

RAPE AND TARES FOR PASTURE—OATS AND PEAS FOR HAY.

W. J. C., Simcoe Co., Ont.:—"I have a field of clover that I took seed off last year. The clover has been winter-killed. I am intending sowing rape to take place of clover for pasture for pigs and young cattle. The soil is heavy clay. Will rape grow well in it? What cultivation should I give the ground? Should I sow in drills or broadcast? How much seed per acre each way? How early can I sow it? How long till it will be fit for pasture? Is it equal to clover? Would it be safe to put calves or cattle in it at night without danger of bloating? How much ground would be required for fifty pigs? When should second plot be sowed so as to be ready when first is done?"

"2. Would peas and oats do for hay? What proportions should they be, and how much seed per acre? What time should they be cut? Would it require longer curing than the other hay?"

[1. While rape is capital feed for cattle and sheep, and is frequently recommended for pigs, we do not consider it as good for pigs as green tares. Pigs will eat the rape if they cannot do better, but they do not seem to relish it like clover or tares. If the field can be conveniently fenced, we would suggest sowing say five or six acres of it to tares or vetches and red clover seed, six pecks of the former and six pound of the latter per acre. A good seed-bed should be prepared as for grain, and the vetch seed sown with drill, and clover broadcast. When the vetches are ten to twelve inches high the pigs may be turned in. The vetches will keep on growing as fast as pastured off until late in the season, when the clover will have attained to a size fit for good pasture. The field would then be well seeded for the following year. Rape will grow well on clay land if it is fairly rich and in a good state of cultivation. We would recommend that the same preparation be given the land as for turnips, mangels or potatoes. On clay land it would be well to sow the rape seed in drills, about two pounds per acre, so that the field can be cultivated frequently while the crop is growing. If the rape is to be sown broadcast, from three to four pounds of seed per acre should be used. Rape sown in May should be fit to pasture before the 1st of August. Rape may be sown up till July 10th for fall pasture. After stock have become accustomed to rape, there is very little danger of bloating if they are allowed access to it at all times, except when it is frosted. Rape is almost if not quite equal to clover for young cattle.

2. Peas, one bushel, and oats, six pecks, mixed together and sown per acre gives an abundant crop to cut for hay. It should be cut very soon after the oats get head out. If left later the butts of the oats get coarse. Hay made from peas and oats would require slightly more making than clover and timothy, but with a tedder and good weather good hay can be easily made.]

PLAN OF A FARM REFRIGERATOR WANTED.

A. McLEAN, Bruce Co., Ont.:—"Having put up some ice last winter, I think I shall try to make a refrigerator for the farm use this summer. I should be much obliged if you could give me a good plan for a refrigerator, or if some of the readers of the ADVOCATE would do the same. I should like to have one that would hold from six to eight deep milk-cans at the bottom, and space enough for beef, butter, and ice at the top?"

[Surely some of our thousands of subscribers can describe a refrigerator such as Mr. McLean desires to build. We would gladly give publicity to such a plan for the benefit of our readers generally. In a general way we may state that a refrigerator usually comprises a large cupboard, or room made with double hollow walls, thoroughly insulated or air-tight. This has a space above for ice, held in a rack or pan, having pipes to carry away the water. The doors should be double, fit tightly, and have enough space between them that when going in or out of the refrigerator only one need be open at once. Another plan that we would suggest would be, instead of keeping the ice in a tray or rack above, use an ice cylinder of galvanized iron, one foot in diameter, and extending from the floor to five feet high. This should be filled each day with chopped ice, and if salt were added it would keep the temperature much lower, but would thaw the ice correspondingly faster. A single very thick door, fitting like a safe door, would answer well. An illustrated description of a refrigerator in use by some of our readers would be of interest to many.]

INFORMATION ABOUT GEESSE.

D. H. K., Queen's Co., P.E.I.:—"In your issue of March 1st, about geese, you advise a correspondent to test eggs on the seventh day for infertile ones. 1. Kindly explain how this test is applied. 2. What is the best feed for young goslings? 3. What variety of grass is best adapted for pasturing geese? 4. Is there a breed of geese known as the 'China-Kong'? If so, please describe them?"

[1. To test eggs after they have been incubated for a week, make a tube of stiff paper from eight to ten inches long. Examine each egg by holding it against one end of this tube, in front of a good strong light at night, while you look through the other end. Every fertile egg will show a dark spot with veins running out from it. The dark spot does not look unlike a spider. Every infertile egg will look just like a fresh egg.

2. The most successful way to raise geese is to use two or over two year old geese with younganders. The first eggs they lay are seldom fertile.

