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16

THE SHORT COURSE AND THE FARMER

Preserving Fertility In His Soil Is One Of the Lessons He Learns At His Agricultural College.

H. J. PATTERSON,
Maryland Agricultural College.

With the beginning of the annual winter short courses in improved farming methods at the Agricultural College the farmer who has not hitherto attended them is inclined to question what benefit is to be secured from them. Perhaps no more striking lesson is taught than the preserving of fertility in the soil, which is beyond doubt the foundation of all successful farming. Particularly is this true in the matter of properly handling the manure made on the farm.

How Manure Is Wasted.

Even though manure is regarded highly by farmers in all sections of the State, there is, nevertheless, no product of equal value which is so much neglected and poorly cared for. It has been found as a result of experiments that fresh manure during decay will lose from 20 to 70 per cent. of its weight. In losing weight, manure also loses in fertilizing value, sources of such loss being due to the incomplete absorption of the liquid manure, which, by the way, is richer both in nitrogen and potash than the dung; to leaching, as when manure is piled against the side of the stable or in a yard where rains wash out much of the nitrogen and potash, which is seen in the dark brown liquid oozing from the pile; and to heating and fermenting while in the pile which breaks down the organic matter, causes loss of humus, and the giving off of ammonia, compounds, containing the most valuable element in manure, the nitrogen.

How To Handle Manure.

Steps to be taken in preventing such osses are to provide sufficient bedding litter in the stable to absorb all the uid manure; to check fermantation nixing the cooler cow manure with e manure; to make piles compact to exclude air and lower the temre; to use chemical absorbents plaster, kainit, phosphate rock, inkled over the manure in the us preserving it and preventto prevent loss from leaching he manure under a roof or hauling it directly to the reading it as fast as it is

ractice is without ques-economical, both in the and in preserving the ties of the manure. spread as soon as it eld. The practice of is objectionable behat is likely to ocit in piles also reor. The manner nd on the equipt where the dist and it is deanure evenly r will prove

rm manure many that portunity er short tilizers, of su grow-ation the oil ich sh

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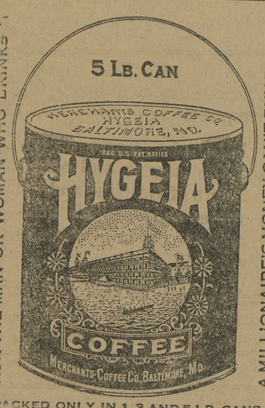

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