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THE HORSE AS A MOTOR

Old Dobbin Something More Than a Mere Machine.

He is Largely a Self-feeder—Does Not Rust When Resting—Has Horse Sense—Keeps an Annual Inventory—How to Select the Breeding Ram.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

The horse is, and will continue to be, the principal farm motor for an indefinite period. There are approximately 1,500,000 horses in Canada, all of which are used as a source of motor power. One and a half million man not seem to be a large number, but if we were to place the horses in the Dominion head and tail in one long parade line, they would reach from Halifax to Vancouver. So there is some horse flesh left in Canada, notwithstanding statements to the contrary by people interested in the manufacture of mechanical motors.

About the Farm Horse.
The farm horse as a farm motor differs from the mechanical farm motor in that it is self feeding, self maintaining, self reproducing, and self controlling. These qualities give the horse a tremendous advantage over the mechanical devices used for field work on the farms and for haulage on the roads.

The Horse Largely a Self Feeder.
Self feeding means a lot. There is no carburetor on the horse; nor are spark plug required. Green grass, good clean hay and oats, the products of the fields in which the horse labors, produce the energy that keeps up the horse's body, and keeps him going as a motor while labor is being performed.

The Animal Motor a Reliable One.
Within the horse's body cavity there is a wonderful self maintaining motor. The heart, the lungs, and the digestive organs make an engine combination of great efficiency. This hidden motor made of flesh, blood and tissue keeps tight, and makes its own repairs. Furthermore, the horse motor develops pep, or places in reserve energizing substances that may be used on demand. The mechanical motor when at rest does not improve nor grow stronger as does the horse, but frequently wastes or rusts. The high cost of gasoline, oil and motor mechanic service, together with the too frequent neglect that is accorded tractors on many farms, has reacted to the advantage of the faithful horse.

Old Dobbin Has Horse Sense.
Old Dobbin is also possessed of horse sense. No mechanical motor yet devised has possessed this function. Fuel for the horse motor is grown on the farm, and all profits remain on the farm. There is no tax on it either.—Lionel Stevenson, Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

ANNUAL INVENTORY.

Keep a Record of What You Own and What It is Worth.

The man on the land can learn much about his own farming operations by taking an inventory each year. No form of record will give so much information about the year's work as will an inventory properly taken at a definitely fixed date each year. The usual time for taking an inventory of the farm business is in March, when there is least feed and unsold produce on hand. The inventory of any ordinary farm can be taken in a half day, so there is no excuse on account of shortage of time. The information about the farm business through the study made possible by inventory taking is worth many times the expenditure of time and effort.

For convenience in keeping the farm inventory any blank record book with pages wide enough to permit spacing for a number of columns can be used, and if ruled to accommodate the entries for a number of years so much the better.—L. Stevenson, Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

How to Select the Breeding Ram.

Select a ram that possesses scale, but not to the extent that he is lacking in quality. A well-developed ram as a rule transmits these characteristics to his offspring. He should be masculine in appearance, which is indicated by the carriage and boldness of head, short face, good width between the eyes, large open nostrils and an absence of feminine characters.

A ram should show good strength of back and depth of body, especially through the chest, with good width between fore legs and well sprung ribs. He should be closely made, that is, good depth, width of body, and short on legs.

The fleece should also be considered as to density, fineness and freedom from black fibres, with a skin that is pink in color, indicating that he is in good condition.

Purchase a pure-bred ram if possible, as blood will count and marked results will be seen in the quality of lambs. Breed character should be considered as it is very important, more especially in pure-bred flocks. Prices are relatively low and it pays to buy the best.

Head lettuce requires cool moist weather to head well. The loose leaf sorts are best for warm weather.

Prepare orchards for spraying for San Jose Scale and other pests by pruning and scraping off loose bark.

Be sure that all seed corn and root seeds are secured from the best sources available, and are in ample quantities for sowing seed.

New Zealand's Experience.
In New Zealand, farmers satisfied the home market for butter a long time ago. They had to export the surplus, and the Government offered a premium for the first shipment of butter which would satisfy consumers in Great Britain. What was the result? Dishonest people stole brands of quality products and shipped inferior butter under these brands. This had a bad effect. It was then found necessary to have Government inspection which would extend right back to the producer, so that inferior butter could be traced to its source and the cause removed.—J. A. Coker, Dept. Farm Economics, O. A. College, Guelph.

World Seed Spread by Manure.

