

Farm & Fireside

The National Farm Magazine



The Profits of 1924— See Page 3

Farming That Will Pay You A Profit in 1924

By L. E. Call

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WHAT can I do to make my farming a success?

This question is one that FARM AND FIRESIDE readers ask me and ask themselves as they face the beginning of a new crop year. The past year, for most of us, was another year of disappointment, not so much because the harvests were poor, for as a rule they were abundant, but because our crops were marketed at a low price when measured in terms of the things we purchased.

When will conditions turn for the better, and how will improvement be brought about? These are questions that we would like to have answered, but unfortunately an answer is mere speculation. History teaches us that we do not recover quickly from severe business depressions. The beginning of better times is slow and often imperceptible, but improvement gathers momentum as we go.

It will help the most of us to take the attitude of mind that, while conditions will improve and the worst is probably behind, we are prepared for a siege and are ready to settle down for a long hard fight if necessary.

We know that to reach a satisfactory condition on the farm it is necessary for prices to advance or the price of manufactured products to fall. We know that the chief cause for this difference in prices is due to high-priced city labor, to high freight rates, to high taxes, and to the fact that we are a food-exporting nation and are attempting to sell our surplus food to a financially impoverished world.

MANY suggestions have been made for the improvement of these conditions. Legislation has been proposed, readjustment of freight rates suggested, schemes of financing the purchase of farm products by foreign nations advanced, and the development of coöperative marketing associations among farmers fostered. These are all possibilities. Help may

come from any one of them. They are all worthy of our careful consideration and study. Some of them may be worthy of our support.

But how much help can you and I expect from any one of them alone or from all of them together toward making our particular farming business a success this season? Not very much.

Of course, anything that helps farming in general helps our business. We should be interested in it. We



This is a picture of L. E. Call

Above the Average and the Eyebrows

AVERAGE farming in hard times means unprofitable farming. Average farming in good times means only a small profit. Above the average farming at all times means a good profit in normal times and a fair profit in hard times.

Mr. Call, making that point in this article, quotes H. A. Pennington, a good farmer in Reno County, Kansas, as follows:

"By applying your training you should be able to increase the soil fertility of your farm to a point sufficiently above the average so that it will produce crops above the average, which when fed to better than average livestock, in rations, balanced better than the average, should net you a profit well above the average.

"If farming pays a good living to the average farmer, you, farming above the average, will have a good living and an extra income too to show for profit. . . . It seems to me that successful farming does not consist of a few large things done in a spectacular way, but rather of an endless number of small, tedious details properly attended to at the right time."

should give time and thought and money to the development of our farm organizations that speak for the business of farming, that help formulate broad national and international policies, that advance our general prosperity, that look after, foster, and protect our interests. We need these organizations.

WE NEED much stronger organizations than we have to-day.

We need organizations that can work together in harmony and speak as one mighty voice for agriculture. These organizations deserve and should have our support.

But let's support them, not expect them to support us.

If we expect them to support us we will be disappointed, because any help that comes from these
(Continued on page 44)

How We Built Our Farm Out of a Swamp

By Mrs. Frederick Reisert

Of Valley Stream, L. I., New York

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MY HUSBAND and I, as bride and groom, began to farm here, near Valley Stream, New York, in 1876, on 75 acres of rented swamp land. Since then we have raised and provided farms for seven of our eight sons. Our total acreage now is 230, mostly swamp, all in truck, and producing about \$175,000 worth of food a year.

We built our home, our family, and our farms by having from the first a *definite plan*, and then by working and saving hard to fulfill it. It is a great satisfaction to me to look back over nearly fifty years of effort and see that our plan has been carried out and our purpose accomplished.

Our earliest objective, of course, was to make a good home by making a success of farming. But our determination to change a swamp into a paying farm was founded on our desire to provide farms for our growing boys and keep them at home. We had eight sons. Seven of them now live on and operate their own farms, which have been carved out of the 230 acres, mostly swamp, which we acquired piece by piece, cleaned up, and drained.

The most common reason why farm boys leave home is that they see a better opportunity elsewhere. We kept our boys at home by making the home attractive and providing an opportunity to make a success here. But this opportunity lay hidden in a swamp so densely wooded that I have known men to get lost in it. It required some foresight and determination to change the swamp from a forest to a truck garden. The beginnings of this undertaking were not encouraging. If we had not had a plan and a purpose, and if we had not been willing to work and save, our story would not have the happy ending that it does have for us.

WHEN Mr. Reisert and I were married we rented 75 acres from Mr. Reisert's stepmother. This was in 1876. Much of this land was swamp, but part of it was cleared and grew such crops as corn, cabbage, peas, turnips, and a few potatoes. It was 16 miles to Washington Market, New York City, and the roads were so bad that it was necessary to send two teams with the market wagon as far as Jamaica. After they reached the horse-car tracks one team would come back.

Our combined capital consisted of \$500, which I had saved from working out, and \$400 that Mr. Reisert had inherited from his father's estate, although he did not actually get this inheritance

until seven years later, when we bought the farm and paid half down on it.

