

## SILAGE.

### ITS VALUE BEING APPRECIATED.

W. DIBBLE.

SILAGE has conclusively proved its value in the ration of the dairy cow, and there are not wanting evidences that it will yet come to be regarded as of equal value for all classes of farm stock. In some countries where more intensive feeding of dairy herds is in vogue than is the case in New Zealand silage is coming to be looked upon as the staple fodder, and this not only for winter feeding, but in the summer months. Made from the proper materials it is a complete milk-producing ration, possessing that succulence and bulk demanded by the deep-milking dairy cow. While this is so in other countries it is surely reasonable to suppose that silage will prove equally valuable in New Zealand, especially in view of the increasing need of making better use of our lands. Practical experience in both the North and the South Islands has proved that silage is all that its advocates claim for it. In addition to providing an ideal milk-forming food, it is an effective insurance against adverse conditions, and thereby eliminates from dairy-farming that great element of uncertainty in a country where stall feeding is not practised and where dairy cattle are quite subject to a variable climate, unexpectedly harsh in some winters and too often of a droughty nature in the latter part of the summer—in other words, a climate of occasional extremes, even if the extremes are not so intense as in some less-favoured lands. With these unexpected unfavourable conditions silage is an unexcelled fodder, for if not required at any particular time of the year it can be kept for the period when pastures fail and other food is scarce. Even the contention that it is more costly to secure than special green crops loses its force when the great advantage of silage in being always there waiting for an emergency is considered. However, I contend that the cost of preparation is too often exaggerated. True, under some circumstances it is expensive, but means can generally be found to minimize the cost, especially where the spirit of co-operation prevails in a community and where labour-saving devices are properly utilized.

During the past season I witnessed a demonstration of ensilage-making, where the cost was certainly not more than in haymaking,