

The Farm.

Sowing Winter Wheat.

From the American Agriculturist.

Comparatively little can now be done in preparing land properly for wheat. The work should have been done earlier. As a rule, it would be better to sow wheat at all than to sow on land that is too wet, too poor, and too foul to produce a fair crop.

We spend labor enough in many cases in preparing our land for wheat, but rarely give time enough. To plow twice in two or three weeks, and harrow and roll the land is as mellow as a garden is not the way to secure a good wheat crop.

The same amount of labor expended over a longer period would produce far better results. In England, great crops of wheat are raised by turning over a clover sod and drilling in the wheat as fast as the land is plowed. We could do the same thing here, provided our land was in as high condition and the season was as good as in England.

We sow a month earlier than they do in England, and it often happens that the land is so dry and hard at this season that we should find it difficult to turn over the clover sod. In exceptional seasons we have known a good crop of wheat grown on a clover sod not plowed until the middle of September, and sown at once on the arrow and harrowed in.

When the Spring crops are now far more common than formerly. We adopt this system on our own farm, and therefore cannot condemn it; and yet we are satisfied that many farmers would do well to abandon the practice. The great danger of the wheat grower must be to get a vigorous, healthy plant in the autumn. He must endeavor to secure this by having rich, moist, and mellow land rather than early sowing.

If we sow too early we run the risk of having the crop injured by the Hessian fly. On our own farm we aim to sow from the 5th to the 15th of September. If we sow in a prime order we prefer to sow not earlier than the 15th. Two bushels per acre is our rule, and we do not find it too much, though many good farmers think 11-2 bushels enough.

Drinking is better than sowing broadcast. It deposits the seed more evenly and deep in the moist earth. The depth of sowing is regulated by the character of the soil. It would be well not to cover the seed more than an inch deep; but if this does not reach the moist earth the drill must be set to sow deeper. It is very important to put the seed where it will germinate in a few days.

Where snout is common the seed should be washed in some preparation to kill the spores of snout before sowing. Moistening the grain with fermented chamber-jelly and drying it with lime is an old remedy, and if properly done is effectual. Manuring for wheat is less common than it should be. A little rich, well-rotted manure spread on the surface before or after the seed is sown often has wonderful effect.

Salt on rich land frequently proves a good fertilizer for wheat. Sow from two to five bushels per acre broadcast before putting in the wheat.

Dr. Franklin on Farming and the Situation Generally in 1771. From the Germantown Telegraph. The following letter, which we are assured has never before appeared in print, possesses as much interest today as it did when written 102 years ago. The style is given just as the communication came from the hands of the writer, retaining the spelling, capitals at all the nouns, punctuation, &c.

The social and political economy of the world consists of a general balance of conflicting interests, and any one interest that is not active in maintaining its own position must necessarily suffer. The farmers have been for long years quite inactive, while adverse interests have been building up themselves at their expense. This is now changing, and they should restore their last balance, and having gained their rightful position in public and business affairs that they should hold it securely by being always prepared to strive for it. Their work is already being crowned with success.

FATTENING PIGS in Warm Weather.

From the Farm and Fireside Journal. The two common practice of keeping pigs upon a spare diet of thin slops from the house, with a little grass, and frequently without the grass, through the warm weather, and then doing all the fattening in the Fall and early Winter, results in much loss of food and poor returns to the feeder. The cost of keeping pigs in this slow-growing condition is little less than generous feeding, which will produce twice the growth in the same time. We do not disapprove putting pigs upon good grass, for this is not only good for their health and thrift, but is the cheapest food as far as it goes. What we wish strongly to enforce is the economy of full feeding during warm weather. A little addition of grain to Summer pasture will give the same amount of grain fed in cold weather. There is very little expenditure of food in keeping up animal heat at this season, and the grain will all go to the extra flesh.

A March pig will fatten as great weight on the 1st of September as a pig fed on the 1st of December by the common system, and the expense will be much less. An experiment, several years since, with four March pigs of the same litter, each of nearly equal weight, all fed upon grass, but two of them having in addition fine wheat middlings and corn-meal mixed in equal parts and soaked in cold water twelve to twenty-four hours, all of which showed the decided advantage of full feeding. The other two had the same grass, with the thin slops from the house for drink, and weighed, on the 1st of September, when five and a half months old, 248 pounds, while the two with meal and bran, and lillium, weighed 450. They ate 500 pounds of the mixed dillings and bran in 123 days, from the 1st of September, and gained 202 pounds by this additional feed, or one pound for two and one-half pounds of middlings and meal.

