

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Agricultural Experiment Station

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GREEN FEED FOR SUMMER DROUGHT.

The dairy interests of the state suffer annually from lack of proper green feed for cows during the dry hot weather of midsummer when pastures are necessarily short. This shortage of feed comes at a very importune time since the cows are already beginning to feel the effect of the heat and flies which of themselves quite perceptibly lessen the flow of milk and if the feed is cut short at the same time the shrinkage is certain to be large. The flow diminishing at this time of year is a great loss because it is practically impossible to restore the shrinkage during that period of lactation. A continuous supply of feed is equally essential to the successful maintenance of young and growing animals, and this is the season for considering this feed question in connection with plans for the summer's work.

A pasture will carry much more stock during spring, early summer, and fall than it will in the dry weather of midsummer. By helping it out during this season with partial soiling, the cattle have better feed and more stock can be carried on a given area than by pasturing alone. Feed may be supplied in two ways, either by growing some crop that can be pastured off by turning on the cows a short time each day or by cutting the crop and hauling to the cows in the stable, yard, or pasture. The former method is the more economical of labor but there is greater waste of feed and it requires either a small field or some temporary fencing.

CROPS FOR PARTIAL SOILING DURING MIDSUMMER.

Kinds of fodder.	Amount of seed per acre.	Approximate time of seeding.	Approximate time of feeding.
1. Corn—early, sweet or dent...	6 quarts	May 1	July 1—Aug. 1
2. Corn—medium dent.....	5 quarts	May 15	Aug. 1—Sept. 30
3. Cow peas.....	1 bushel	May 15	Aug. 1—Sept. 30
4. Soja beans.....	1 bushel	May 15	Aug. 1—Sept. 15
5. Oats and Canada peas, (each)..	1 bushel	April 15	July 1—July 15
6. Oats and Canada peas, (each)..	1 bushel	May 1	July 15—Aug. 1
7. Rape (Dwarf Essex).....	4 pounds	May 1	July 1—Aug. 1
8. Rape, second sowing.....	4 pounds	June 1	Aug. 1—Sept. 1
9. Rape, third sowing.....	4 pounds	July 1	Sept. 1—Oct. 1

Such crops should be planted as will mature in proper succession with each in its best stage of growth insuring a continuous supply of green feed during the dry season.

For central and northern Illinois there is no crop that will produce more feed to the acre than corn, and by planting a small quantity of an early variety together with the general crop, corn may be had in the proper condition for feeding from July 15 until frost. There are several early varieties that will mature for feeding in from sixty to seventy-five days after planting. Corn should not be fed too young. When it is nearly full height it contains only one-third as much nutriment as when in the roasting ear.

Some other crop should be fed in connection with corn to balance the ration and afford variety. Leguminous crops as clover, Canada peas, cow peas, soja beans, etc., are especially valuable for this purpose, being unusually rich in nitrogenous ingredients which are so essential to dairy cows.

Cow peas and soja beans give a large amount of valuable forage, furnishing feed from the first of August until frost. If more feed has been grown than can be fed green, it may be made into hay of excellent quality.

Oats and Canada peas yield well. They are not in condition to feed for more than two or three weeks but the supply may be lengthened by sowing at different dates. If a portion becomes too ripe it may be utilized by making into hay.

Rape is also an excellent feed; it grows quickly, gives a good yield of relishable fodder, remains green for a considerable length of time, and will produce a good second crop, either when cut or pastured off. Green feed may be had all summer by sowing at intervals of two or three weeks. Care must be exercised to prevent its spoiling after being cut lest it taint the milk. It is also one of the best feeds to pasture off on account of its quick growth after being eaten down. Cows should be accustomed to it gradually, as there is some danger of bloat.

If the pastures are short and no allowance has been made for green feed, cut corn from the regular crop if it is near the roasting ear stage, as it will bring the best of returns. Never under any consideration allow the stock to go hungry and suffer the losses incident to shortened feed at the time which is for every reason the most trying season to live stock.

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