It is quite generally known that waste products of animals and still remain viable. The manure will contain these seeds, and the result is that a field may become infested with weed plants, some of a very noxious character.

In spite of this fact, precautions were not generally observed in the feeding of screenings which contain seeds of noxious weeds.

As a result of experiments at the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, it was found that in feeding certain manures the germination may even be increased after having passed through the digestive tract. Curled dock, a very common farm weed, germinated only four per cent. in its natural condition. A quantity of this seed was fed to a cow, and 100 such seeds were placed in a germinator. Ninety-eight out of the one hundred grew. The same is true to some extent of lambs' quarters, the seed of which was germinated 85 per cent. before feeding, 88 per cent. after feeding. The germination of quack grass seemingly was not much affected, as a germination of 85 per cent. was secured before feeding, and 89 per cent. after feeding. The viability of Canada thistle seed was decreased to some extent, but enough seed remained to infest a field.

In view of the foregoing figures, the farmer should be very careful in the use of screenings. They should either be ground to the very finest possible condition, so as to crush all weed seeds, or else they should be fed to such animals as sheep, which graze or thoroughly destroy the ordinary weed seeds.

THE IMPLEMENT SHED

Should be an Important Feature in Farm Buildings.

Have It Centrally Located—How to Make Cement Posts for Foundation—Not Only Have Implements Under Clean Cover, But Keep Them Ready.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

The storage of tools and machinery in a general barn is not always economical. Frequently the barn has to be cleared out during haying or harvest storage, necessitating the removal of the implements for a long period of exposure. A building designed and constructed for implement storage is to be desired on every farm. The size of an implement shed can be determined by measuring the implements and then determining the space required by each. Wide buildings are not usually satisfactory, since such will incline toward a storage system that requires the removal of several implements in order to get the one wanted. Narrow buildings just wide enough to protect the largest implements and wagons are to be preferred.

Should Be Centrally Located.
The implement shed should be located as a central feature in the farmstead group of buildings at a point midway between the house and barn, in such a position as to be convenient to teamsters going to and from fields and roads. Concrete floors are highly satisfactory, but not always necessary; gravel and dry earth floors are generally satisfactory. The walls need only to protect from wind and sun, while the roof, if it will keep out the rain and dust, is satisfactory. This means a cheap structure, made up of 2 x 4 to 2 x 6 inch boards and prepared roofing paper. The wall framework can be constructed by setting 3 x 4 foot poles set on 24-inch centers. Sheds planned to be 16 feet or more in width should have 2 x 6 rafters if the roof is of one slope. Rough board sheathing and battens well nailed to the rafters will make a strong wall, quite good enough to shelter the farm machines and tools.

How to Make a Good Foundation.
The foundation should be firm, and can be easily made by setting half barrels in line and level, and then filling up with cement concrete. Such a foundation is strong and durable. An inset of 2 x 4 in the cement to spike the walls is very essential in windy localities. Implement houses may be built with one side open, or one side may be made up of doors, half of which are hung on an inside track and half on an outside track. This double track arrangement for door hanging permits the opening of a door at any point, which is an important feature.—L. Stevenson, Secretary, Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

ARE THE IMPLEMENTS READY?

A Question That the Prudent Farmer Will Keep in Mind.
With tillage and harvesting machinery in idleness during the winter period and with farm men not as busy as they are during the spring season, it is good management to see that all implements and tools are put into the best condition possible. Odd hours of the day during the winter on many farms are always available for such repair work. Such spare periods can be very profitably used in going over all machines and making good any wear and tear, tightening bolts and rivets, putting in new parts where needed; painting to protect against rust and weathering, have done much to prolong the life of farm tools. Many hours and many dollars are lost each year through tools and implements being neglected. Ploughs, binders, mowers and rakes left in the fields or in the farm yard or along the fence row or in the orchard may worn out or rusted out years before their time. Fifty per cent. efficiency is too low for any implement or tool in which we have invested capital. One hundred per cent. efficiency from farm implements and tools comes only to those who take care of their implements. Provide protection from weather when not in use and keep them clean, sharp and tight. The rush of spring work is seriously hindered by the plough being rusty, loose or out of adjustment; by the harrows being dull, by the grain drill and the roller being out of repair when such should be in the field and in use. A little attention to the implements during February and March will save hours and dollars in April and May.—L. Stevenson, Secretary Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

BENEFITS OF ROTATION

It Maintains Both the Humus and Nitrogen Supplies.

