

On the Land

GENERAL.

It is now conservatively estimated that there are 1,000,000 horses engaged in the war.

An all-steel silo is being erected at the Moumahaki Experimental Farm.

A new variety of wheat from Italy being tested at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction gives evidence of great drought-resisting powers.

At the Ruakura Farm of Instruction a small area of chow moellier has stood the drought well and is nearly fit for cutting. Apart from this, lucerne is the only successful fodder crop this season. It has been used for soiling purposes for the past four months.

Hop-growing is developing in the Motueka district. Last year 1915 bales were exported, or 83 bushels more than in the previous year.

This season there have been supplied from the poultry section of the Ruakura Farm of Instruction 1255 dozen eggs for breeding purposes, an increase of 102 dozen on last season's record.

The progress of fruit-growing in the Motueka district—which for this purpose is taken to include the Moure country—is indicated by the following figures (says the *Journal of Agriculture*). Despatched over the Motueka wharf for the year ended December 31, 1914, 227,360 bushels, against 143,229 bushels for the previous year, an increase of 84,131 bushels in the twelve months.

Forty varieties of potatoes are being tested at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction this season. Among them are the following varieties from the State farm of Deloraine, Tasmania:—Excelsior, American Bruce, White City, Harman Circular, Rector (Scotch seedling), Mac (Scotch seedling), Celt (Scotch seedling), and Pict (Scotch seedling).

A fine tally was put up by three shearers a few days ago (says the correspondent of the *Fielding Star*) at Waituna West. With machines they shorn 740 lambs in 8 hours 34 minutes, which is a record for the district. The individual tallies were: C. Mayhew 256, D. R. Davies 229, and O. L. Davies 225.

There was a large yarding of stock at Addington last week, and a good attendance. Fat cattle were firm, store sheep showed practically no change, good forward lambs were in keen demand, fat lambs were rather easier, the quality showing a falling off, and store sheep were in good demand. Two-tooth wethers, to 16s 3d; fairly good four and six-tooth wethers, 15s 6d to 18s 6d; very forward four and six-tooth wethers, 19s to 21s; very forward lambs, 15s 6d to 16s 1d; forward lambs, 13s 9d to 15s; good four and eight-tooth ewes, to 16s 3d; aged ewes, 10s; fat lambs, extra prime heavy-weights, to 24s 4d; tegs, 20s 6d to 23s; average weights, 17s 6d to 20s; light and unfinished, 15s to 17s. Fat Cattle.—Ordinary steers, £7 17s 6d to £12 10s; extra steers, to £22 2s 6d; ordinary heifers, £6 to £10; extra heifers, to £11 17s 6d; cows, £5 5s to £8 10s; extra cows, to £17; price of beef per 100lb, 34s to 42s 6d; extra, to 45s. Pigs.—Choppers, 50s to 87s; light baconers, 50s to 57s 6d; heavy baconers, 60s to 67s 6d; extra heavy baconers, to 74s (price per lb, 5½d to 5½d); light porkers, 36s to 40s; heavy porkers, 42s to 48s 6d (price per lb, 5½d to 6d), best stores, 32s to 35s; medium stores, 22s to 30s; small stores, 14s to 20s; weaners, 3s 6d to 8s.

At Burnside last week there was a big yarding (237) of fat cattle. The sale was a bit slow at the beginning, but export buyers were operating steadily, and kept prices firm at previous rates. Quotations: Prime heavy bullocks, £16 to £19; medium, £12 15s to £14; light and unfinished, £8 10s to £11 10s; prime cows and heifers, £12 to £13 10s; medium, £9 to £10 10s; light and inferior, £5 15s to £8 10s. Fat Sheep.—3077 were yarded. The major portion of the yarding was made up of medium quality wethers and ewes. Freezing buyers were operating keenly, and secured a large number of sheep. This had a steadying effect on the market, and kept prices firm at a shade better than at the previous sale. Prime wethers, 25s to 26s 6d; extra, to 29s; medium to good wethers, 23s to 24s

6d; light, 19s 6d to 21s 6d; prime ewes, to 25s; extra, to 29s; medium to good, 20s to 22s 6d; light and inferior, 17s to 19s. Lambs.—The largest yarding of the season—2661 penned. Competition amongst the freezing buyers was very keen, and prices were, if anything, firmer than at last sale. Prime lambs, 21s to 24s 3d; medium, 18s 6d to 20s; light and inferior, 16s 6d to 17s 6d. There was only a medium yarding of pigs, prices being on a par with those ruling lately.

TREATMENT OF TEMPORARY PASTURE.

A temporary pasture is the only form of pasture which should be used on the light lands of New Zealand (says the *Journal of Agriculture*). Indeed, it will be found on arable land, in nine cases out of ten, that it will pay far better to sow a temporary pasture of from two to four years' lay, than to sow a permanent one. Many of the grasses selected for a permanent pasture are slow in maturing, some of the fine grasses taking three or four years, while in a temporary pasture fast growing grasses can form the basis of the mixture, bringing a quick return. The breaking-up of the land every few years for cropping and regrassing helps to sweeten the land, improves the drainage, and adds to the store of humus. Temporary grasses in rotation with crops necessitate the addition and use of artificial manures; the land is kept in good heart, and the pastures give a maximum yield; thus temporary pastures are the backbone of the small farmer, especially the milk producer.

As with a permanent pasture, the preparation of the land is of the greatest importance. The land must be properly drained and sweet, worked to a fine tilth, and rolled so that the seed-bed is firm. The selection of the seed depends on the length of the lay in addition to the climatic influences. Early maturing varieties should be selected as well as clovers. The chief object is to quickly produce heavy crops. The pastures require the use of the brush harrows to spread the manure. They should be rolled in the spring and carefully stocked, care being taken not to allow the grass to run to seed. Neither should they be overstocked, otherwise the grass will be pulled out by the roots or trodden out.

MANURING PASTURES.

There is one phase of pastures manuring worthy of special note, namely, the beneficial influence which fertilisers exercise on the composition and value of the grass or fodder. In trials it has been found that grass hay grown on manured land contained 8.75 per cent. albuminoids, while that grown on unmanured contained 6.45 per cent. This is an increase of over 30 per cent. of the total albuminoid content of the crop, due to the use of manure. The fodder grown upon the manured land contained not only the maximum amount of albuminoid, but also showed a tendency to contain the minimum amount of fibre. Test experiments have shown that fodder which contains the least fibre is the most digestible; hence the gain in digestible albuminoid resulting from the use of manure is greater. The larger amount of plant food in the manured soil places at the disposal of the grass or fodder a larger amount of building material in the form of the essential elements, and as a result a crop of higher feeding value is secured. If the soil fails to contain the requisite amount of nourishment the results are inferior both in quantity and quality.

In feeding for milk, and beef production as well, the largest returns at minimum cost are secured from using the most valuable and nutritious fodder. The quality of the fodder is the deciding factor in determining economy of production. Increasing the fertility of soil through the use of manure results not only in larger yields, but also in better quality of crops. There is much loss of liquid manure from stock when fed in the sheds, and this valuable fertiliser is allowed to run to waste down drains and into ditches. It has been calculated that 1000 gallons of liquid manure, if applied to grass land, would have the same beneficial effect as would be obtained from the application of 2cwt. of the best Peruvian guano.

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