

FARM ANIMALS

EXTRA FEED FATTENS CATTLE

Cottonseed Cake as Supplement to Summer Pasture Increases Materially Rate of Gains.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

Feeding cottonseed cake to steers as a supplement to summer pasture increases materially the rate of gains made by the animals, causes them to finish more quickly and take on a higher degree of finish, and increases the margin between the buying and selling prices, specialists of the United States department of agriculture say in Bulletin 777, just published by the department. The bulletin is a report of experiments in fattening steers on summer pasture conducted co-operatively by the department and the Alabama experiment station in 1912 and 1913, and the Mississippi experiment station in 1915 and 1916.

All the experiments were carried out under actual and typical farm conditions. Consequently the results may be applied directly in many regions to the management and feeding of cattle on pasture. In each experiment, groups of steers were kept on pasture alone; on pasture with a supplementary feed of one-half corn chop and one-half cottonseed cake; and on pasture with a supplementary feed of cottonseed cake. The average daily gains for each animal, which may be considered the most valuable standard in judging the efficiency of rations, were 1.49 pounds for the steers getting pasture only; 1.88 pounds for the steers getting cottonseed cake with pasture; and 1.53 pounds for those on pasture supplemented by the mixture of cake and corn chop.

The initial cost of the steers per 100 pounds of the three groups was the same for any one year, but in each case the steers on pasture alone sold for a lower price. The margins between the buying and selling prices of the cattle were always in favor of those which were fed supplements with their pastures. The margins averaged less than 25 cents a hundred pounds for the steers on pasture alone, compared to 90 cents for animals which were fed cottonseed cake with pasture, and 81½ cents for the animals whose pasture was supplemented with the mixture of cake and corn chop. After the animals had been



Steers Receiving Supplementary Cottonseed Cake on Pasture Gained 1.53 Pounds Apiece Daily.

butchered inspection showed that the steers which were fed cottonseed cake or a mixture of cake and corn with pasture dressed out higher than the cattle which had pasture alone.

While the steers that had pasture alone made gains cheaply, the total gains were not large, and the steers did not take on a high finish. Their unfinished condition is reflected in the small margin on which they were sold and low dressing percentages. Thus the profits they returned were smaller than for the steers in the other two groups.

The cost of gains of steers on pasture is greatly increased by feeding cottonseed cake, it was found, but the better market price received for cake-fed cattle usually pays for the additional cost of feeding cake, and returns a greater average profit than is realized on the grass-fed cattle. One of the distinct advantages of supplementing pastures for concentrates is the fact that steers so handled can be finished more quickly and can be marketed earlier than steers getting grass alone. Thus the cattle can be sold before the rush of grass-fed cattle glut the market and depresses prices. Moreover, when cattle are marketed early, the pastures have time to recuperate and furnish good grazing for other stock during the fall.

There is only one case, says the bulletin, when pasture alone is preferable to pastures with concentrates. Steers of inferior quality may return more profit by grazing alone than by grazing with the addition of supplementary feeds, especially when they are on good pastures that are cheap. Scrub steers do not respond readily to the use of good feeds, and even when well finished do not command satisfactory prices in competition with well-bred cattle similarly finished. The better the quality of the steers, the safer it is to give them high-priced feeds.

Sheep Need Much Water.

An impression prevails that sheep can get along without water for long periods, but this is wrong. The sheep is as reliant on a drink. They should have access to plenty of fresh, clean water.

URBANITES ARE BIG BEEF EATERS

That the farmers are the chief pork and poultry consumers, when a comparison is made on a per capita basis, while the city dwellers eat a greater proportion of beef, veal and mutton is shown by the estimates of the per capita consumption of each kind of meat and poultry by the urban and rural population. This is the first adequate information concerning the meat consumption of various sections of the country and of the city and country population that has ever been obtained.

The total meat consumption per capita is 9 per cent greater in the country than in the city. Beef consumption is nearly two-thirds greater in the city than in the country.

