



LIVE STOCK

DAIRY NOTES



Caring for Wyandottes.

O. O. Wild, talking with a representative of the Farmers' Review, said:

I have my poultry houses divided in the center. One-half is floored with boards and the other half is floored with earth for a scratching shed. I have used concrete for floor, but it is too cold. If it is not covered with something it is too cold for the feet of the fowls, and if it gets moist it holds the moisture. I had my entire poultry house on a concrete floor, but I had to have it torn out and a board floor put in, which I cover with sand.

I believe if a house is built on an elevation, on top of a knoll, say, you might be able to keep the cement floor from getting moist, but my objection to cement floors is that they are always cold. However, there is a little difference of opinion about that among breeders. Some of them won't have any other kind of a floor.

Diseases of poultry do not bother me much. It is always a question of cleanliness. I do not clean out the poultry house and throw the cleanings out into the yard where the fowls are, as many people do. I have them hauled to the barnyard and mixed with the barnyard manure.

I had my birds on the place for three years before I had a louse or mite in the flock. Then some of them got through a hole in the fence, invaded my neighbor's flock and came back with both lice and mites. I have fought them ever since, but I do not let them get the upper hand. I have looked the male birds over twenty times this winter. The other day I found one of them full of lice, which shows how rapidly they breed and how carefully one must inspect his flock to keep them down.

Such a bird I give a bath of soap-suds that will kill any louse that lives. The suds are strong enough to make a good lather and I work it into the feathers till the bird is clean. Then I wash him in clear water and I believe that I get all the lice and lice eggs. The same kind of washing that the show bird gets is the kind that kills the lice.

I had some trouble with rats, but I got rid of them. They were most troublesome in my brooder house. I have a tom cat that is like a dog in protecting the chicks. He never eats a chick, but seems to take as much interest in them as I do. When I feed them he goes along and seems to enjoy seeing them eat. A cat that I had previously had the habit of "sneaking" a chick now and then, and I had to kill him.

Green Stuff for the Fowls.

It is yet a long time before grass will be abundant enough to give much green food to the fowls. Long before grass comes the farmer's family will be eating lettuce from the hot bed. If there is a spare corner in this hotbed sow in it some lettuce or rape seed for the fowls. The green stuff will be worth more to them than the food element in it indicates.

Darkness and Disease.

Fowls are naturally averse to darkness. A dark poultry house is a breeder of disease. Some with windows only two feet square can be made light by cutting out some of the side of the house and putting in glass. Fowls can stand cold much better than they can stand darkness and disease.

An Overfed Fowl.

An overfed fowl is not a well-fed fowl. She is developing so much fatty tissue that her egg-laying power will be lessened or destroyed. The well-fed hen is one that has a properly balanced ration and is made to exercise every day so that she can properly digest it.

The Butcher's Sheep.

In an animal intended for the block we want the greatest possible amount of meat of the best quality at the points that bring the highest market prices, says A. W. Smith. In the sheep we always want a very well covered back, as the cuts are valuable right along the back. In some markets the leg is considered the most valuable part. To produce a good carcass a sheep should be good on the loin, wide and fairly thick, good on the saddle and round the heart, and good in the leg and twist. One of the most important points in judging a mutton sheep is to see that the flesh handles well. It should not be soft and blubbery, but firm and elastic to the touch. The wool on a sheep makes it more difficult to determine this satisfactorily. Firmness is one of the most important points. Wherever you have softness and blubber it is an indication of fat, and not of muscle or lean meat, as is desired. This applies to all breeds, whether it is a large breed like the Leicester or the little Southdown. We want the largest proportion of lean meat possible, and we have to estimate when judging alive, as nearly as we can by touch, what is the proportion of lean to fat. To get the best quality of meat we must make allowance for a certain amount of waste to the consumer and dealer. To the dealer it is more profitable to throw away a certain proportion of fat and have a large proportion of meat of good quality than it is to have a good deal of fat and but little lean, and that of poor quality.

Value of Pedigree.

To illustrate the importance of pedigree, let us assume that two men, Mr. A and Mr. B, start out to breed cattle, each with a foundation of equally good cows. If these men are taken to represent a fair average of our stockmen, probably A will recognize the importance of having his cattle well bred, while B is a little closer as regards his pocket and takes an inferior bull. He continues that practice, considering that, after all, pedigree is a mere matter of fancy; but A continues to select well-bred bulls. What is the result? By some chance B may now and then breed one or two first-class animals. Possibly he may have the good fortune during the first year or two to produce animals that excel A's; but after ten, twenty or thirty years B will have no assurance that the progeny of his herd will have certain fixed characteristics; but A, who has given close attention to pedigree, is almost certain that when he mates this and that animal together he will get a good animal. In his herd we come to recognize what we like to see in all good herds, a uniformly good lot of young stock. This is the ideal everyone should aim at. Incidentally, I may say that Mr. Amos Cruickshank made the statement that no man can hope to achieve success in breeding in less than thirty years.—M. Cummings.

Best Bacon Hogs.

Men that are in touch with the hog markets of the country say that the best bacon hog is now being produced in the northwest part of the United States and in Canada. In these regions there is not only a scarcity of corn, but an abundance of grains rich in protein. In addition there are numerous flour mills, and these turn out great quantities of by-products rich in protein, which is cheaply obtained by the feeders. The farmers that handle these hogs produce a kind of meat that the people want and for which they pay. The farmers, however, complain that the market does not discriminate as much between bacon and lard hogs as it should.

