WASTEFUL MANAGEMENT OF FARMS
AND LAZY ACRES, THE CAUSE OF
HARD TIMES IN FARMING.

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Leaks and Wastes.

Mismanagement in dairy farming and unproductive acres, is the procuring cause of most of the wide-spread depression now so loudly complained of, by the great majority of dairymen in this and other localities. The annual waste of fodder on the large majority of farms is often equal to the amount utilized. Mr. Horace E. Stockbridge, director of the Experiment Station of the state of Indiana, says in Bulletin No. 29, that “careful inquiry and observation extending over the entire state, forces the inevitable conclusion that as much nutrient in the form of fodder is wasted every year as actually finds its way into the digestive systems of the farm animals of the state.” Let us pause and consider for a moment the deep significance of this statement if it is true. It is very easy for the careless and unthinking farmer to dispose of the unwelcome charge, by saying I don’t believe it is true, but the careful and observing dairyman has no question of its entire truth, many intelligent dairymen know from their own bitter experience that the statement is a very mild one.

Criticism Thyself.

Many farmers are very ready to ask questions of others and this is all right, but real progress begins when we ask questions of ourselves, when a man begins to talk to himself in earnest, made more earnest, when total receipts from the farm, are less than the legitimate expenses of the family, a man in this condition is not apt to have much nonsense in his questions, or answers. The man says to himself, I have eighty acres of land and I have never been able to keep more than fifteen cows, and these cows average about $30 per head, total receipts $450, and I have to pay one hired man eight months, his wages and board cost not less than $150, leaving but $300 to pay taxes, farm machinery, repairs and board and clothe the family. I tell you, that my wife and I work more hours and for less wages than any miners or operatives that ever struck for higher wages. Again this man says to himself, I have this farm, and have always worked at farming and don’t know any other business, what shall I do? The capital I have invested in the farm don’t bring me in anything. I don’t even get good wages for my work, and nothing for the hard work of my wife, not even good clothes, no recreation and but little reading matter for the family, I know it is hard and the question for me is: Is this condition of things a positive necessity? I know that some farmers keep more cows than I do, they keep double the number on the same number of acres, and I have heard that some dairymen keep forty cows on eighty acres, but I don’t believe that, but if I could only keep twenty-five cows, it would bring in $400 more than I now get and that would want only one more milker, and my wife really needs a good hired girl,
and that would make all the milkers we would want.

Success and Courage.

The man begins to take courage, and says to himself $300.00 a year more and only the expense of a hired girl, and we ought to have the girl any way, if we could afford it, now the main question is how can I manage to raise fodder for ten cows more? It is the fodder I want, because the skim milk or whey from twenty-five cows will make pork enough to buy the bran or oil meal I sought to have. Now I have read or heard somewhere, that this large fodder corn will produce fifteen, twenty, thirty and sometimes forty tons to the acre. Now I don't believe a word about thirty and forty tons to the acre, but perhaps I can raise twelve tons. It is said by many dairymen that a cow will eat about fifty pounds of green corn or ensilage per day, so I see by this that an acre of corn fodder if it only produces nine tons will winter two cows, and if it will produce thirteen and one-half tons per acre it will winter three cows. Now I have made up my mind in talking to myself that I will send off and get a sack of sweet corn, two and a half bushels, and that will plant ten acres. I will try it any way. The relation of this imaginary case may seem to some a trivial affair, but it is the true history of hundreds of progressive dairymen throughout the country, it is the most important step the man has ever taken in his farm life, and becomes a memory in after years, as the turning point from penury to prosperity.

On the Up-Grade.

Now mark his subsequent history if he is a resolute man. He planted the ten acres of fodder corn, and in anticipa-

tion of the possible success of his new departure, he raises ten heifer calves, the corn proves a large crop; and by the first of January he finds he can sell $200.00 worth of hay and still have plenty of fodder; with the $200.00 from the sale of hay, he buys five cows, so that he is milking twenty cows the first year after conversion to improved methods of farming. The second year his ten heifers are in milk and he is milking thirty head, and he plants twenty acres of corn, and plows up ten acres of his old pasture, and sows to winter rye, clover and millet for feeding, when pasture is short, thereby keeping up the flow of milk so that his thirty cows average a production of forty-five dollars each, raising the total receipts of the farm to $1,350.

A Brighter Picture.

This is a true history of hundreds of dairymen in the state, who have had the sense to change the old methods of pasture grass for summer, and mainly hay for winter. What is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is this, in place of nothing as net receipts under the old method, he now has $350.00 at least, his land is growing more and more productive, his cows are grading up to larger production, he has raised his wife from a mere drudge, to her rightful prerogative, a well dressed, good looking, agreeable companion, he has kept one more boy and girl on the farm, he is more self reliant, more independent, a bigger and better man. Is there a man present that ever knew a man that raised good fodder crops, carefully preserved them and fed them to his own stock without waste, that was a poor man? One thing the timid or inexperienced dairymen should not forget. That if the skim milk or whey from fifteen cows, will raise calves or pork enough to buy the bran and oil meal for fifteen cows, then any increased number of cows, thirty, fifty or one hundred will do the same thing, cultivating and enriching lazy acres, and the cultivation preservation and final utilization of the fodder crops, is the keynote to successful farming.