

Remarks by Hon. John Luchsinger Monroe, Wis.

It needs not many words to assure you that in grateful reward for being the provider of the milk our great dairy interest owes its life to, the Wisconsin dairy cow is well cared for and generously fed. In the matter of shelter and care nothing is too good for the dairy cow, roomy, light and warm barns, are the rule, the exception is the other way, water clean and cool in summer, and in winter warmed, so as to prevent chilling, is provided. The milk farmer needs no argument, he knows, that there is loss when his cows are neglected, his monthly milk check is the convincing proof of the care or lack of care his cows receive, also whether it has paid to buy and feed the high priced grain feeds.

Many times we hear it said, it costs too much of the earnings of the cow to feed her liberally of the ground feeds that go the increase of milk, that such feed is too dear to feed with profit. On the other hand the price of everything made of milk is also so high that the proceeds equal the extra price for feed.

It is a fact however, that the amount of food fed to our dairy cows is much greater than is generally realized. None of the Hay, Fodder, Corn, Oats, Barley or other grain grown in Green County are sold to be shipped elsewhere, all is fed at home, but this is far from enough, in the year ending Jan. 1st, 1910, there was shipped by rail alone into Green County.

Oats of the value of	\$10,300
Corn	3,600

Barley	1700
Hay	1200
Bran, Shorts and other ground feeds	<u>31,800</u>
Total	58,600

The previous year, a much greater amount was paid for such feed because of the short crop of corn, oats and hay, for the cow, to be of profit, must have just as much good food when it is dear as when it is cheap. Madam Cow does not pay dividends to a stingy owner.

But, there are quite a large number who say that the outlay for extra food is too great. That there is no need of buying so much, ask them for a reason for their belief and their Alfalfa. They are not mere theorists, they are practical dairymen who have made a careful study of the value of foods, they have found out what a balanced ration means, they believe not only in good rational feeding but also that they can and should produce all the food on the farm.

It is long past argument, that it pays well to cut all the corn, and to shred the fodder, it has been a rare sight to see a field of uncut ripe corn in the dairy section. Ten years ago Alfalfa was but little known or grown in southwestern Wisconsin, longer ago, it had gotten great reputation for great yields on the nearly rainless plains of the West and Southwest. Also under the name of Lucerne it has been grown for many centuries with great success in Europe, especially in Spain and France and Italy, countries that have hot dry summers, as Wisconsin frequently has, moved by the reports of the marvellous productiveness of alfalfa under conditions of drought, some of our progressive milk farmers began in a small way to experiment with it, they met with great success, they became convinced that our soil, climate, and other conditions, were perfectly adapted to its growth, this knowledge has spread and is spreading. It is no longer a question whether our conditions are favorable, it is an accepted fact that there are but few places in southern Wisconsin where it cannot be

successfully grown. By analysis and practice it is proven, that Alfalfa when cut in due season, and properly cured and gathered, contains more milk producing substances than any other of the grasses. It is asserted that it is a complete substitute for bran, and that by its liberal use a very great portion of the ground feed now bought, can be dispensed with, and its cost saved to the farmer. It is also proven that Alfalfa as a preserver and enricher of the soil has no superior, its strong roots pierce deep down through soil and subsoil, and get nourishment that no other plant has the power to reach (unless it be a Burdock or thistle). Unlike clover, which is a two year plant, alfalfa with proper care is a permanent plant and does not require reseeded. It is easily possible however to injure and even destroy alfalfa by greediness and neglect, by mowing once too often, by pasturing too close, or by pasturing all at certain times, like clover it grows no dense sod, it is a plant rather than a grass, it does not stand well the trampling of stock, it is a plant to be cut and fed green as in Europe or to be cut and made hay of rather than a pasture plant. To make hay of the best quality the first crop should be cut when its purple blossoms are fully opened before any seed has formed it should be put under cover as soon as possible after it is cut and wilted to be rained on when dry injures it more than to haul it too green under cover, also if dried too much the brittle leaves and fine stalks are broken into powder leaving the coarser parts of less value.

