A Method of Silage Stacking

By B. A. J. SMITH,

Fields Instructor, Department of Agriculture, Palmerston North

RECENT surveys have shown that wastage on the sides of silage stacks varies considerably with the different shapes of stacks. In a trench the depth of wastage on the sides is as little as 2in., but in a normal stack the depth may be as great as 11½in. to 12in. On many farms topography does not allow the use of trenches, so stacks must be used. The greater depth of wastage on stack sides is due largely to the lack of consolidation on the edges. If trampling can be done to the edge, the amount of waste is appreciably reduced, and this article describes a method of stacking which will achieve this.

A FARMER in the Makerua (Manawatu) district has overcome his wastage problem very successfully and at the same time made his method of stacking easier. Since his tractor is equipped with a fore-end loader, he prefers to build stacks rather than wedges.

The stack is consolidated right to the edge, with no fear of the edge falling away, and wastage at the sides is appreciably reduced.

The fence has been raised for the first time and filling continues.

Before the stack is begun a circular fence is erected enclosing the stack site. Generally the fence encloses an area with a diameter of 18ft. The fence is built of ordinary pig netting erected around eight or nine iron standards spaced regularly. The standards are placed inside the netting, but not attached to it.

Sawn wooden fencing battens are then nailed at 6in. intervals, also around the **inside** of the netting.

Green material is then placed inside the fenced area with the fore-end loader, spread out, and tramped well around the edges. When the level of green material reaches the top of the fence the whole fence is raised about 2ft. and the filling process continues. Lifting the fence is fairly easy, as the battens hold the netting away from the stacked grass, and the whole fence is guided up by the iron standards. If there is any difficulty in raising it, the fore-end loader assists.

By this method the material can be trampled right to the edge and good consolidation is obtained. Stacking is easier and not so much care is needed to maintain straight sides. Wastage has been reduced to 3in., most of which is due probably to the effect of air on the outside material.