

AROUND THE FARM BY W. G. NIBLER
County Extension Agent

More tons of hay in the barn or ensilage in the silos does not always mean more feeding value. If those extra tons come from letting the crop get more mature it may actually mean less feeding value per acre.

How can that be? Let us consider the way animals get food value from hay or silage.

The natural feed for cattle and sheep is roughage—hay, silage or pasture. Their digestive system with its multiple stomach is particularly well adapted to digesting the cellulose in roughage. Hogs and chickens, on the other hand, have a single stomach incapable of digesting cellulose and these animals must rely heavily upon concentrates such as grains for their food supply.

One of the important food values of hay, silage, or pasture is the cellulose in the plant tissues. Cotton is almost 100 per cent cellulose and cattle or sheep with multiple stomachs can di-

gest almost 90 per cent of the food value in cotton. Hogs or chickens can not digest any food value from cotton, however.

Now, here is the catch to letting your hay, silage, or pasture become too mature. As the grass grain, or legume gets nearer to seed bearing it adds lignin to the cellulose in the stems. This lignin strengthens the stem and makes it rigid for flowering and seed bearing. Lignin, however, is indigestible even for ruminants like cattle and sheep. In fact the lignin reduces the digestibility of the cellulose.

Actually this explanation is just a detailed way of explaining why cattle will do well on grass or grain hay that is cut when the plants are just coming into head while grain or grass straw is poor livestock feed.

In the past few years we have run into several cases where grass silage was made from grass that had fairly mature seed heads. This silage preserved well and had a good color. It seemed good when being fed. But the cattle receiving this silage did not do well. They ate good quantities because the feed was palatable but they could not get sufficient feed value from this silage to make satisfactory gains.

This doesn't mean that hay, silage, and pasture should always be harvested as tender young shoots but earlier harvest before seeds set—before lignin is formed in large quantities—is going to result in better quality feed.

It is not the most tons per acre to put in the barn or silo that we want—it is the most milk per acre of crops harvested.

Food Preservation Topic Planned Next Monday

Mrs. Vivian Freeman, home economist for the Kerr glass manufacturing company, will speak at a food preservation meeting on Monday, March 31, at the First Methodist church, St. Helens, at 1:00 p.m.

Although this is being planned mainly as a leader training meeting for 4-H food preservation club leaders, anyone is welcome to attend.

Mrs. Freeman will discuss the preparation of fruits, vegetables and meats, for canning and freezing, use of the pressure canner and water bath, and other information dealing with canning and freezing.

Miss Frances Gallatin, extension agent in home economics, will speak on the part of the food preservation project in 4-H club work.

Chair Covering Learned



MRS. PAUL DOUGLAS, a member of the Columbia county home extension committee, is shown in her living room preparing to re-cover one of her chairs.

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Douglas moved to St. Helens in February, 1941, from Sabatha, Kansas. In January, 1946, they moved to their present home on the Robnett's Road in the Yankton community, according to Frances L. Gallatin, home agent.

"In the fall of 1948, I was invited to attend a home extension unit meeting at the Yankton grange hall," said Mrs. Douglas. "Only a few members attended the meeting as it was a very stormy day, but I really became interested in what I could learn at unit meetings to help me become a better homemaker."

Mrs. Douglas has been project leader for her unit for one or more projects each year. She took special interest in the reupholstery workshop in 1949, serving as one of the Yankton unit project leaders. She is shown above preparing to re-cover a chair which she previously reupholstered. Much of the home extension program is carried on by capable project leaders like Mrs. Douglas, after they have received training from OSC extension specialists and the home agent. Project leaders as well as other unit members, continue to use the information and techniques learned, over a period of years.

Since the fall of 1949, Mrs. Douglas has served as chairman of the Yankton unit. During this time, the attendance at unit meetings has increased from an average of 12 to a present average of 25 to 30. The increase in interest and attendance is largely due to Mrs. Douglas' leadership and enthusiasm. Through her efforts, the Yankton unit has developed a satisfactory method of caring for pre-school children during unit meetings which has proved beneficial to mothers and children alike.