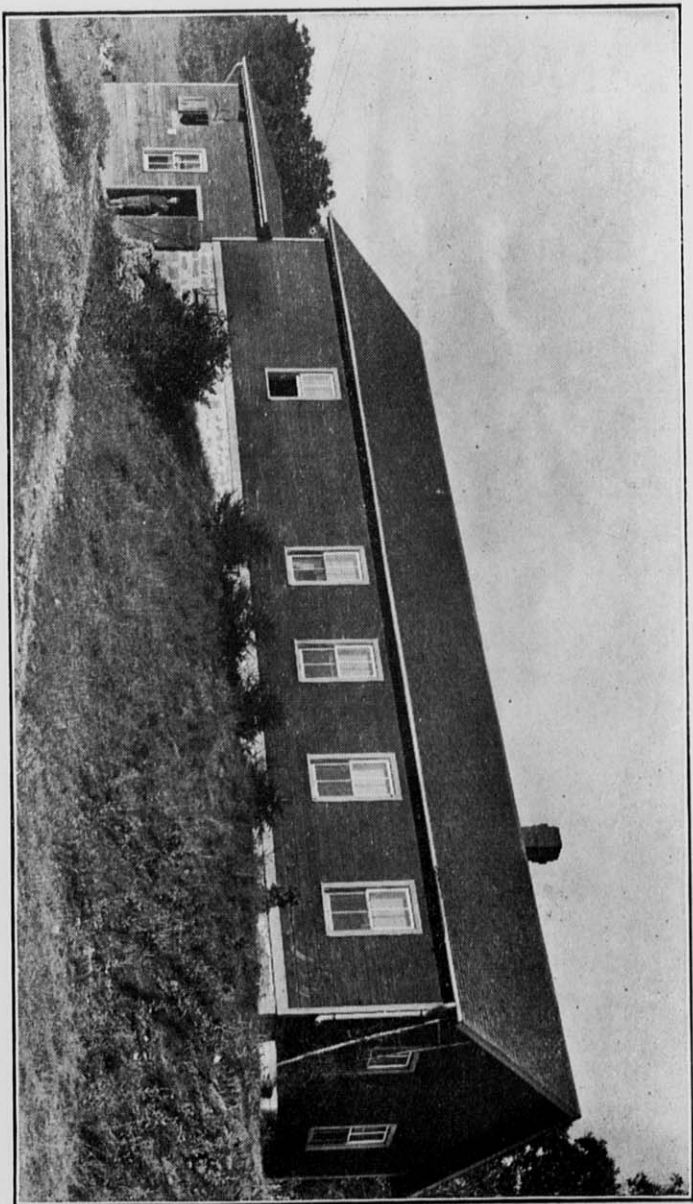
Above all no one should get the idea that alfalfa will produce its marvelous crops season after season without fertilizers. It is true that it gets thru its roots from the subsoil far below, a large portion of its substance and by its leaves from the air another large portion, but it is no exception to the rule that one cannot get something for nothing. The surface soil is also drawn upon, to support this plant of fast growth and yield, and this supply of plant food must be kept up or the yield will as surely

become less, and in the end fail, as other plants fail when starved.

As a means of clearing the land of many of the most persistent weeds Alfalfa is of great value, its dense strong growth shades the soil so completely that no other plant can live on the same ground. As a crop to be plowed under for fertilizing it is fully the equal of clover, its roots penetrate down three to five feet, and when decaying after being plowed under, cause the soil to be rich, mellow and fit to feed other crops. The best method of preparing the land, sowing the seed and gathering the crops, has been well given you by Mr. Waelti in his very able paper, he is one of the pioneers in alfalfa growing, and his success as a dairyman is well known to you all.

My way differs in no important way from his, I sow from April 15th. to June first, on fall plowed, or stubble land, alfalfa alone, or with a half or two thirds seeding of barley, oats or heavy crop of any grain makes too much shade. and spring plowing is apt to become dried out so the tender young roots wither from lack of moisture, when sowing with barley disc well first, then drag until there is a fine mellow surface, then sow 15 to 20 pounds of seed to the acre, harrow lightly once more.

No land should be worked when wet. Land on which water stands after rains will not produce alfalfa. Any of our limestone soils are good for alfalfa.



Railroad Valley Cheese factory, New Glarus, Wis.

