



Silage making has the twofold advantage of adding to the store of stock food for use in periods when succulent feed is short and of being a profitable method of preventing the development of rank growth.

grass, temporary pasture, autumn-saved pasture, and the cereals, oats, barley, ryecorn, and wheat or combinations of these.

The most valuable of these is undoubtedly a young pasture well balanced in short-rotation or Italian ryegrass and clovers. The production of these pastures sown on well prepared land after a summer fallow is high and the type of feed is ideal for ewes in late pregnancy. On farms where short-rotation and Italian ryegrass are not favoured because of fear of contamination of perennial ryegrass seed crops, a young stand of perennial

ryegrass with suitable clovers will fill a very useful place.

However, if green feed is to be sown late in the season or when soil or moisture conditions are unfavourable, any of these pasture mixtures may give disappointing results, whereas a green feed cereal will thrive.

Algerian oats are the most common choice, though Duns are hardier and do well over a wide range of soil types. Both varieties make excellent recovery after grazing and can be fed again and again. Of the white oats Russets makes considerably better

recovery than varieties such as Abundance.

Cape barley is widely grown for green feed, though Black Skinless establishes more quickly and is ready for grazing before any of the other cereals. Wong barley has given satisfactory results when grown under ideal conditions, but otherwise its winter production is low. Its most important feature is its power of recovery after grazing.

Ryecorn is the most hardy of the green feed cereals, but unless soil fertility is reasonably high its early winter production is low. There are numerous strains of ryecorn with varying performances but the certified strain (C.R.D.) will generally give superior results.

Experimental data are not yet available, but it appears that Arawa wheat is capable of filling an important place as a green feed, especially for use in July, August, and September.

Any of the winter forage crops may be sown with short-rotation ryegrass or Italian ryegrass. This gives better fodder and a longer productive season.

White-fleshed turnips, kale, chou moellier, and sweet lupins, with or without grass, are sometimes used to supplement pasture and lucerne for lamb fattening, but rape is the most popular of the fattening crops.

Rotation

The place of forage crops in the rotation will vary with conditions. There is little doubt that the wheat acreage will increase again next season, but stock numbers should also show a gradual increase. This will demand full utilisation of all grass growth and a larger area in supplementary feed crops. Winter-sown wheat will sometimes provide an early bite for ewes in spring. Where oil fertility is high and in seasons when

Report of Irrigation Committee 1959

THE report of the Parliamentary Select Committee on Irrigation which was recently laid before the House of Representatives will be of considerable interest to farmers in the low-rainfall areas of Canterbury and Otago.

It draws attention to the slow rate of development of irrigable land by private owners in Canterbury. In an assessment of the contribution which irrigation can make toward increasing primary production and closer settlement the report points out that irrigation of our dry soils will enable farming on them to become more diversified.

Of the recommendations made by the Committee possibly the most significant is the proposal that if 60 per cent of the land holders in a proposed irrigation area vote in favour of a scheme, they can bind the remainder of the farmers in the area to an irrigation charge being registered against their land titles. This irrigation charge provides for payment of interest at ruling rates on one quarter of the estimated cost of the

scheme, plus operating and maintenance costs and depreciation and renewal charges.

At present the vote of those holding 75 per cent of the area decides whether a scheme is to proceed. The proposed amendment would give each land holder one vote regardless of the area of his farm.

Other recommendations include:

- A vigorous land policy should be expanded by Government purchase, development, and resettlement of land on irrigation areas and also in areas suitable for irrigation.
- The present demonstration and education programme aimed at proving the optimum water requirements for various soil types should be continued and expanded.
- A comprehensive Water Act should be introduced at an early date so that the taking of water for all purposes may be controlled and allocated in the best interests of all sections of the community.

The report is available from the Government Printer, at 1s. 6d. a copy.