Mrs. Douglas is now president of the Yankton P.T.A., treasurer of the Columbia county P.T.A. council and an active member of the Yankton grange. In 1951, she was appointed a member of the county home extension committee and was installed at the Homemakers Festival in Rainier. The seven members of the county home extension committee act in an advisory capacity to the home extension agent. At present, Mrs. Douglas is chairman of the Columbia County World Citizenship committee and chairman of the committee for planning and arranging the extension unit exhibit at the 1952 Columbia county fair.

Like the other county committee members and project leaders, Mrs. Douglas gives her time without compensation. "My home and family life have been made much more enjoyable by my work in extension," Mrs. Douglas observed; "Since reupholstering

several chairs, my living room is more comfortable. After the lessons in window treatment and furniture arrangement, I hung curtains and draperies and rearranged furniture, which made my home more liveable and attractive. I have met and made many new friends through home extension activities. Knowing and working with these lovely women has given me a new and happier life."

Silo Erected



HOMEMADE wood stave silo in process of erection at the Boone Johnson farm, Birkenfeld. M. G. Huber, agricultural engineer from OSC, is on top of the ladder fixing staves to the top hoop. Pictured also shows a silo stave being raised to position.

Silos Erected On County Farms

Home made wood stave silos constructed according to plans prepared by Oregon State college are now in use on several Columbia county farms.

First to tackle this job in Columbia county was J. A. Mitchell of Warren. Three years ago he constructed his first silo with the assistance of W. G. Nibler, county extension agent, and M. G. Huber, agricultural engineer from O.S.C. Mitchell now has two 12x30 ft. silos constructed by this method. Approximate cost of each was \$600 including the concrete base. These two silos are used to store grain and silage and pea vines for dairy cattle feeding.

Two years ago Boone Johnson, Birkenfeld, put two of these silos to store grass silage for

Trees Planted By Mist Club

The Mist 4-H Forestry club held its regular semi-monthly meeting at the home of Virginia Johnson on Saturday afternoon, March 15. As the weather was favorable the club spent most of the afternoon planting trees on some cut over land at Virginia's home.

Last spring Vern Kohstrand, Warren, put up one of these silos to store pea vines and grass silage for dairy cattle feeding.

This silo uses the conventional 2x6 tongue and grooved stave common to all wood stave silos. The main advantage to the silo is the construction method.

It is designed so that it can be erected without the use of staging. Once the materials are assembled this silo can be erected in two days by a three man crew.

Erecting this silo does require the farmer to purchase and assemble the wood and hardware for its construction. This does take some time. On the other hand no commercial concerns are today offering a complete set of materials for construction of wood silos.

Interest in silos has increased with the increased use of grass silage as a method of storing roughage for cattle feeding. Several dairy herds in Columbia county were fed grass silage as the only source of roughage this last winter. In many herds cows are getting a large portion of their roughage from silage.

Members planted several hundred Douglas Fir and Cascade trees under the direction of their leader, Robert Mathews. After tree planting they went to the house and saw a moving picture and were then served some much enjoyed refreshments by Mrs. Johnson.

The next meeting will be at Margaret Coleman's home on March 23. Good weather is hoped for at that time so tree planting can be finished and so they can get out into the woods to begin tree identification studies.

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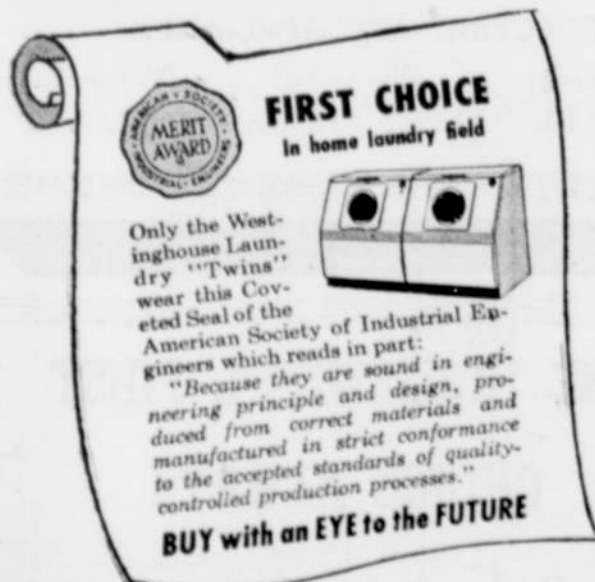
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