

FARM NEWS.

MR. WATSON'S TOBACCO LETTER.

TO THE TOBACCO PLANTERS:—This is the month to compost your tobacco land. If you want to make good, tough, waxy tobacco I think it best to compost your land. I always compost my tobacco land with good, light, sandy dirt; rich jams of fences, sandy ditch-bank, or light wood mould. Do not haul black dirt on your tobacco land. If you want to compost heavy, haul three heaps to the acre, with fifty one-horse loads to the heap; then mix twelve or fifteen bushels of cotton seed, and five or six loads of horse or hog-lot manure to each heap; mix it in well with a shovel, and throw it up good and high so it may rot and pulverize, and let it stay until about the middle of April, then run off every fourth row and dump a one-horse load about every seven yards: drill it regularly, as much in one row as another. Then put in six or eight hundred pounds of good guano to the acre, on top of compost; then list land up on compost, and set your tobacco plants on list, and plow your tobacco one way all the time. If you cross-plow it you will plow up your compost, and expose it to the sun, and you will lose some of the strength of compost. I always plow one way to prevent plowing up manure.

I will try to give you my ideas on building tobacco barns next week.

K. H. WATSON.

Selecting a Dairy Cow.

In selecting a dairy cow first of all inquire into her pedigree and ascertain what has been the record of her ancestors in the dairy. Next look into her own actual performance at the pail, and test her milk with the Babcock machine. Some claim that the use of the test is all that is needed, but the Babcock test does not tell anything of constitution, of the nervous force of the animal, the prolonged or deep milking qualities, or whether she will be a desirable animal to breed from. Last of all, it is not always possible to have a tester at hand, especially in a country where dairying is not generally pursued.

The following points will be found to form an index for the guidance of the inexperienced breeder, being based on careful observation and some experience in the handling of dairy stock.

A model dairy cow should possess the following characteristics very strikingly:

First. General outline: she should be rather fine in the head, neck and crops, wide in the chest, large in the barrel and large development in the hind quarters.

Second. The triple-wedged formation is considered essential in a dairy animal; it implies:

1. Increasing width from the withers downward.

2. Increasing width towards the rear parts.

3. Decreasing width from the top of the hind quarters downward.

Third. The head is medium to fine, longer and more dished, and tapering somewhat more than in the beefing breeds.

Fourth. The neck should be fine, fairly long and the throat clean.

Fifth. The body should be capacious, broad and deep and medium in length.

Sixth. The udder should be long, broad, deep, extending well forward and well up behind, and rather evenly quartered.

Seventh. The milk veins should be large and tortuous, abundant on the udder, and the orifices large where they enter the body.

Eighth. The escutcheon should be well developed from the pergenium to the udder and should extend well onward at the thighs.

Ninth. The legs should be medium to short, with bone of medium size.

Tenth. The skin should be medium to fine, elastic and mellow, hair plentiful and soft, and the skin a rich yellow color.

These points will be found to vary but slightly in the essentially dairy breeds, i. e., making due allowance for the fine points of distinction between different breeds. We have had some experience with several breeds and are not prepared to discriminate in favor of any one.

All the dairy breeds have their strong points and their weak points and it is impossible to state which is the best for all purposes—as many of our fine dairy herds are composed of grades.

"A good cow is a good cow all the world over, no matter what breed she belongs to."

Killing Hogs.

Animals should never be killed while in an overheated or excited state, but should be kept quiet for twenty-four hours previously and fed lightly on cooling food. Where cold storage rooms are available in which the meat can afterwards be reduced to any required temperature, the killing may be done without risk in any weather; otherwise a cool dry day with the temperature not above 45° or 50°, nor below 20°, is the most favorable. If the weather is wet or damp, the temperature should not be above 35° or 40°. The killing may be done in warmer weather than this if the temperature on the following night falls to 40°, or below. After killing, the carcasses should be hung without touching each other and allowed to remain for twenty-four hours, or more, until the animal heat has passed off and the temperature is 40° degrees or less throughout. Meat thus treated may be shipped or kept for days in a temperature of 45°, or below, in dry weather; 40°, or below, in wet. When the night following the killing is warm, the hind quarters of hogs are sometimes slit open to allow them to cool more rapidly. Temperatures above 50°, with moist air, damage green meats very quickly. Meat, and particularly pork, that has been frozen does not keep as well as that which has been simply chilled. Pork intended for curing should never be frozen.

The following extract from a letter from a Southern State is given as of interest in this connection:

"Cause of meat spoiling.—First place, the slaughtering is done during the coldest days and the meat hastily cut up next morning, sometimes a bit frozen, then salted in an outhouse. Now, if several freezing nights come right after the butchering, the intelligent farmer expresses himself in luck so far as having an ample supply of meat for the coming summer. By and by he thinks it enough time in salt, takes it up, hangs it, and begins the smoking. In about a week he takes the good wife to the smokehouse, shows the plump hams; so far so good. Well, wife cooks one of the hams to see how it is cured; then he finds that he has got a nice lot of gasometers that gives off an odor that the good wife can't tolerate. The trouble is all his own fault: The meat may have frozen through, or at least the salt had frozen, then become caked, and the action of penetration ceased; but nature does not wait, inside along the bone a gas forms which, if it were just warm enough, the salt would take up and absorb; but instead the salt has hermetically sealed and keeps it in; then the meat takes it up and holds it insoluble until the air can get to it; then decomposition takes place."

