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Alfalfa is a Quick Grower

One of the many outstanding favorable characteristics of alfalfa is the rapid growth it makes in early spring. At the first sign of growing weather, the alfalfa plant begins to shoot. By the time red clover has got fairly started, alfalfa has made considerable growth. The possibilities of alfalfa in this particular are well illustrated by the following letter, received last week from a Gleggarry County, Ont., Farm and Dairy reader, enclosing a stalk of alfalfa grown this year measuring over 12 inches in length:

Editor, Farm and Dairy.—The enclosed stalk of alfalfa was taken from my alfalfa field, which this year will give a crop for the fourth season. The alfalfa in this field measures a little over 12 inches high at date of writing, April 25, which I think is surprising. Our cows are living now on ensilage and alfalfa hay. They appear to enjoy it, as they are giving excellent results. I believe it is not possible to get as much feed off the same ground from any other crops as is possible with corn and alfalfa. My alfalfa looks as if the stand might last indefinitely.—W. H. Byers, Gleggarry Co., Ont.

Alfalfa a Splendid Crop

J. Locke Wilson, Toronto, Ont.

Ontario farmers who have gone into alfalfa experimentally have proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that it is the best paying fodder crop that an agriculturist can grow. Alfalfa has been known since 490 B. C. and was successfully grown in Greece and Rome nearly 2,500 years ago. In the State of Kansas there were in 1891 30,000 acres of alfalfa grown, while last year nearly a million acres of alfalfa were under crop, resulting in untold financial benefit to the farmers of that State.

There are five different varieties of alfalfa, viz.: American, Turkestan, Arabian, Peruvian and German; for Ontario the American variety is best suited.

Alfalfa, unlike many other crops, enriches the soil rather than impoverishes it. The roots extend into the earth from five to 12 feet, reaching down and bringing to the surface nitrogen and other valuable mineral plant food. This crop has been grown continuously on a farm in Ontario for nearly 30 years, and it still produces good crops. It can be grown successfully on sandy, heavy clay loam, or on nearly any variety of soil that is properly drained.

EXPERIMENTS SUCCESSFUL.

Experiments with alfalfa have been conducted on a limited scale with success in nearly every part of Ontario, both when sown with and without a nursing crop. Spring sowing has given the best results. If sown with a nursing crop, barley at the rate of one bushel an acre is an excellent one for the purpose. Eighteen or 20 pounds of alfalfa seed is the proper quantity to sow.

From three to four crops of alfalfa can be harvested in one season. The average height of a plant runs from 14 to 20 inches. The yield per acre of green crop is about 20 tons, and of dry hay, five. It should not be allowed to remain too long in the hot sun, as the leaves are liable to become dry and break off and they contain the most valuable nutrients.

Alfalfa seed is produced best from either first or second cuttings. It averages five bushels per acre, although it sometimes runs as high as ten.

COMPARED WITH RED CLOVER.

Alfalfa hay contains about 50 per cent more digestible protein than hay from red clover. It makes a splendid feed for horses and cows. Care needs to be exercised when sheep or cattle are turned in, as there is a tendency for them to bloat if allowed to eat too much, especially when the plants are wet.

An application to the alfalfa field of about 12 loads of barnyard manure an acre every four years has proved very satisfactory. Fertilizers containing phosphate have given the best results. When a field of alfalfa is plowed down the surface soil is completely filled with root rich in fertilizing elements.

Farmers Should Not Bear the Loss

During the discussion of the Act to amend the meat and canned foods Act recently in the House of Commons, Mr. W. O. Sealey said, in part: "Our packers in the vicinity of Hamilton claim that they lose all the meat rejected by the inspectors, and

Rumored Appointments

It is rumored at Ottawa that there is to be a rearrangement of the staff at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa. It is stated that as a result of the new branch farms being established this year, the work has so increased that extra assistance is required. Dr. Saunders of Ottawa is to remain head of all the farms, but Mr. J. H. Grisdale, agriculturist at the Central Experimental Farm, is to be made Dominion Agriculturist. He will have charge of the agricultural and live stock work on all the Dominion experimental farms throughout Canada.

It is understood also that Mr. W. T. Macoun, horticulturist at the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, is to be made Dominion Horticulturist and given charge of the horticultural work on all the experimental farms. Both Mr. Grisdale and Mr. Macoun will be given more assistance at Ottawa so that they will be able to give more time visiting the various other experimental farms.

While I have sympathy with any person who meets with a loss which might be averted, I cannot endorse the reasoning that the loss should be on the farmer. I think the drover who purchases the animal has the right to make the examination and inspection he wishes before he buys the animal, but when he has bought the animal and taken possession of it, the farmer's responsibility should cease.

"Then, when the drover sells on the market to the packer, unless he unwillingly agrees that he should stand the loss, I am quite satisfied that he gauges his buying and selling prices by an estimate of that loss, and no doubt the producer and consumer pay in the end. I do not want the House to look upon this matter from the point of view that the drover is standing that loss now. He may be in some cases where he agrees to, but if it be a fact that he is bearing the loss, then the law should be amended so that when a man buys and assumes possession of an animal the responsibility of the seller should cease."

Herewith is my renewal to Farm and Dairy for another year. I appreciate the much improved and up-to-date farm paper which Farm and Dairy is furnishing the farmers of this country.—Jas. Lewis, Lennox & Addington Co., Ontario.



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