

Mixed Farming

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hills. The other two methods can be used to plant in hills in rows running both ways. This makes cultivating much more effective and lessens hoeing. It is decidedly the best way to plant. In planting with a hand planter, the field must be marked with a home-made marker, which is dragged across the field in both directions. The hills are then planted where the marks cross. This method is cheap, but rather slow. The corn drill is made especially for planting corn either in drills or hills. It is a very satisfactory machine for planting in hills, but no better than the ordinary drill for planting in drills.

Root seed may be sown quite well with an ordinary grain drill. By stopping up spouts, as in the case of corn, the rows are put the right distance apart. The quantity of seed may be gauged properly by jacking up the drill, turning the wheel, and counting the seeds turned out by one revolution, then setting the gauge so that the desired quantity for the distance covered by one turn of the wheel, is dropped.

Time of Planting

Corn should be planted during the last half of May. Earlier than that the soil is likely to be too cool for good germination. Later sowing does not give the corn a long enough season for full growth. Early seeding of roots is found to give best results in the West. May 10th is not too early if they can be got in then.

Cultivation

Corn and roots are spoken of as cleaning crops, because being grown in rows they allow cultivation to be performed between the rows while they are growing. Left to themselves they would be quite useless as cleaning crops, in fact there are probably few

crops that give weeds any better chance or are so easily overcome by weeds. Therefore if they are to be effective as cleaning crops, cultivation is the only means to the desired end. Not only does the condition of the land depend on cultivation, but the very life of the crops themselves is equally dependent on it. Most of the poor crops seen far too frequently are due to lack of cultivation.

Cultivation for corn should begin as soon as the seed is in the ground, with a good harrowing. Harrowing should be repeated after the corn is up and may be done safely until it is six inches high. This is a very cheap way of hoeing and saves much work later on. Roots should be harrowed after planting, but must then be left until the rows can be seen as the tender seedlings will not stand harrowing. As soon as the corn is too high to harrow, and as soon as the roots are visible, the work of intertillage should begin. This may be done with a one-horse cultivator or scuffler, or with fairly large areas of corn, it will pay to have a two-horse cultivator. The cultivator should be kept going up and down the rows of corn and roots all summer. They should be cultivated frequently and the cultivation should not cease when haying begins, but should continue until no more weeds come. The reward of thorough work is a big crop and a clean field.

Corn is usually planted in the quantities desired for the permanent stand and thinning is not necessary. With roots, however, it is advisable in order to make sure of a stand, to plant several times the amount of seed actually required. The excessive plants must then be thinned out. The best way is to block them out roughly with the hoe as soon as they are large enough to be clearly distinguished. Several plants are left in each group at this thinning. Then later, when they have grown a little more, they must be gone over by hand and reduced to single plants. Mangels and turnips should both be thinned out to about ten or twelve inches apart in the row.

It is well to do as much as possible of the cultivation with horses, but if a clean field is to be left, it is always necessary to do some hand hoeing. There are always some weeds in the row among the corn or roots that horse-drawn machinery cannot reach. These may be few enough not to prevent a good crop, but they will go to seed and leave a filthy field for the next crop. It is, therefore, necessary to do some hand hoeing, though good management and preparation may reduce it to a small amount.

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