There were many things to handicap us in those first years of struggle. Manure was hard to get, and we did not have the ready money to buy it. Like most other farmers in those days, we knew very little about the use of commercial fertilizers and chemicals, particularly nitrate of soda. Consequently we often had poor crops.

THE long haul to market was tedious and wearing on both men and horses, and oftentimes the market would be glutted with what we had to sell. Our capital did not enable us to buy tools and make improvements that were needed badly. But we persevered, worked hard, and saved what we could. How slowly these savings accumulated is shown by the fact that we did not have this first 75 acres paid for in full until 1895—nineteen years from the time we started. But all this time I had my mind on the rest of that swamp, for I knew it would grow market garden crops once it was cleared and graded and drained.

In 1895 we bought an adjoining 65 acres. Of course, this meant another mortgage and another period of struggle and saving to pay it off. My husband's health gave out, and I took charge. But our boys were helping by that time.

In fact, from then on until they ran their own farms, one or another of the boys was manager.

As soon as we could we bought 20 acres more, making a total of 160 acres—all but the center of the swamp, which was owned in tracts of varying sizes by a number of different people who had wood lots there. We had to have these wood lots too. Otherwise we could not drain

our own land. And all the time values were going up. Our first 75 acres cost us about \$85 an acre. The second purchase cost \$125 an acre; the third, \$200, the fourth, \$260; and finally we paid \$350 an acre for the last five acres in the center of the swamp.

IT IS easy to set this all down now. But after we had paid for the first 75 acres it took twenty years to buy, stub, grade, and drain the balance of the swamp. Of course, all this meant a great deal of expense. Stubbing alone cost us about \$150 an acre. Grading and ditching and piping were also very expensive. But it was paid for out of the crops as we went along, though sometimes we would have to be patient and hold up a job until we had the money to finish it. Our purpose remained steadfast; our effort never let up; and finally the job was completed.

Surely we are justified in feeling proud of the result of forty years of planning, working, and saving. Our faith in the old swamp was justified too, for it is a wonderful place to grow market garden crops. The soil (Continued on page 58)



Mrs. Frederick Reisert

Who tells here how she and her husband set a goal forty years ago, and how they planned and worked until they made their dream a reality. Now they and their seven boys own 230 acres of land on Long Island, within 16 miles of Broadway, that produces \$175,000 worth of garden truck every year

Do It Yourself

TOO many people now are asking the Government to guarantee their success and their prosperity, thereby admitting their own incompetence. Mrs. Reisert asked nothing—she worked and saved, and she made a 230-acre swamp into a profitable truck garden. Read her story. *The Editor.*

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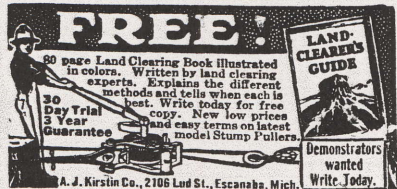
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This is another picture of Mrs. Reisert. We've heard it said that too much hard work makes a person bitter—but to Mrs. Reisert it seems to have brought nothing but happy motherhood and peaceful old age

Out of a Swamp

(Continued from page 11)

itself is sand, but there is mixed with this sand the accumulation of centuries of leaf mold and other decayed vegetation. With our drainage pipes we can practically control the supply of moisture, backing up the water during a dry spell, or letting it out if there is plenty of rain.

Seven of our sons now have their homes and their farms here, where only a comparatively few years ago was an almost impenetrable swampy forest. Here they take off truck-load after truck-load of spinach, lettuce, and celery—which are the three principal crops—as well as minor crops, such as cabbage, carrots, beans, and sweet corn.

A few years ago my husband and I turned all the farming over to the boys, although he has regained his health and still works nearly every day with them. A little later we had the land surveyed, built good roads through it, and decided to divide it up while we are still here. Our sons now own their farms, and we have laid aside enough for ourselves to see us through.

As I look back I know that there was no short cut. The long road was the only one. We must work and save, and make a good plan and fulfill it.

Two Shirts for the Cost of One

(Continued from page 22)

light-colored sports silk might have sleeves of white silk banded at the bottom with the dress goods. A navy-blue crêpe would go well with a printed crêpe in tones of navy and tomato-red or navy and beige or navy and gray. A cloth dress might have sleeves of heavy crêpe silk in some such contrast as beige silk or gray on a navy, or the sleeves might match in color.

Spots and Tears: When spots won't come out cover them up with appliqué or embroidery. I have known three rows of cross-stitching down the side front of a waist to cover up a stubborn grease spot. A fold of material may serve the same purpose. A navy silk frock that was torn at the side back had the darned place covered with two folds of the goods lined with white and attached at one edge. They ran from the waistline to the hem.

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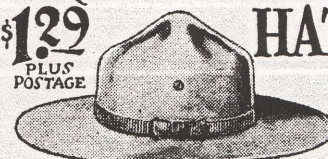
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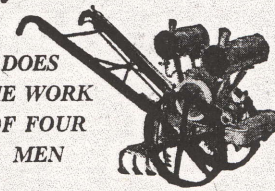
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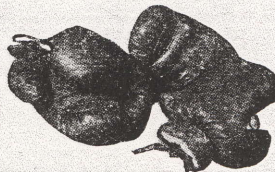
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