

DIVERSITY OF FARMING IN FLORIDA—GENERAL FARMERS NEEDED

Both in central and southern Florida there exists too great a tendency for new settlers to turn their attention solely to the raising of vegetables or to citrus culture. Sometimes there are inquiries as to the possibilities of both on the same tract of land, but as a rule the inquirer's question is confined to one or the other.

The responsibility for this lays mainly with the land companies and their agents, and the railroad companies. They do the greatest amount of advertising and while this is perfectly sound and is helping the upbuilding of the state to an enormous degree, it is a pity they do not extend their horizon a little further.

Take up at hazard any of the folders or other descriptive literature so widely distributed and you will invariably find the greatest emphasis is laid on the fact that this or that tract is good for citrus fruit or this and that tract is adaptable to trucking. This is all right so far as it goes, but does not go far enough.

There is no blame to be attached to these companies or their selling agents—it is only they do not tell enough about the broader field of agricultural opportunities which exist in Florida in addition to the citrus and trucking industries. This narrows the point of view and range of possible action on the part of the newcomer or would-be settler, as it is, of course, for these the advertising is mainly intended and written.

If we all, pulling together, open up and tell those seeking information about Florida what opportunities exist in diversified farming, I verily believe we will in an immeasurably short time more than double the tide of immigration into this state, and encourage a class of settlers who will have greater confidence in their first endeavors amidst their new surroundings.

They will feel that even from the very start, notwithstanding the changed conditions of climate and so forth, they can carry on certain practices in farming to which they have been accustomed. Tell them more about forage crops, the raising and fattening of livestock. Tell them the opportunities existing in poultry. Tell them about hogs and how easily they can be fed on even a small area. Tell them of the saving prospects and how cows can be fed and pastured off the fields for the whole twelve months of the year. Tell them of sugar cane and syrup making. Tell them of other fruits besides oranges and grapefruit. Tell them of home canning possibilities and vegetable and fruit growing for that purpose. But tell them the truth, and tell it all—the whole truth, not half truisms.

A few of the colonist companies have commenced to do this and are making good, as evidenced by their increasing number of settlers and by the increased contentment and prosperity of those settlers. They are demonstrating the truth of what they claim for Florida.

Diversified farming, it stands to reason, must be carried out on a somewhat larger scale than 10 acres, while this acreage is more than enough to gain a substantial livelihood in Florida; the scope for carrying such must of necessity be somewhat restricted, and this I endeavored to explain in last week's notes. The question is to determine the unit of size for an average farm in Florida best adapted to diversified farming.

To my mind the ideal farm is one of 40 acres. It is easy of management, especially in a country where hired labor is high priced. A perfect rotation of crops can be maintained so



Rhodes Grass, the Growing of Which Will Make Fortunes.
Photo Taken Early April.

Red Clover.

Growing Celery in Florida Has Produced Untold Wealth.
Photo Taken Early in April.

that not only can they be grown for marketing, but also for home requirements in the feeding of livestock. The equipment necessary for such a farm is not excessive nor costly. Our northern friends will understand better the capabilities of a 40-acre farm in Florida when I state that it is more than equivalent to 160 or 200-acre farm in their section, with the added advantage that the cost of maintenance and

equipment is considerably less and the profits per acre proportionately higher. On such a farm in Florida it is easy to keep six cows or even more, hogs, poultry and mules or horses for the purposes of the farm and not go outside the boundary lines for the keep of any except perhaps a little grain. Added to this can be the grove, say 10 acres, which, as explained before, is the endowment policy of the farmer,

a home orchard where many fruits can be grown not only for home use, but also on a small but paying scale, for market, and the raising of marketable crops practically the year round.

The first step towards success is to start right, and the right way to start a farm of this nature is to plan and lay it out right. Where diversified farming is practiced it is essential that the farm be subdivided into fields, and that these fields be fenced off from each other and yet be intercommunicating and again of easy outside access so as to avoid the necessity of having to cross one field in order to reach another.

