to start a stunted calf to growing has a big job on his hands. It is therefore to great advantage to keep them growing from the time they are dropped until the steers become cows and until the heifers are ready for the block. As winter approaches the calves should be placed in comfortable stalls or allowed to run together in bunches of ten or twelve. Three pounds per head per day of the bran, oats and barley ration in addition to a liberal supply of good hay, corn fodder or other roughage should be sufficient to keep them in a growing healthy condition. Any one fortunate enough to have a silo filled with good corn silage will find it splendid material on which to raise young cattle. The green silage tends to put them under summer feed conditions and it gives them that thrifty vigorous appearance which breeders like to see.

The calves should be allowed the run of a sheltered yard for a short time each day but should not be left out until they are able to exercise through as too much food is being used in the shape of animal heat when they chill and shiver. Growing calves that shiver are like heating a house with the windows open. If the calves are given good care during the first winter they may be carried quite cheaply the second winter as they are older, stronger and much better able to shift for themselves at that time.

When a year old a beef calf should weigh between eight and nine hundred pounds. The second summer they may be run in the pasture with the other cattle if necessary although they will do better in a separate field. Young cattle seem to do better when kept by themselves. Salt and sulphur mixed at the rate of ten parts of salt to one of sulphur should be placed where the cattle may have access to it at all times. In the fall the steers and the heifers that are not kept for breeding purposes should be placed in the feed lot where they may be fed ear corn or ground barley lightened with bran. Three parts of barley and one of bran, by weight, is about the right proportion. Corn fodder, corn stover, prairie or millet hay will serve well for houghage.

After one hundred twenty days feeding on the above ration the cattle will be ready for market and should average from 1,200 to 1,400 pounds. That is a very attractive market weight and good grades of a beef breed which will find a ready market at a good figure. By following what is called "from teat to block" method, the farmer will not have to divide profits with the cattle jobber. Cattle from North Dakota are not shipped into Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, fed and re-shipped to Chicago just for the fun of handling them. Depend upon it there is a good profit for every man

and company which handles or feeds them.

The heifers that are kept for breeding should undergo practically the same treatment the second as they receive the first winter. The grain feed may be eliminated except for a few of the thin and less thrifty ones.

The selection of a pure bred bull of the same breed that has been used in the grading up of the heifers, is the next step and it is a very important one. If the heifers are pure bred it is an all important point. A good pure bred sire is recognized by all breeders as being more than half the herd. When selecting the sire the following points should not be overlooked. He should be low set, broad and deep with a short but broad head; with masculinity stoutly indicated by the presence of long curly hair in the forehead and over the shoulders; and a well developed crest on his neck, the latter feature varying, of course, with the age of the bull. Silky hair and a mellow skin with considerable depth of springy flesh show that an animal is a good feeder, and are points of great importance. A sire such as the one which I have described above cannot fail to stamp similar qualities upon his offspring.

The following breeding table should be rigidly adhered to. A yearling, twelve cows; A two year old, eighteen cows; A three year old, twenty five cows; A four year old the animal will be mature and the owner must use his own judgment. The condition and vigor of the bull will be his best guide. A good growing ration consists of one fourth bran and three fourths ground barley and oats, by weight. A little ground flax seed or oil meal will tend to keep the flesh, hair and skin in a good mellow condition. The above ration with a supply of good roughage and plenty of exercise in a good yard adjoining the stall is about the right treatment to give a breeding bull. The heifers should be bred between two years and twenty-six months of age, that they may drop their first calves when three years old; as they will then have attained the growth necessary to make large and well developed cows. If heifers are bred too young it is likely to seriously retard their growth and development. Under sized, immature cattle will not produce as large or as thrifty calves as those which are more mature and well developed. If the heifers are bred too young for a few generations the herd will degenerate instead of improve, even with the use of a good sire. The question has been asked "why not breed beef heifers like dairy heifers which are allowed to calve at two years old?" In dairy cattle special attention is given to milk production, size is not considered as long as the animal weighs 1000 pounds at maturity; while in the beef cattle size and milking qualities are considered equally important. A beef cow that does not weigh over 1300 pounds at maturity should be promptly discarded. During the pregnant period the heifers will require better treatment than I have outlined for the cows in the first pages of this paper.

While an immature cow is carrying her young there is a great strain on her vitality. This may be offset by supplying additional grain which will keep her in a good thrifty condition, and enable her to perform her functions of motherhood without injury to herself or her offspring. Beef cattle cared for in the above manner cannot fail to give good results and if such treatment does not bring paying returns less feed and care will surely fail to return a profit.

Poultry Show Closes.

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The following cup premiums were awarded. The poultry show which has been taking up the interest of Fargo and many other Red-river valley people for three days, closed last evening after a very successful exhibition of fancy poultry.

The following are the awards in the different classes completed last night and this morning. White Plymouth Rocks—R. T. Kingman of Hillsboro—First cock first cockerel and first, second and third pullets.

Buff Plymouth Rocks—R. T. Kingman of Hillsboro—First, second and third cockerels, first, second and third pullets and first hen. Harry Clark, Hillsboro—Second hen.

J. W. Criser, Fargo—First hen. Black Langshans—L. A. Taubert, Casseton—First cockerel, first, second and third hens. Light Brahmas—Charles Spearling, Hillsboro—First and second cockerel and first, second and third pullets.

Cornish Indian Games—H. H. Potter, Glyndon, Minn.—First cock, first and third cockerels, first and third pullets and first, second and third hens. Dr. Winslow, Cooperstown—Second cock.

Geo. I. Elliott, Jessie—Second cockerel and second pullet. White Wyandottes—Mrs. L. A. Huntton, Moorhead—First and second cock, first, second and third hens, first and second cockerels and first and third pullets.

Geo. Hausman, Hillsboro—Second pullet and third cockerel. Geo. Hasman, Hillsboro, first and third pullet; first cock and first cockerel, second and third cockerel.

L. Hoffer, Moorhead, first hen. Geo. Hausman, Hillsboro, first hen. That the cost of keeping is comparatively small and the original investment the same, while the care required is not only light but pleasant. The profit from a well-bred hen is not much below three dollars net, and with a good sized flock, there will be a considerable item added to the farm income. The raising of poultry for the market is also profitable, for they can be largely raised on what usually goes to waste on a North Dakota farm. As a beginning for the boys there is nothing better, and as land becomes scarcer and higher in price, requiring closer farming, poultry will be recognized as a splendid money maker.

Winter Fed Cattle.

The following article from The Breeders' Gazette deals with the subject of winter feeding of cattle for market in Montana, showing that native hay has fattening properties equal to corn and hay of the great

(Continued on page 3.)

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