

sow. This will depend upon the growth the trees are making, the amount of moisture in the soil, the size of crop the trees are carrying, and the earliness or lateness of the district.

Where trees are making a rank growth and not coming into bearing as soon as they should, sowing down the orchard to one of the sod crops is a good plan, or sowing the cover crop early in the summer. This will tend to check growth. This is also a valuable practice where trees are growing oversized, poorly coloured, and poor-quality fruit due to excessive growth.

In sections where the rainfall is light and there is no irrigation, sow the crop early enough so that it will make a good growth before cold weather and have a good amount of growth to turn under in spring. This will be from the 1st to the middle of August under most conditions. In these dry sections where moisture is scarce, cover crops are very important in increasing the moisture-holding capacity of the soil. Sow one at least every other year.

Under ordinary conditions in most of the fruit-growing sections of this Province, cover crops should be sown by the 1st of August.

#### **SOWING THE CROP.**

Many make the objection that a cover crop will not catch in the fall. This may be true on soils very devoid of organic matter, but where a proper system of soil-management has been maintained in the early part of the season, there will be little trouble in getting such crops as rye, wheat, buckwheat, etc., to catch, and the second year there will be still less trouble. If a seeder can be secured, the seed can be sown in the damp earth just below the mulch with little difficulty. Otherwise the seed can be sown broadcast, and, as a rule, an ordinary smoothing-harrow will cover it deep enough to secure good germination.

#### **PLOUGHING DOWN COVER CROPS.**

Cover crops should be ploughed under early in the spring. Many who have grown cover crops have had poor results, even to the extent of injuring and stunting the growth of the orchard, and for that reason have discontinued using them and are condemning their use. This is a mistake, for after investigating the difficulty it has been found that it was not the cover crop that did injury, but the method by which it was handled. Plough it under as soon as the land is fit to work in the spring, when the crop can be easily turned under. If one has a very large acreage and not sufficient teams, a fast-growing crop, such as rye, may get ahead and be difficult to turn under if not taken early. If allowed to grow up to make hay or seed, it takes the moisture and plant-food from the trees just at the time they need it most. This was what happened with many of the growers, and the use of cover crops was discouraged in their districts.

#### **COST OF COVER CROP.**

The seed and time taken to sow are the only costs connected with a cover crop where the orchard soil is ploughed every year, so the cost will vary with the kind of crop grown. When the value of the crop is considered, this cost is a mere trifle, for the improvement in soil conditions alone on many places would result in making the soil so much easier to work that it would more than cover the cost of the crop, besides the value in enriching the soil.

In irrigated districts where the soil is light, the use of cover crops will reduce the amount of irrigating after the first couple of years by increasing the moisture-holding capacity of the soil.