

Farmers' Column.



Give feet their good and leaves their power. Let fortune's bubbles rise and fall. Who sows a field of truth, a flower. Or plants a tree, is more than all.

Best Use of Corn Fodder.

A correspondent inquires for a brief statement of the advantages as well as of the drawbacks of keeping corn fodder in a silo, as compared with other modes of preserving and feeding. In answer, we would in the first place, never feed the stalks whole under any circumstances, for more than half the value is thus lost, and the resulting manures, mixed with long fibre, is difficult to handle till it has rotted half a year. This reduces the question to a comparison between the excellent feed of ensilage, and the dry fodder of cut stalks cured in the field. We have found comparatively little difference in the feeding value in these two conditions, in either case being over twice as great as feeding the stalk whole.

The peculiar advantages of covering the fodder to ensilage, are:

- 1. The facility with which it is cut, drawn in and chopped for the silo, in all weather except heavy rains.
2. Avoiding the care and labor of placing in shocks and protecting from injury by the weather.
3. The greater ease with which the succulent stalks are chopped.
4. The comparatively small space required, 100 tons of ensilage occupying no more space than 20 or 30 tons uncut.
5. The security from spoiling in the field, or moulding in the stock or bay.
6. The advantage of succulent feed for cows in winter.

The essential requisites for success are, a good horse or steam cutter, connected with a water wheel, a suitable wagon on which the stalks are placed when cut for drawing in, at one operation; and the same level for the silo and the cow stalls, for ease of feeding.

The drawbacks are, the labor required for filling the silo occurring at nearly the same time that land must be prepared for winter grain, and the expense of constructing the silo.

The advantages of preserving the stalks dry, and chopping them in winter for feeding, are, the comparative season of leisure for doing this work; and avoiding the cost of building the silo. The disadvantages are, the greater labor required for chopping up the stalks and dry stalks; and the difficulty of preserving the stalks unjured by the weather.

Every one will compare for himself the preceding advantages and drawbacks, bearing in mind at the same time that new operations often fail for want of the skill and conveniences only attained by experience; and by the omission of essential requirements. Enterprising farmers, in many cases, will prefer to prepare and feed their stalks in the shape of ensilage; others will adopt the practice of cutting their dry stalks short and fine as they are needed while others again, and those who will greatly outlive all the rest, in numbers will continue in the wasteful practice of feeding the stalks whole after they are more or less blackened by exposure to autumn rains.

Agricultural Notes.

A canning statist estimates that three weeds of moderate size and growth will occupy as much ground, draw as much nutriment from it, take in as much of the life-giving sunlight and of the food-bearing atmosphere as a good stalk of corn.

My young heifers, after they are with calf, I prefer to keep in a lot by themselves, apart alike from the old cows and younger animals. They thrive and do better, and are less liable to injuries from various causes than if allowed to run with other stock promiscuously.

A discussion has been going on in an exchange as to the cost of making honey for market. We are not able to see that anything is determined by it further than that it costs more in some places than in others, and more in the hands of some producers than in those of others.

The harrow should follow closely after the plow, especially in hot, drying weather. The soil on the newly turned furrow is exposed to the air and the warmth of the sun, and dries out quickly. Early in the spring this is beneficial, but later it becomes and continues to be a disadvantage through the warmest weather.

Many of the new varieties of grain coming on the market from time to time are, in fact, old sorts under the name, or improvements upon old sorts so slight as to leave the principal characteristics unchanged. Especially in this the case with wheat, of which, while an endless number of brands are before the public, there are, after all, but a few distinct types.

The relative advantages of these two methods of feeding are often discussed in the columns of the press, but there is no higher authority to appeal to for decision than experiment. This matter has been tried at the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, with the result that about 8 per cent more of the organic matter of the ground corn was digested and used than of the whole corn; and, further, that the difference existed in the most valuable—the albuminoid—principles.

Where winter rye is sown to be plowed under, it is important that the plowing be not delayed much, if any, after the seed stalks shoot up. They soon become hard and woody, thus not decaying much more rapidly than straw. It is not the bulk of green manure turned under that gives its chief value, but its succulence. There is as much water in green rye just before the straw shoots up as there is after. One of the advantages from this method of manuring is that it greatly helps to clean the land of weeds. They germinate freely when the rye is sown, and do not have an opportunity to ripen seeds as they can when rye is sown for a grain crop.

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