Double-Headed Fraud.

Reports from the South say that bogus butter is still sold there in considerable quantities. This is a double-headed fraud, as it is a fraud on the consumer and a fraud on the maker of pure butter whose butter is forced out of the market by the compound. The makers of the latter are, however, wiser than the makers of pure butter, both in the manufacture of their stuff and in the selling of it.

The makers of the compound article make it profitable for the merchants to handle the goods they make, and so get a very influential part of the community working in their favor. Having won over the dealers they have a powerful leverage on the communities. If the fraud is detected by their customers they are able to cover it up by placating the consumer that feels himself aggrieved.

Then the makers of the bogus butter put it up in attractive packages and label it with a name that makes the eater believe he is getting the best quality of pure butter, or, at least, something that is just as good as butter. It is true that what the consumer does get is a compound made largely of cottonseed oil and lard, but if he is satisfied, it is hard to start prosecutions. The same thing was common in the North, but the Northern communities have shown themselves so much opposed to fraud that the makers of the compound article can no longer take the risk of selling colored oleo for butter, except in rare cases.

Progress in Dairy Science.

The savants are making great progress in dairy science, but the progress is but slowly touching the masses. There are a few thousands of men that have become interested in dairy studies, but there are a few millions of men that care nothing about dairy science. Some day there will be a revival. The preaching that is being done now will in the future make its fruit manifest in a great wave of improvement that will sweep over the country. We are not prophesying, but are simply measuring the future by the past. It has always been thus. It takes time for the seed to fall, collect moisture and germinate. The human mind is like soil, it must take its time to give forth the energies that are within it.

Increase Use of Milk.

The use of milk should be encouraged in every way. In most of our cities stations could be established for the sale of milk by the glass. A quart of milk makes four large glasses and at two cents a glass, milk would bring eight cents per quart. Here and there in cities stations have been established for the sale of milk, but as yet only in a tentative way. There is no doubt that the sale of milk in this way would to some extent at least decrease the use of strong drinks. When a man is full of one kind of liquid he does not so greatly crave another kind. It is the thirsty man that is the hard drinker. Skim milk could be sold at a cent a glass and yield a profit.

The Dairyman and Agriculture.

The dairyman needs to be well versed in agricultural matters. It is a mistake to suppose that the only thing a dairyman needs to know is dairying. He may be an expert in matters essentially of a dairy character and yet fail because he knows too little of how to get cheap feed of a substantial character. At a dairy convention attended by the writer a dairyman of prominence said: "I find that I have to read the agricultural papers as much as I do the dairy papers. It is necessary for me to learn how to grow crops and how to tile land. There are many other things that I need to know besides how to milk cows and take care of the milk."

Low-Headed Apple Trees.

Prof. Arthur T. Erwin: One important lesson gained from the past is that, at least for the northwest, low-headed trees are very much better than the old-time "skyscrapers."

In a prairie region like Iowa, protection from the wind is important. This refers not only to the matter of wind falls, but also to the protection of the plant from the drying influences of winds in winter. A low-headed tree offers less leverage, hence less wind fall; and the head being closer to the ground receives proportionally more protection from desiccation.

A serious loss to young trees is by sunscald. This usually occurs on bright, warm spells in early spring, and the injury is generally on the south or west side of the trunk. Heat stimulates activity. During the winter season the protoplasm is in a dormant state, and while in this condition is uninjured by cold. On a bright, warm day, on account of the rise in temperature, the protoplasm becomes active. At night the temperature suddenly falls, catching the protoplasm in this active condition and it is destroyed. The live bark dies and partially peels away in patches. A low head has less trunk exposure, hence less opportunity for such injury. The top also shades the stem better, and hence affords a protection not received with high headed trees.

No fruit grower who is in the business for the money can afford to omit spraying as one of his orchard operations. Low headed trees can be sprayed much more effectively and cheaper than high ones. At gathering time there is also an important advantage. One man on the ground can do the work of two on ladders.

Orchard cultivation is an essential to good fruit growing, and a high headed tree is very much more convenient in this respect. It is likely in this one fact that we find the practice of high heading so prevalent in older sections. With the old-time implements and harness it meant slow work and lots of lifting, to work around low headed trees. The fellow who has had such an experience is very strongly tempted to lop off a few of the lower branches the first opportunity.

Better types of orchard harness and implements have remedied this to a large degree, and there is no longer ground for complaint from this source. The traceless harness does away with single trees, which skin the bark and are very useful in the orchard.

Some Small Fruits.

The raspberry, blackberry and dewberry will need careful thinning out and short pruning of the bearing canes, and then, after the fruit is well set, take off one-half or two-thirds of the berries, and keep down the young sprouts and canes so that the strength will go to the berries. Fertilize with four pounds muriate of potash and two pounds of nitrate of soda per square rod.

For next year's fruiting, grow the canes for this especial purpose, retaining about one-fourth as many canes as usual and then treat the same as above; picking, handling, wrapping and packing the same as for the strawberry. Fine clusters and branches where they can be retained should be shipped as clusters after wrapping.

Twisting the canes often causes them to produce larger fruit, and water is often used with 1 lb. muriate of potash and ½ lb. nitrate of soda to twenty gallons of water to help increase the size, especially if the weather is dry. Mulching is necessary and watering can then be done safely.—L. A. Goodman.