

# Farm Crop Queries

CONDUCTED BY PROF. HENRY G. BELL  
The object of this department is to place at the service of our farm readers the advice of an acknowledged authority on all subjects pertaining to soils and crops. Address all questions to Professor Henry G. Bell, in care of The Wilson Publishing Company, Limited, Toronto, and answers will appear in this column in the order in which they are received. When writing kindly mention this paper. As space is limited it is advisable where immediate reply is necessary that a stamped and addressed envelope be enclosed with the question, when the answer will be mailed direct.

C. S.—I have three or four acres of corn stubble, good ground, which I want to sow to buckwheat this season. I would like to know how it would do to sow sweet clover with it. Which would grow the fastest? We sow buckwheat here in June as soon after planting as possible. Would there be a chance to get buckwheat or would the clover wheat beat it out? Would it make good fodder?

Answer—You could sow sweet clover with buckwheat but I am afraid the result would not be satisfactory. The buckwheat makes very rapid growth and would in all probability smother the clover. You would do much better if you would sow the sweet clover in oats or barley. I do not believe the mixture of sweet clover and buckwheat would make satisfactory fodder because both are very coarse in straw, especially the buckwheat. Sweet clover must be cut early if you are going to use it for hay, otherwise it would get very woody.

A. L.—What means can I take to rid my farm of English sparrows?

Answer—I do not know any practical method of ridding a farm of English sparrows. Cutting down brushwood which surrounds the fields will destroy their nesting places. As a rule they cling pretty closely to barn yards and groves. Crop the ground nearer the barn and woodlots or groves to fodder crops or corn, potatoes and so forth, crops on which the sparrows do not live.

W. G. S.—We are gardening on

## Some Do's and Don'ts in Setting Fruit Trees.

Don't put manure in the holes when setting trees. Orchardists have given manure a thorough trial and condemn it. If you do use manure, place it on top of the ground around the tree, but be sure to scrape it away before fall. It makes fine mouse nests if you leave it near the tree.

Don't crowd the roots or curve them around the hole. It is far better to cut them off if they are too long.

Don't leave air spaces under the roots; air is fatal to the root growth. Don't allow the trees to lie in the sun while you are digging holes. Dip the roots in water or, better still, in a pail or tub filled with thick muddy water.

If you can possibly spare them, put a few potatoes under each tree around the roots. The rotting potatoes furnish moisture and some plant food. If they grow, let them, but do not attempt to dig the potatoes.

Don't forget to cut back the branches to a length of not over six inches. Cut off all side branches of the peach trees. Do the pruning after you are through setting. Lean the trees a little in the direction of prevailing winds.

Don't put soil around the roots. Save the top soil and put it in the bottom around the roots.

Don't set out dwarf trees in a commercial orchard. They are for the city lot or garden. Don't set out standard trees on the city lot. Dwarf trees take up but little room and bear young.

Don't buy trees just because they are cheap. A cheap tree is a mighty dear tree. Deal only with reputable nurseries.

Don't buy pictures, buy trees. The standard varieties need no fancy pictures.

Don't let the high price of nursery stock prevent you from setting out some trees. A year from now your money will be gone and you will not have the trees.

Don't let your age prevent you from setting out an orchard. You are never too old to set trees. Father set apple trees when he was past sixty and lived to eat many an apple from them.

## Spray for Aphids.

As the days grow warmer and the buds begin to swell, the apple aphids hatch out and cluster on the buds where they begin feeding on the tender green tissues. At this time the insects are more susceptible to spray application than at any other, especially as later on the foliage offers the aphids some protection. An application of three-fourths of a pint of nicotine sulphate to every one hundred gallons of spray mixture will give satisfactory control, provided a very thorough application is made.

Practical experience in the control of these insects indicates that it is advisable to do all the spraying from the ground, rather than to stand on the rig while application is being made. By standing on the ground, one can thoroughly cover the lower branches and twigs, and in general do a better job than when the work is done from the top of the tank.

Beat your soil or your soil will beat you.

## Fertilizers for Gardens.

Fertilizers give great results in the garden. No garden is so rich that a careful use of the right fertilizers will not make better vegetables and more of them. I have seen gardens so rich in nitrogen that all kinds of plants made a rank growth, but many failed to produce good crops because of a lack of other soil elements. Wood ashes, ground phosphate rock, and ground bone are the common natural fertilizers for balancing where manure or green crops are used freely. Lime is not a fertilizer but is valuable to sweeten the soil and give the plants a chance to get the plant food in an available form.

Garden soils will be sure to get sour if kept manured for this tends to make them sour, and a soil to do its best should be more or less alkaline. Potash is not often needed, but phosphorus is commonly deficient, and bone-meal is one of the best fertilizers to use for phosphorus, as it is very rich in it, and also contains much lime and some nitrogen.

