

# In the Field of Agriculture

## SPRAYING TO KILL WEEDS

Prof. Thomas Shaw, an agricultural authority, believes that, as a rule, spraying to get rid of weeds is an expensive process not warranted by results. During recent years much experimenting has been done, chiefly by the various experiment stations, with a view to test the value of various chemical solutions in destroying weeds when employed as sprays, and many of these sprays have been commended for use on farms. Prof. Shaw says that the sprays that can be used in grain crops without doing serious harm to the grain will kill only a limited number of noxious weeds. These include wild mustard and some other varieties of the mustard family, kinghead, wild buckwheat and some weeds less harmful, as peppergrass and chickweed. The last two named are usually so little harmful in grain fields that it will not pay to destroy them, especially by spraying. It is doubtful whether it will pay to spray for wild buckwheat or plants of the mustard family, as spraying only destroys plants that are growing and can not harm the millions of weed seeds that may be lying in the soil ready to spring up in the spring in the next and succeeding crops. The sprays in common use will not kill many kinds of weeds. They will not kill weeds of a grassy nature as fox-tail, squirreltail, quick grass, Johnson grass and sweet grass. They will only check the growth of biennials, as the burdock and wild carrot. They will only check the growth of perennials without killing them. Sprays will not avail for weeds with a root system which enables them to throw up fresh shoots around the parent stem or to produce fresh plants from the latent buds. In this class are included the Canada thistle, the sow thistle, the dandelion, the oxeye daisy and many other weeds. The use of sprays is further restricted by the fact that they injure legumes, and are not necessary in cultivated crops. These sprays are all more or less poisonous, hence live stock should be kept away from the treated fields for a time. Much has been said as to the value of sprays for destroying weeds on lawns. If lawns are cut as frequently as they ought to be cut, many weeds, especially annuals and biennials will die. Perennials may call for special treatment, but that special treatment should not be a spray, for sprays do not readily destroy perennials. They disfigure the lawn more or less and do not affect the end sought.

## STEEL FENCE POSTS

For line fences, or permanent cross fences, steel posts are much better than wood or concrete posts, says an authority of the Colorado agricultural college. The life of steel posts is very much longer than wood posts, and when set in concrete they will maintain their alignment indefinitely. The cost of steel posts is not high. The line post will not exceed in cost a good wood post. Corner and gate posts, being heavier and longer than line posts, cost a few cents more than the latter. Even these cost about as much as heavy wood posts used as corner and gate posts.

A good way for setting steel posts is to fill in the bottom of the post hole, and around the post, with six inches of concrete. On top of this

cake of concrete fill in with dirt, tamping it well around the post at the ground line in with six inches of concrete. This method provides an anchor at top of ground and bottom of hole for post. One style of post on the market requires no staples to fasten the wire. The fence is secured to the post by means of tongue like punchings on the post. These tongues being bent around the wire to secure it firmly to the post. These posts are round and tapering, and are galvanized to prevent rusting. Another style of post is made of angle iron, with holes on side to receive staples. As the staples are driven home the ends cross, thus clinching them and holding the fence securely. Barbed wire and woven field fencing may be used with either style.

## HOG CHOLERA

Scientists in the employ of the United States government have for years been tireless in their efforts to discover a cure for this dreaded malady for the hog yard, and only recently have they succeeded in developing a serum that, as a preventive, has proven very satisfactory in its action. It can not be stated positively, however, that there is yet a positive cure for this terrible disease. The real cure lies in prevention. If your herd be kept in good, healthy condition, free from stomach and intestinal worms, and if the yards and pens are kept in sanitary condition, providing nice, clean and wholesome food, there is little need to fear an outbreak of cholera among your hogs. The cause of the disease is an organism in the blood so extremely small that it can not be seen with a microscope. The virus is spread about in the manure and the danger of its being carried about is very great. According to Iowa veterinary authorities, the crow is responsible to a greater degree than any other thing, for the spread of the swine plague in that state. The crow, say the veterinarians, carries the disease from one farm to another. Some advance the belief that the pigeon is not without blame in the matter. At first the animal may be constipated, but in the later stages this condition changes to diarrhoea. The cough is usually short and hacking. Sick animals should be separated at once from the well ones and the latter should be dipped in one of the reliable coal tar dips. After this remove them to clean, new quarters and have them attended to by a different person from the one who looks after the sick ones, as the disease is very contagious.

## FALL WORK IN THE POULTRY YARD

This month should see the closing up of all summer work, as well as the finishing touches preparatory to the coming winter. All hens and pullets should be brought into winter laying quarters before the last of the month. At this time the feeding problem is simple. If you have given proper attention to culling your flock will be well balanced, and then you have not the varied sizes of hens and chicks to look after as in summer. Maturing chick, laying pullet, moulting hen, alike can have the same mash and scratch feed. If you have a bunch of cockerels you may need to fatten them. At this time of the year there is still green

food growing in the garden or field, and you will not need to turn to clover in the mow or roots in the cellar to supply their needs in this direction. Feed them soft heads of cabbage, and throw in their yards turnip and mangel tops, besides weeds that are not yet brown and dry. It is impossible to lay down feed rations that will suit every condition, but for satisfactory winter work the hens need about twelve per cent of animal food. If the hens eat equal quantities of mash and whole grain, then the mash can be one part scrap to five of ground grain. If the hens eat large quantities of whole grain, and little mash, the chances are slim of getting a good supply of eggs for early winter. It will be well to weigh and watch the amount of mash and scratch feed given. It is a good thing to have open hoppers of dry mash, daily feeding a scratch grain mixture, with something in the line of green vegetable feed in abundance. No check should be allowed in the growth of pullets at this time of the year from lack of good feeding, neither must the moulting hens and cocks be stinted. Give the poultry quarters the final cleaning out and make all necessary repairs to houses before the disagreeable fall weather comes. Bad days will come soon and it will be best to get this work out of the way as soon as possible. Use judgment in allowing poultry free range in bad days from now on. Good rains and winds are not helpful to good health and winter eggs. Give all the range you can when the weather is pleasant, but confine to shelter of house when the days are cool and damp.

## BEGINNING IN THE DAIRY BUSINESS

The general activity that is being shown in the dairy business throughout the country should lead many to consider the possibilities of the dairy cow. Milk of the future is going to be produced by well bred cows, and the person who enters this line of work will have need of knowing how to select the right type of cows as well as to know how to handle them for the best results. Dairy work is becoming more highly specialized every year, but the demand for good dairy products at good prices is growing, and there is an increasing demand for well-bred cows from heavy milking ancestry. As a rule it is a difficult proposition to secure good foundation stock. If this is the case in your locality it will pay you to visit some well-known dairy community and select a few choice grade cows, a pure bred sire and as many pure bred females as you can afford to buy. Where there are several farmers in a locality who are interested in starting in the dairy business it will pay them to associate themselves together to keep one breed of cattle. In this way they can be of much benefit to each other in purchasing new breeding stock and in creating a demand for their products and breeding stock. They can use the same bulls and change them from farm to farm, thus reducing the cost of introducing new blood into their herds. If there is a surplus of breeding stock a joint sale will reduce the expenses of selling. It is important to secure a location where there is a demand for dairy products and young breeding stock. The farm should not only be located near suitable markets, but it should

be adapted to dairy cattle. Plenty of pasture, hay, forage crops and corn silage will be necessary for feeding. Neat, attractive buildings, fences and equipment are important factors. If the cows and surroundings are clean, well-kept, and have a thrifty and attractive appearance, one can find better markets of his products. It is not necessary to put

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