

# WISCONSIN BANKERS' FARM BULLETIN

## How to Make a Small Farm Pay

By

**ONE WHO HAS**



A FEW ACRES WELL TILLED

Often yield vastly more pleasure and profit than do larger but less carefully managed farms.

File this bulletin where you can find it

Distributed by

**Wisconsin Bankers' Association**

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## How to Make a Small Farm Pay

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Down in Walworth County, a man who taught school for 23 years is farming a 40-acre farm with wonderful success. F. F. Showers is this money-making teacher-farmer. He has a herd of cows that made him a net profit of \$72 a head in a year. Read his story.

“If you are thinking of joining the union so that you will have but an eight or ten hour working day, do not think of trying to operate a small farm. To succeed in farming you must so enjoy your work that it becomes a pleasure instead of a task.

“In fact, success in farming depends upon the man who runs the farm. For if he thinks enough of his problem he will succeed no matter what lines of farming he may pursue.

### **A WORD TO THE OWNER OF A SMALL FARM.**

Love and enjoy your work.

Study each of your fields to know its weaknesses and its possibilities.

Harvest your crops so that you will receive the largest return from them.

Give your herd a chance.

Produce, care for, and raise only the best.

“Utilize all of the farm. I study each field so that I know what crop it will produce to best advantage. A farmer can do this on the small farm since it is possible to utilize the smallest possible fields. The farmer on the small farm must utilize all the corners

of the farm. The returns from some fields on a small farm will be equal to the wastes upon many large farms.

**“Make soil productive.** If my soil is acid, I use lime. If my field is wet or poorly drained, I tile it. A farmer can fertilize the field, plow it, prepare the seed bed as it should be prepared and get the soil in the best condition for plant food and the maintenance of the moisture.

**“Raise most profitable crops.** The farmer on a small farm must raise crops which are best adapted for his soil and from which the best returns in milk, pork, beef, or whatever you have to market, can be secured. Often the surplus roughage or hay can be sold and feeds bought which will produce more milk or meat than this hay or roughage would have done.

“I found that I could grow alfalfa on my farm and get good returns. I made a study of the plant, found that it needed a well drained soil, and that it required a well prepared seed bed. I knew that I had a well drained soil and that it was necessary for me to supply the seed bed. The farmers who drove past, stared at me when I harrowed and harrowed the field I was preparing for alfalfa. I went over the ground eleven times until it was as mellow as a well worked garden.

“Sweet clover was growing three or four feet high along the roadside, so I inoculated my alfalfa field with the soil in which the clover had been growing. The stand did not satisfy me, so that when I planted my second field I fertilized the field before plowing it in the fall, disking and harrowing in the spring.

“My first field yielded five tons to the acre, but it did not satisfy me. I bought a lime sower and ground limestone, and inoculated with soil from the old field at the rate of 500 pounds of soil to 2,000 pounds of ground limestone. I sowed 20 pounds of alfalfa and 25 pounds of barley to the acre. Because of the thorough preparation of the seed bed, the barley yielded 40 bushels to the acre.

“Upon this field last year eight tons of alfalfa hay were cut from every acre. My profit was \$98.40 an acre, after deducting the interest on the land at \$200 an acre, the taxes, the cost of plowing, disking, planting, fertilizing, and liming, besides the expense of cutting, tedding, raking, cocking, capping, shaking out, and hauling the hay.

"In curing alfalfa to get the largest return I cut the hay as soon as the dew is off in the morning and start tedding so that I can cock and cap the hay in the afternoon. About three o'clock

### **A PROFIT PRODUCER.**

After paying his taxes, the interest on his investment, the cost of establishing a stand, and the expense of putting up the hay, Mr. Showers figures that he had nearly \$100 as a profit from each acre of his alfalfa.

the alfalfa is raked into windrows, carefully cocked (not tumbled) and then capped. I leave the hay in the cocks from eight to ten days, depending on the weather. (If necessary to leave the hay in cock for several days the cocks should be moved about so as not to kill or weaken the plants under them.) Then the cocks are opened up, but not scattered

out, and the hay placed in layers so that the leaves do not become brittle and rattle off. An hour or two later I begin putting the hay in the mow. It is surprising how the alfalfa retains its color until it is thrown out of the mow in the following summer.

"**Home grown feeds not always cheapest and best.** I try to run my farm as the best business men run their business. Most business men would not feed their cows hay just because it happened to be on hand if he could sell that hay and buy other feed which would produce more milk. Last year I sold \$300 worth of alfalfa and purchased feed valued at \$296.95. I did this so I could have a balanced ration, and I know my cows like a change in feed.

"**Manage the herd carefully.** I try to make each cow as comfortable as possible. I give her a soft bed, plenty of bedding, curry her, and speak to her kindly. I find that these increase the dividend from my milk pails.

"I make a difference in the amount of feed I give to a cow weighing 1,000 pounds and one weighing 1,200 pounds. Reason shows me that although the larger cow may not produce the largest amount of butter fat, more feed is required for her maintenance. This food, of course, will vary from the kind of food fed for butter fat. I think that the secret of success or failure in the dairy business lies in the worth of the individual cow.

"I know it is possible and profitable to have one head of stock on each acre. My silo and alfalfa fields have helped me to unlock the secret of money making on the small farm."