If you wish to obtain as many eggs as possible use hens as sitters. When a goose becomes broody, confine her away from her nest for a few days, when she will soon lay again. Good comfortable nests should be provided, and all eggs gathered so as not to become chilled. After the young goslings are hatched, put them in a nice grass run, and confine the hen in a coop. Feed them moistened corn-meal, ground wheat, middlings, or any kind of ground grain, and give them all the grass they will eat. As soon as the hen begins to lay, remove her altogether. Protect the goslings from the sun and see that they have plenty of green grass.

In winter feed the old geese a mixture of ground grains, beef scraps, and boiled potatoes or turnips in the morning, and grain in the evening.

3. Geese prefer to roam along a creek where there is natural grass, or they will do equally well in marshy land with access to a tame grass (say clover) pasture.

4. We know of no such geese as "China-Kong." RUSSIAN MULBERRY AND ENGLISH FILBERT NOT BEARING.

WM. FERGUSON, York Co., Ont.:—"I have a Russian mulberry that blossoms profusely every spring, but has not had any fruit. The blossoms all fall off. It is a good thrifty tree and planted on south side of bush (forest). Also an English filbert, which blossoms every fall and falls off in the spring. If you or any of your readers will tell me what to do with the above you will greatly oblige."

[In reply to your correspondent's query regarding Russian mulberry and English filbert, I beg to state as follows:

Russian mulberry.—The blossoms of the Russian mulberry are not perfect—that is, one tree bears male and another female flowers—and unless your correspondent has trees bearing each of these kinds of flowers, and near enough to be readily fertilized by wind and insects, he will not get any fruit.

English filbert.—The blossoms of the filbert are also not perfect, but the male and female flowers are borne on the same bush. Although the male catkins are formed in the autumn, they do not shed their pollen until spring. In Ontario the male flowers often open and shed their pollen before the female flowers are open and ready to receive it. The result is that the female flowers are not fertilized and no nuts are formed. By saving the pollen and applying it to the female flowers when they are open it is possible to fertilize them, and nuts will thus be produced. W. T. MACOUN, Experimental Farm, Ottawa. Horticulturist.]

PLAN OF CORN MARKER.

J. A. S., York Co., Ont.:—"May I trouble you for a plan of a corn marker? We have thought of planting our corn in squares."

[Fig. 1. represents a convenient corn marker, and one that is easily made. The figure and description were sent us by J. W. Lamb, of Bruce County, and described in the FARMER'S ADVOCATE, April 15th,

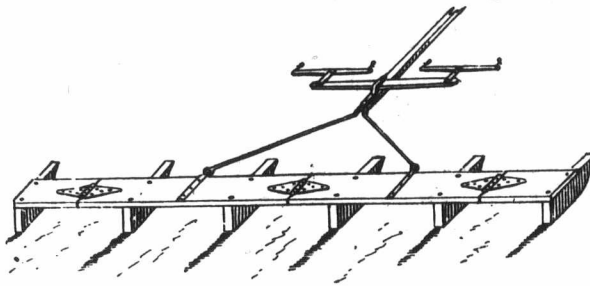


FIG. 1.

1896. The top plank is 15 feet long, 10 inches wide, and 2 inches thick. The runners are 18 inches long and sloped in front so as to run easy. They are fastened to the top plank 3 feet apart with 4-inch wood screws. Eighteen inches from each end the plank is cut with saw, and strong strap hinges screwed on. A hinge is also placed in center, as shown, so as to make the marker adapt itself to uneven ground. The ends can be folded over for turning. The tongue may be put on as shown in cut or be fastened to rollers connecting the 2nd and 3rd runners from either end.]

SMUT ON CORN.

JAS. TODD, Elgin Co., Ont.:—"I would like to hear through your columns of something to prevent smut on corn? I am very much pleased with your paper, and think it is a dollar well invested."

[Although corn smut usually infests the ears of the plant, it is occasionally found upon tassel, stem, and leaves. It is not an easy matter to prevent it when once it has shown itself in former years, as it may exist in the soil from year to year and infect succeeding crops. The spores, although so small that it would require 25,000 of them laid in a straight line to measure an inch, grow into the corn plant, pushing the mycelium through the tissue of the stem, and finally developing extensively by means of many branches in the ear or tassel. While spores adhering to the kernels of corn and planted with them may infect the resulting plant, it is just as likely to be propagated from smut lying in the ground from previous year, or from smut mixed with manure from the yard. These modes of infection indicate that corn should not be planted on the same ground year after year. Manure that has had any chance of being infected with smut should not be used, and the seed corn should be dipped into water at 132° Fahr. It should not remain longer than half a minute, and the temperature should not be allowed lower than 132° or higher than 135°.

TROUBLE IN GETTING A CLOVER CATCH.

A. BLOOMFIELD, Middlesex Co., Ont.:—"Kindly advise me as to the best kind of fertilizer for a heavy clay soil with very heavy subsoil, under-drained with tile, now sown with oats and clover seed. I have had trouble with clover in getting a standing catch. What is the matter with my land, and what kind of fertilizer, if there is such a thing to be got, would benefit me in getting clover to grow? Please give probable cost per acre, and quantity necessary for an acre. I like your paper very much—would not be without it."