A little thought will show the reason for this. It would never do, for instance, to have to cross a field of sweet potatoes with a herd of pigs so as to get them into a field of peanuts grown specially for them. The sweet potatoes wouldn't be worth much by the time the hogs had crossed that patch. Then again, subdivisions fenced off are necessary when rotation of crops is practiced, for on many occasions each field in its turn will be growing pasturage for the livestock, which must necessarily not only be fenced in but fenced out from other crops.

We can here only assume a plan and work to it, giving but a general idea of the layout of a farm. In Florida in general a 40-acre farm would be subdivided rectangularly, for there are very few sections in which the land is not sufficiently level, even the undulating, where it would be necessary to follow the contour of the hills in laying out the fields.

I'M FIRED AGAIN

How often, oh, how often comes this expression, and so frequently from the one of immatured years, on account of which some indiscretion on his part had been performed. Possibly out late the night before, looking at the bright lights which the city environments afford. Late to the office or factory the next morning. He meets the "Boss" when trying to slip in, who looks him squarely in the eye, puts his hand on his shoulder and whispers in his ear: "You are not suited for the work you are doing—you better hunt for another job."

How different on the farm, where the clear, sunny skies and Nature's own rare scenes are conducive to good living and good health, where the work is not more difficult than in the office or factory, and where the toiler has independence every day in the year. The most vital question that confronts every father today is: "What shall I make of my sons; what advice shall I give them in order to start them right? Shall it be along the line of a profession, a trade or an agricultural pursuit."

A few years ago, our engineering departments in all of our colleges were overcrowded; engineering courses seemed to be the one most sought by most students; at the same time, our agricultural departments in these various colleges had very few students, but today we find the reverse condition exists. The engineering departments in the various colleges are not at all overcrowded while the agricultural departments are very much overcrowded, and all this not only because men are realizing the great possibilities in agricultural pursuits, but because of the opportunities furnished those who follow that line to live the life that tends towards health and happiness.

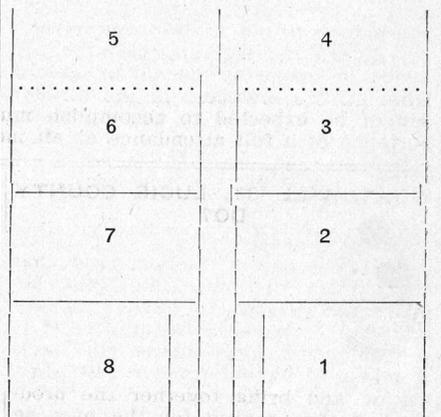
Agriculture today is vastly different from what it was a few years ago. The hayseed farmer has passed, for today it is the gentleman farmer—the man who has made a keen study of the soils, its treatment and its possibilities, the man who has found the way to make the golden grain harvest abundantly and the blossoms to form perfect fruit.

Few of us realize that twenty-five years ago 65 per cent of the people of the United States lived on farms and 35 per cent resided in the cities, while today just the reverse is the condition, for statistics show us that 65 per cent of the population lives in the cities and have to be fed by the 35 per cent who live on the farm, and possibly few of us realize that this reverse condition of twenty-five years ago is what has made the much-talked-of high cost of living today, and again possibly too few of us realize the magnitude of feeding this ever-increasing population of this most wonderful country of ours, and too few of us have looked ahead fifty years and viewed the magnitude of this same problem then: what it will mean.

As we look back over the land values of this country for the past twenty-five years, then look ahead fifty years and see this present population of a hundred million people in the United States increased to between one hundred fifty and two hundred million and this great army of people to be fed from the same number of acres of land that we are now feeding this hundreds millions of people from, we wonder what might be the price of these agricultural lands at that time.

When we make a thorough study of this problem, there will be more of us go to the farm and more of us educate our sons along agricultural lines and advise them to follow the vocation in life which is most conducive to health and prosperity and which will not only tend to, but will make them independent every hour in the day and will eliminate that nightmare, "I'M FIRED AGAIN."

ROBERT REED.



Rectangular Subdivision of a 40-Acre Farm

The above little sketch plan shows a 40-acre farm divided rectangularly into eight fields of approximately five acres each. The main road is shown at the bottom of the plan. It will be seen I carry the farm road (which should be a good one, not just a track) (Continued on page 18)