

Sooner or later the poorer pastures on the farm must be renovated. What is the best way to go about it? This article discusses the various methods available, and particularly deals with the

RENOVATING FARM PASTURES

question of ploughing and cultivation versus surface sowing. It is emphasised, however, that no matter which method is adopted, the ultimate result will depend largely on the topdressing practice and subsequent management.

EVERY farmer is at some time confronted with the problem of how best he can renovate his poorer pastures. Almost inevitably the time must arrive when he is called on to decide whether to make a clean sweep and a fresh start with the plough, whether to rely on a programme of surface sowing combined with topdressing, or whether the object might possibly be economically achieved by generous topdressing alone.

Although, in the extreme case of a pasture which is very poor or one which is moderately good, the answer

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is obvious, the problem is frequently very complex, and only too often the correct answer is found too late at the price of costly experience.

Importance Of Clovers

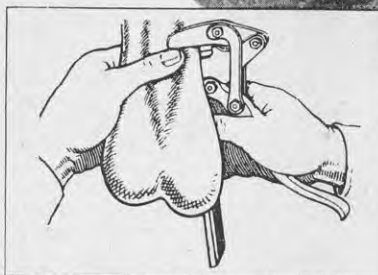
Considering the last-mentioned method first, experience goes to show that it is indeed difficult to over-estimate the cumulative effect of a sustained programme of efficient topdressing. While this is undoubtedly true, it must also be admitted that heavy topdressing is expensive, and that if insufficient of the better clovers are already present in the sward, the cost may well be altogether disproportionate to the results obtained.

Wherever really spectacular results have followed topdressing, a detailed study would almost invariably have shown that, although very minute and inconspicuous, nuclei of clover plants already existed in the sward before the topdressing. Even though only

one starving, pin-head-sized white clover plant per square yard can be found after diligent search, this, considering the rapid spreading powers of its runners and seeds, can, under conditions of improved fertility, quickly produce a complete ground cover.

Clovers Not Always Present

It may be argued that nowadays such nuclei will invariably be found in any pasture, no matter how poor. It should be pointed out, however, that clover is not always present. In poor



You Can't Reasonably Continue Using the Knife to Your Disadvantage!

Striking results are quoted in the Scottish Journal of Agriculture of an experiment with the two methods of castrating lambs—the knife and the bloodless castrator.

Ten pairs of twin half-bred male lambs were taken from a flock of Cheviot ewes. One twin was castrated with the castrator, the other with the knife. The live weight gain between castration and weaning was recorded for each lamb, and the gain made by one lamb castrated with the castrator compared with that of its brother castrated with the knife.

IN EVERY CASE, THE BLOODLESSLY CASTRATED LAMB MADE MORE RAPID GAINS, THE AVERAGE INCREASE BEING 59 lb., AS AGAINST AN AVERAGE OF 53 lb. FOR THOSE CUT WITH THE KNIFE, AN ADVANTAGE OF 6 lb. PER HEAD.

Seven single lambs castrated with the castrator averaged 64 lb. increase between castration and weaning, compared with an average of 58 lb. for seven cut with the knife, again an advantage of 6 lb. per head. In addition to yielding a heavier lamb, the bloodless castrator gave a bigger lamb with bolder head and stronger bone, and in better condition.



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