[We judge the difficulty to get a catch of clover is largely due to a faulty mechanical condition of the soil rather than a need of fertility, although the latter may be lacking as well. If the clover catch is of the greatest consideration, we would suggest a heavy coating of barnyard manure, followed by a hoed crop, and the next spring sow clover without a grain crop. Oats generally make such rank growth as to shade the ground too much and smother the young clover plants. If this is not practicable under the existing conditions, it would be well to apply a coating of lime (from 30 to 40 bushels per acre) and grow a green crop of buckwheat or oats to be plowed down. There should be no difficulty to get a catch of clover the following year, especially if the clover is sown alone, or if seeded with oats, wheat or barley sown quite thinly. We have not had sufficient experience with any fertilizer to guarantee a stand of clover on the present seeded oat crop. The lime will render the clay soil more friable. It will also decompose the minerals containing plant food and dissolve the organic matter so that all conditions to get a clover catch would be improved.

MARKETS.

FARM GOSSIP.

The Outlook for Fall Wheat and Clover.

The very severe frost of the past winter created grave doubts in the minds of many farmers as to the safety of the winter wheat and new clover meadows. In order to arrive at the condition of these important crops, so far as that can be told at the present time, we have received information from many of the wheat-growing counties, as follows:

LAMBTON.

Winter wheat is looking exceedingly well in our immediate district—along the banks of the Sydenham River. In most other localities which have come under our observation prospects are very poor, and many farmers are reseeded the land to spring crops. On a recent trip from Alvinston to London our attention was particularly drawn to the poor condition of both winter wheat and clover, the latter being very badly heaved. Some fields were noticed which, although not heaved, still appeared to be killed outright. Rain is needed very badly, none having fallen for many weeks. A good warm shower would, no doubt, improve the outlook very much. ELLIS F. AUGUSTINE.

MIDDLESEX.

The winter wheat has suffered severely. Indications are about 70 per cent. of an average crop. Young clover appears to be all right. A. B. SCOTT.

The winter wheat in our neighborhood that was sown late or on poor ground is badly damaged. The new clover has heaved in some places, but, I think, will be a fair catch. R. NICHOLSON.

ELGIN.

Wheat is looking very bad; some plowing up, and prospects are poor. Of young clover, I had 40 acres sown last spring, and not more than 15 acres will stand, and not more than half a crop at that. My Gold Coin and Paramount wheat seems to be standing fairly well. Worst winter I have seen for 25 years for wheat and clover. T. H. MEDCROFT.

ESSEX.

The wheat outlook is very blue. I think fully from one-third to one-half in this vicinity will be plowed up. I was away yesterday and found some plowing all they had—from 30 to 60 acres each. That which was largest and best in the fall has suffered most. Late sown seems to have come through best. It all looked bright when winter broke, but the cold, dry weather following, with frost at bottom, has finished what the winter did not. W. G. BALDWIN.

BRANT.

The new clover looks well. It is rather early yet to judge of the fall wheat, but it looks now as if it might be a fair average crop. E. F. COWAN.

Winter wheat looks very poor, being in a weak state, and if the dry weather continues will not be half a crop. Fields that have been sheltered from the cold winds have come through apparently all right, but on the whole we are not looking for more than a half crop, if that much. It is much the same over all this district. Clover is badly heaved in exposed places, but cannot tell to what extent as yet. TELFER BROS.

WENTWORTH.

Winter wheat.—A few pieces look well, but most of it is very patchy; some very poor—killed in the ground (not heaved out at all); very early sown is worst; some kinds worse than others in same fields side by side: Golden Chaff and Red Clawson—Golden Chaff very much the better. New clover.—Generally a thin catch—has suffered considerably by heaving. Once-cut clover has come out better than usual. It's all right. JOHN JACKSON.

Fall wheat has been badly killed in this vicinity—worst on light lands. Will not be more than half a crop, from present appearance. Young clover has generally come through in fair condition. R. S. STEVENSON.

BRUCE.

Winter wheat has come out very satisfactorily in this section. I should judge that at least 80 per cent. of the fields should give a full crop. There is very little winter-killed, even along the fences; but wireworm seems to have injured the crop in a few cases. Clover is not so promising. There was a very thin catch of clover in this section last year, and there are many bare places this spring. The young plants have wintered well, and where there is an even catch they are doing nicely. I should judge that not more than 50 per cent. of the acreage will yield a full crop. JAS. B. MUIR.

WATERLOO.

The wheat is scarcely up to the average in our locality. Fields lying to the east and south are all right. There will be some plowed up, however. The clover is generally pretty safe; very little, we believe, winter-killed, unless it be on heavy land. JOHN TAYLOR, JR.