Too Frequent Grain Growing Exhausts the Soil—Rotation Will Help to Destroy Weeds, Insects, and Fungus Pests—Currants and Gooseberries.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

Crop rotations will, if properly planned and practiced, maintain the humus supply in the soil, will restore the nitrogen supply, will give the benefits resulting from alternating crops that have different food requirements and leave different root residues in the soil; will help in weed, insect and fungus disease control; will make business management possible, will distribute the labor and reduce the risk of the loss in poor crop years.

Grain Growing Exhausts the Soil.
Lands that are continually used for grain crops will in time show exhaustion of the humus supply, due to annual tillage creating conditions that favor oxidation. Lands that are given a rest from the action of plough, disc, and cultivator, for two years out of every four while growing a hay or pasture crop will not become depleted of humus material, since the roots of the clover and grass crops will during their period of growth increase the quantity of vegetable matter or humus making material.

The common food plants have quite different root systems, legumes and root crops go deep, the grasses and grains have fibrous roots and feed nearer the surface. The grains develop their feeding roots and are most active during the spring and early summer, while corn and the root crops draw the greater part of their food supply during the late summer.

Use the Soil as a Feeding Ground.
The point is to use the soil as a feeding ground for the various food plants in such a way as to employ all its resources during the rotation period, but not to overwork or exhaust any particular part of what the soil may offer. A soil that is subjected to the task of nourishing a surface feeding type of plant over a long period of years will become exhausted of the food elements within the range of the feeding roots. The same is true when a soil is subjected to supplying the same food elements in excess to classes of plants requiring the same elements. Alternate Shallow and Deep Feeding Crops.

By planting a rotation that will call for a surface feeding crop one year, a deep feeding crop the next year, and a rest from tillage for two years the soil is not subjected to the same overtaxing drain on its fertility that the one crop or no system imposes. The work that the soil is required to do is distributed over a longer period, the soil is given time to rest up while certain food elements are reaching a condition suitable for plant food in quantity large enough to be of use to a developing crop. When crops are alternated, weeds, insects and fungus pests, all of which like the sameness of conditions characteristic of the one crop system, are not given a chance to increase, but are rooted out and destroyed annually through the breaking up of conditions suitable to such pests by employing a suitable rotation system.—L. Stevenson, Secretary Dept. of Agriculture, Toronto.

Currants and Gooseberries.

If a currant or gooseberry plantation is properly cared for, at least eight to ten crops may be expected before it becomes unprofitable because of its age. Productive fields over twenty years old are not uncommon in some sections. Although the number of years a plantation will continue in good bearing condition depends to some extent upon location and soil, the most important factor is the care which it receives. The period of productivity of both currant and gooseberry plants is longer in northern regions than toward the southern limits of their culture and longer on heavy soil than on sandy soil.

In gardens where the available land is limited in extent, currants and gooseberries may well be planted among the tree fruits and left there permanently. The shade of the trees protects the fruits from sun scald, and the foliage is usually healthier in such locations than when grown where it is freely exposed to the sun.

A place with good air drainage is preferred for gooseberries. In low, flat places mildew attacks both fruit and foliage more severely than on higher sites where the air circulation is better. Currants, however, are seldom severely attacked by mildew. Therefore, when the site is a sloping one, currants may be planted on the lower parts and gooseberries above. As both fruits blossom very early in the spring, neither should be planted in low pockets where late spring frosts may kill the flowers.

Gooseberries ordinarily are propagated by mound layers. The plant from which layers are to be procured should be cut back heavily before it begins to grow in the spring. By July it will have sent out numerous vigorous shoots. It should then be mounded with earth half way to the tips of the shoots. By autumn the shoots will have rooted. Those with strong roots may then be cut off and set in the nursery, to be grown for one or two years before planting in the field. If the roots are not well developed, it will be better to leave the shoots attached to the parent plant for a second year.

Rainbows in a Flame.
The color of a heated object depends largely upon the temperature to which it is subjected. When, for example, a poker is placed in a fire, it will first turn a dull red, then a bright red, and finally a glaring white.

The same principle applies to a flame. The outside of which is far hotter than the inside, and, in consequence, gives off a brighter light. This difference in temperature is due to the fact that only the outer portion of the flame comes in contact with the oxygen of the air, while the inner part has to be content with the small amount of this inflammable gas which reaches it still unconsumed.

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