The experiment was continued three months longer, to the 1st of December, all four pigs being fed alike what they would eat of the three parts: corn-meal and one part fine middlings, with grass during September and October, and pumpkins in November, and weighed, the two former, 440 pounds, and the latter 660 pounds live weight. The former lost twenty per cent. in dressing, and the latter only sixteen per cent. They consumed of the meal and middlings 1,500 pounds, or four pounds of feed to make one pound live weight, besides the grass and pumpkins.

Here it takes sixty per cent. more grain to produce a pound live weight in the Fall than in the Summer. But this result is caused, first, by the greater age and weight of the pigs, and second, by the cold weather. The two pigs that were full-fed during the Summer still weigh more pounds in the Fall than the others, and show their better condition in the end by losing less in dressing. There is only one point of importance left out in the experiment—the separate quantity consumed by each two pigs after the 1st of September. It is highly probable, however, that the two pigs which consumed the most food to make one live weight after that period, as the full-fed animal constantly eats more as its weight increases, for each pound of gain. From other experiments tried by us, we found that it cost forty per cent. more food to produce a pound live weight in November than in July, August or September. These experiments were made in ordinary years, not warmed or constructed with a view of keeping up a Summer temperature, which might probably be done for Winter feeding.

But as few farmers are prepared to keep their pigs of an even temperature at all seasons of the year, economy requires them to feed when the greatest amount of pork can be made from a given amount of feed.

BY FEEDING EXTRA FEED. The principle illustrated in the above experiment is most important. During the warm weather two and one-half pounds of extra food produced one pound live weight. This would be a most extraordinary result if applied to all the food taken by the pigs, but it must be remembered that they had all the good grass they could eat, and that this food supplied the waste of the system, the animal heat, and kept the pig growing moderately, and this extra food was used solely to lay on flesh. Here is the secret of full feeding. The extra food digested all goes to profit, whereas the food that supplies animal waste produces no gain in flesh, and if no more is fed than to supply waste in the young animal, the food is all thrown away. Full-feeding is the only profitable feeding, and this leads to early maturity and early profit. The most profitable feeding of pigs is before they are ten months old. No profit results in keeping pigs to eighteen months and two years old, except for breeding purposes, and besides, these eighteen to twenty-four months long do not usually average more than 350 to 400 pounds, live weight, and 350 pounds may be reached in ten or twelve months. Many millions of dollars' worth of grain is thrown away every year by half feeding or feeding principally in cold instead of warm weather.

Putting on Manure. S. J. Woolley, writes to the Germantown Telegraph from Ohio. "It is customary with farmers at this season of the year to haul out their manure and spread it over their grass-land. This practice is not much better than throwing it away; the scorching rays of the August and September sun will dry it up and the heated air at night will absorb it, until there is but little left. I put on twenty loads of barn-yard manure to the acre last August, and by October I could scarcely see any of it. And when I cut the meadow where I put the manure, it was not much heavier than where I put none. The best use that can be made of manure at this season of the year is to put it on wheat-land. Spread it evenly over the land after it is plowed and harrowed it immediately. If you put it on the land before it is plowed it will be covered so deep that the wheat-roots will scarcely reach it before Spring. The best time to haul manure is in moderate, heavy rain, or in the early Spring. It can either be spread on corn, wheat or grass land with great benefit. There is then no scorching sun or heated air to take it up, while the freezing and thawing and washing will incorporate it in the soil, so that the crop will receive the full benefit of it."

THE WORK OF THE GRASSES.—The organization of the farmer is already fruitful. As might have been expected, the united power of the largest interest of the nation is irresistible. Already the moral influence of the railroad reform. Reductions in freight and passenger fares have already been made on some of the long lines in the West. The impetus given will not suddenly stop, nor will it be exhausted until every legitimate advantage that may be obtained from it has been procured.

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