

FARM MANAGEMENT

Traction Plowing versus Horses

R. E. Gunn, Ontario Co., Ont.

If dairy farms here in Ontario could be operated cooperatively so that the fields could be in large areas, then traction cultivation could be practised satisfactorily here in Ontario. But this method has not proven to be successful. Even if it were feasible, I doubt if it would be economical to operate tractors in many places in Old Ontario.

In one instance where it was tried with fields of from 60 to 100 acres in extent, an engine drawing six plows could not do as economical work as was done on the adjoining farm with three three-horse teams. The time consumed in turning and the size of the ends it was necessary to leave, which required horse power to plow, made it hard to produce cheap work and the saving in time, money and

with frequent use of a broad shared cultivator. Late in the fall plow somewhat deeper. In the spring again frequently cultivate to prevent the development of any leaves and thus weaken the roots to the greatest possible extent. The middle of June or first of July sow rape in drills at the rate of one and one-half pounds to an acre. Cultivate until the rape completely covers the ground. If there are any roots left when the rape is pastured or cut, a hoe crop should be put on the field the following year. Buckwheat may be used instead of rape as a smothering crop.

Shallow Cultivation For Corn

It has been hard to wean our farmers from the old-time useless custom of planting corn in hills raised some inches above the surrounding level, and from the worse than useless custom of deep cultivation between the rows. Most of them are now fully awake to the fact that corn does best when planted on level ground. But in too many cases the deep cultivator



An Implement That is Not Used Half Enough

Rolling is necessary to smooth the surface of a field after the crop is sown. But too many of us stop there. We leave the surface hard and firm, and moisture evaporates rapidly. A light cultivation such as the one here illustrated, following the roller, would create a soil mulch to conserve this moisture. Mr. Leggat, of the firm of McMillan and Leggat, Huntington Co., Que., may be here seen.

—Photo by an editor of Farm and Dairy.

hard work is the only excuse for the consideration of the subject at all.

Anent Sow Thistle

What is the best way to get rid of sow thistle? I have a patch growing on a field that I intend to sow to buckwheat. Is there more than one kind of sow thistle? If so, please describe both kinds and how to treat them.—A. O. Grey Co., Ont.

There are two sow thistles quite common in Ontario. The annual thistle has fibrous roots and is one to four feet high. The leaves are deeply cut and toothed and the flower is a deep yellow, quarter to half an inch in diameter. This thistle is dealt with in the same manner as Canada thistle, and is not nearly so great a menace as is the perennial sow thistle.

This latter plant is somewhat similar in appearance to the annual sow thistle, but has a creeping root stock and the leaves are not so deeply serrated. The flowers are bright yellow, one and one-half inches across, closing in the hot sunlight. The seeds are light and are carried for long distances in the wind. Hence one small patch may be the seedling ground for the whole neighborhood.

If the infested portion of your land is small we would advise that the roots be eradicated by digging out the roots as thoroughly as possible by hand and destroying them. This may have to be done several times during the season.

A system that has been most effectively used is to plow lightly after hay or grain is removed and follow

still "gets in" its murderous work. The rootlets of the corn plant love the warmth of the surface-soil; hence they spread widely on every side, mostly from two to four inches below the surface—so widely that filaments from adjacent rows will meet in the center of the intervening space in a few weeks after planting. Whatever disturbs them lessens the amount of nourishment they may send up, and reduces the production of corn per acre.

So, while the first cultivation, before these spreading rootlets are sent out, may well be close to the plant, and say four inches deep, no subsequent cultivation should be more than two inches deep. This will suffice to destroy weeds and to maintain a soil-mulch for the retention of moisture, as well as to let in air and to warm up the soil. Shallow cultivation, repeated as often as practicable, especially after a rain, will be sure to "tell" in increasing the size of the crop.—C. R. Barna.

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