

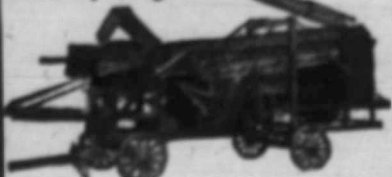
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food as useful plants. They are, in many cases, better able to draw upon plant food and moisture than the cultivated crop, for the reason that their root system penetrates deeper and are more vigorous. For this same reason weeds usually grow faster than grain crops, and very soon attain such a hold that the growing crop is crowded out. This is particularly true in the early stages of growth of the young plants. The shading of the grain by the excessive growth of weeds hinders the proper development of the useful plant. The extra trouble in the cleaning of the grain for either market or seed when polluted with weed seeds is considerable, and adds much to the cost of putting on the market. Weeds growing in a crop tend to make conditions favorable for the development of plant diseases. The dense shade formed by a rank growth of weeds has frequently caused the presence of rust and mildew, and further weed in fence corners and waste places furnish winter lodgment for various injurious insects. With very few exceptions weed seeds are valueless for stock feeding. Many of them are possessed of bitter juices that are distasteful to livestock, in fact some are injurious in that they contain poisonous material. Everything considered, there is no justification for their presence in a crop and every effort should be made to keep them in check.

Care of Alfalfa

When alfalfa is seeded down with a nurse crop, care should be taken that the young plants are not smothered either by lodging grain or by allowing the shocks to remain too long in one place. In case the field should become badly over-run with weeds or the alfalfa plants come in head the mower should be run over the field early in the fall and the cutting bar be set as high as possible so as to have a reasonably high stubble. The cuttings left on the ground act as a mulch and protect the young plants during the winter and early spring. When alfalfa is seeded without a nurse crop it usually attains such a growth as to require cutting. The cutting should be done sufficiently early so as to allow the plants to reach a height of six to eight inches at the end of the growing season. Under no circumstances should stock be allowed to pasture upon an alfalfa field the year it is seeded down.

Western Wheat-Stem Sawfly

From some parts of Manitoba complaint has come recently of the breaking down of stems in grain crops due to the presence of an insect. In many cases the damage is caused by the larva of the Western Sawfly, of which the following is a description:—

The Western Wheat-Stem Sawfly (*Cephus occidentalis*) is a native of North America, first recorded in Canada 1895 (Indian Head). Description: the egg is a small cylindrical object (white), too small to be seen unless the fly is seen depositing it. The larva is a small grub, less than one-half inch in length, first two segments are somewhat swollen, and a short blue point protrudes from the hind end of the body. Easily distinguished. The pupa is developed in May, within the stubble inhabited by the larva. The adult is a shiny, black, four-winged insect with three yellow wasp-like rings on the abdomen. In the female the legs are yellow, one-third inch long, and the males are a little shorter.

Life History: The flies appear during the second week in June and are found, during the day, resting head downwards on stems of grasses and cereals. The eggs are deposited by the

females while resting in this position, by drawing the abdomen well under the body and thrusting ovipositor well into leaf sheath. In three or four days the eggs hatch and the young larva gradually work their way down into the stem to the lowest joint, and by August 1, they have reached the ground; they gnaw a ring, cutting through the stem, which falls to the ground. The larva forms a cocoon in the exposed portion, it being stopped by partly chewed material. It passes the winter in the larva stage, pupates May 1, and emerges during the second week in June as a fully developed sawfly.

Means of Control: Plow or burn over all infected stubble five inches deep, from August 1 to June 1 of the following year: Pack the land; cut infected grass between July 10 and August 1; cut infected crops before they ripen.—Prof. F. W. Brodrick, Man. Agricultural College.

Roguing Seed Plots

The verb "to rogue," meaning to remove foreign or undesirable types, has not yet come into general usage, and the operation to which it refers is perhaps still less known. The high standard of purity set for the seed grain disposed of from the Dominion experimental farms makes it sometimes necessary to rogue quite large fields, even up to 20 or 25 acres in extent, but such an extensive operation is not advisable for ordinary farmers or seed growers. Nevertheless, even in these times, when the cost of labor is so high, many farmers who expect to sell part or all of their grain crop for seed purposes cannot afford to neglect altogether the roguing of some of their smaller fields. In the threshed grain, it is practically impossible to separate barley from wheat and quite impossible to separate barley from oats. In a field of wheat or oats, however, when the barley has headed out, it is a simple matter to remove all the plants, provided, of course, the seed sown was not very seriously mixed.

If the principal fields which the farmer is growing are too large to be rogued, as will generally be the case, the smaller multiplying fields (which usually consist of only about one or two acres each) should be gone through carefully two or three times at intervals of a week or more, between heading and harvest, in order to remove all plants of other kinds of grain and any abnormal plants observed of the variety which was sown.

If the seed used by the farmer was pure as to variety, there is usually no need to attempt any form of selection. Any very unusual or peculiar heads which are observed should be removed; in other words, the grower should devote his attention to selecting out and rejecting everything abnormal found in his field. This is much more rapid and, in some ways, even a better process than the laborious plan of picking out the seed which is to be retaining.

By roguing, every year, the special, small, multiplying fields of pure seed, which every grower should have, much time and waste of good seed can be avoided when cleaning the threshed crop in the fanning mill, and the higher degree of purity of the seed grain which the grower will be able to offer for sale will enable him to command a higher price.

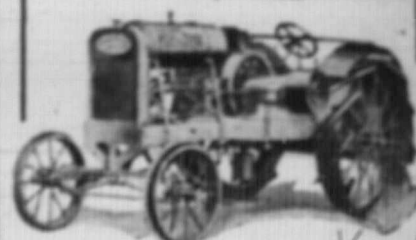
The hand picking of a few bushels of seed grain in the winter months is desirable, but this operation cannot altogether do away with the necessity for very careful inspection and occasional roguing of the smaller fields in mid-summer.—Chas. E. Saunders, Dominion Cerealists.



Sweet Clover, as it grows in Ontario. Photographed June 2, near Listowel.

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