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KEEP DRY MASH BEFORE FOWLS AT ALL TIMES

In addition to grain and green feeds, dry mash should be kept before growing chicks at all times after they are 3 or 4 weeks old. It is best

to feed it in a hopper inside the building or where it will not be exposed to rain or wet. If a large number of chicks are raised, the mash may be fed in an outdoor hopper. The following mixture makes a good dry mash: Two pounds cornmeal, 2 pounds middlings, 1 pound oatmeal, 2 pounds wheat bran, 1 pound beef scrap, and one-fourth pound charcoal.

When a larger quantity is desired it should be mixed in the same proportion.

Also grit and oyster shell should be provided, so that the chicks may help themselves whenever they wish.

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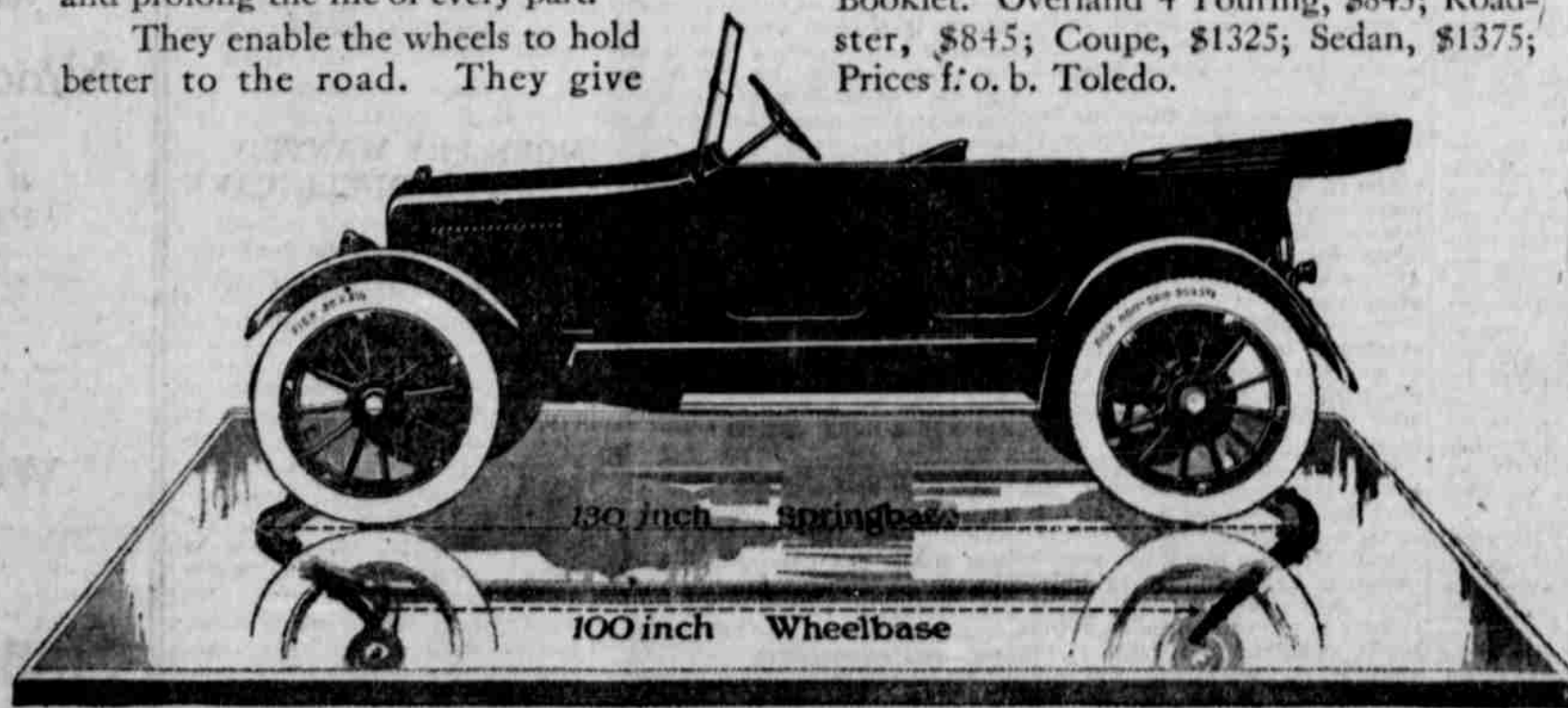
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