Notes on the Dairy.

Cows should have free access to water all the time.

The stalls should be so arranged as to allow a free circulation of air.

All milk vessels should be thoroughly scalded each time before using.

Rancid butter is caused by the growth of a certain kind of bacteria, whose life depends upon a state of uncleanness.

Calves should not be fed with too much milk. If they "scour" give them a little lime water.

As the manure is a great source of profit to the dairyman, care should be taken to preserve it.

Cows kept on dry food alone require more water than when they have the run of the pasture or are given succulent food.

The milk does not become normal until the tenth day after calving.

If butter color is used it should be added to the cream before churning is begun.

Milk remaining in the udder longer than twelve hours loses in quantity and quality.

In feeding cows, always study the composition of the food and work up a well-balanced ration.

It is expensive to try to feed cows for fine results in a barn through which winter winds can enter.

Soft Butter.

Overheated cream will make oily butter, sometimes as soft as to be unworkable and of quite a bad flavor. In the absence of other means of keeping the cream cool, it may be kept in a clean pail and hung in a well, a few feet above the water. The coldest air is in just that part of the well, and it is quite rarely that the temperature is as much as sixty degrees. Thus it may be a desirable thing to put a house with lattice work sides over the well and use it for cream storage in the hot weather.

Mixing Fertilizers at Home.

Acid phosphate is the best material to produce phosphoric acid, considering cost.

The best article to furnish potash for ordinary usages is kainit.

For ammonia, in our locality, cotton-seed meal, considering also the cost.

The best proportions found practicable, as a general rule, are:

1,200 pounds acid phosphate,
600 " cotton-seed meal,
200 " kainit.

Acid phosphate seldom runs more than 13½ or 14 per cent. available phosphoric acid. It should always be bought upon a definite guarantee, as any percentage can be made less than that amount according to the grade of the rock from which it is produced.

For average purposes for cotton and corn, the percentages given by the above mixture are about right, namely, 8.55 per cent. available phosphoric acid, 2.55 per cent. ammonia, 1.68 per cent. potash."

Judging from the results of experiments made in Kentucky, we should think the foregoing mixture rather too poor in potash for the average Carolina soils for the production of a corn crop. There the use of a high-grade potash fertilizer was most marked in its results on the corn crop, and we believe this would be found to be the case in N. C. especially in the middle, eastern and southern parts of the State where our soils are undoubtedly deficient in natural potash salts. Muriate of potash might be substituted for kainit. The muriate analyzes usually about 50 per cent. of potash against only 12 per cent. in the kainit. In two hundred pounds of kainit there is only about twenty-four pounds of potash, whilst in the same quantity of muriate of potash there would be about one hundred pounds.

Bringing Up Poor Land.

To those who cultivate land with a clay bottom that has always been shallow plowed, I recommend the course which I have pursued with satisfaction. Take a good modern plow with a sharp point, put a wheel upon it and set it to run two inches deeper than usual. The next year go down two inches deeper, and the third year two inches more. By good cultivation old and new soil will become homogeneous, the new will give up its plant-food gradually and the crops will be increasingly better. Add to this practice a judicious use of cow peas and the clovers to bring fertility up from deeper depths and down from higher heights, and save and apply all the manure made on the farm, and our Southern friends could wholly ignore commercial fertilizers and be relieved from their burdensome tax. A conspicuous example of bringing up a farm nearly on this line, which was as poor as poverty when he commenced, and which this season produced forty-seven bushels of wheat to the acre, and upon which land commercial fertilizers will do no good, is owned and conducted by a farmer in Ohio. Most farmers can do similarly if they will.

A farmer in Southern Minnesota, as reported in Station Bulletin 34, says that one year he seeded clover and timothy, while his neighbor in an adjoining field planted timothy only. The line between the two fields was not well established, and when the fence was built, twenty feet of the timothy seeding came up into the field with the timothy and clover. A marked difference could be observed between the height and yield of grass. For three or four years, even after the clover had all "run out," the timothy seeded with the clover was much superior in quality and gave a larger yield. The same point—the superiority of timothy when seeded with clover—has been frequently noticed elsewhere. The explanation, probably, is that the clover gathers nitrogen for both, and, in fact, serves as a feeder to the timothy.

"Chimmy," said a curbstone cherub, "what's de equator?"

"Don't you know? I learnt it in wan lesson at night school. De equator is an imaginary line around de eart."

"Who put it dere? Great Britain?"

—Washington Star.

Hicks (whose hair is getting thin) —I doesn't follow that a man is getting old merely because he is becoming bald.

Wicks—Not at all. You'd ought to see how the hair comes out of my shaving brush and the brush is brand new.

—Boston Transcript.

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