The best way to use bonemeal is to spread a narrow strip of it out a little from the row on each side and stir it into the soil. Barely cover the soil of these two or three-inch strips with a dusting of the bonemeal as a heavy application is not needed and more may be given later if it is thought best. It is perfectly safe and becomes available slowly, so lasts for a long time. One application is enough for quick-growing plants, but crops growing all summer will be benefited by a second. A light sprinkling of nitrate of soda when planting starts the plants off quickly as it is ready to use at once before much soil nitrogen becomes available.

## The Sunday School Lesson

APRIL 15.

Joseph, the Preserver of His People. Lesson Passage: Gen. 30: 22-24; 37: 2 to 50; 26. Golden Text—Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Exod. 20: 12.

LESSON FOREWORD—Among the patriarchs Joseph stands perhaps only second to Abraham as regards the level of high moral personality. In today's lesson we may observe two of his outstanding traits. First, there is his magnanimous forgiveness. All the more remarkable does his forgiveness appear when viewed against the moral background of his own generation. His was an age which, on the whole, believed in retaliation, rather than forgiveness. "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" was its usual practice. Second, his conception of providence, in which he unifies the actions and fortunes of men with God's directing and controlling hand. To recognize that God makes even the sins of men serve his purposes, without thereby lessening their moral responsibility was the solid achievement of Joseph's faith.

I. A Noble Forgiveness, 8-8.  
V. 3. This touching scene took place in Joseph's house—perhaps in the audience chamber. (See ch. 44:14.) Judah had been interceding passionately for Benjamin (44: 18-34) and Joseph could no longer restrain his pent-up feelings. *I am Joseph.* There is a sublime simplicity in this brief, direct and controlling word. To recognize that God makes even the sins of men serve his purposes, without thereby lessening their moral responsibility was the solid achievement of Joseph's faith.

V. 5. *Be not grieved.* Joseph uttered not a word of anger or revenge. He sought to soothe his brothers' troubled consciences. *God did send me.* He recognized a providential purpose in his life. His brothers, in selling him into Egypt had been the unconscious instruments of God.

V. 6. *The famine.* In Palestine famines were frequent because the fertility of the soil is almost entirely dependent upon the rainfall. In Egypt, however, not only is there remarkable fertility but, as Warren says, it is not directly dependent on rainfall, the annual flooding of the river Nile inundating nearly the whole land and making the cultivation of the soil, as a general rule, a yearly certainty. Sometimes, though rarely, the Nile failed to overflow and a famine ensued. One of the Ptolemies had to import grain from Syria and Phoenicia because of a famine in Egypt. *Eating; plowing.* See Isa. 30: 24. "The oxen and the young asses that ear the ground."

V. 7. *To preserve you a posterity;* leave you descendants. Had it not been for Joseph's timely aid, the whole house of Jacob might have perished with famine.

V. 8. *A father to Pharaoh.* This was perhaps an official title of the chief administrator under the king. Joseph had become a sort of vizier in Pharaoh's court. Aliens of capacity and fidelity were sometimes elevated to the most responsible positions in the state by Eastern monarchs.

II. A Bountiful Provision, 9-15.  
V. 9. *Haste ye.* Joseph bade them haste because he longed to see his father and because, if they delayed, his father might meanwhile perish through the famine.

V. 10. *The land of Goshen.* Goshen, one of the names of lower Egypt, comprised the territory lying to the east of the Nile delta. Situated on the frontiers of the desert, it was frequently invaded by hungry nomads. It was an excellent pasture region, and since Jacob and his family were shepherds and not agriculturists, it would admirably suit their tastes and pursuits.


V. 11. *There will I nourish thee.* A Hebrew slave rising to the highest position in Egypt, drawing his family after him, and supporting them with public property entrusted to his care, may be paralleled with similar instances. Jews who rose to high offices

## The Dairy

Dairy cows to produce profitably and economically, must consume their feed regularly and in such amounts as to encourage them to build up strong assimilative systems. Loss of appetite is commonly the result of feeding too large a ration, unclean grain, or moldy roughage, or feeding a too narrow ration without a change of feed. Among dairy cows, loss of appetite is a serious matter as it lessens production and impairs the working capacity of the animals.

My experience has proven to me that some cows are more susceptible to loss of appetite than others. Cows of this type should be gradually eliminated from the herd. However, the dairyman should learn to recognize the approach of this trouble and be continuously on the alert to avoid such conditions that would likely cause it. It is a great deal easier and more profitable to avert loss of appetite among members of the herd than to correct the trouble after it once occurs.

The ration should have as much variety as possible. Change of feed stimulates appetite and encourages the cows to increase production. Clean sweet roughage and grain should be fed and nothing else. I find that wheat bran in the ration is a wonderful appetite stimulant and keeps the digestive system in active working condition. I like to change my roughage feed as often as possible. Salt is essential and should be kept constantly before the cows, either in the yard or stable.



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## Horseshoes of Paper.

It has been proposed to make a paper horseshoe that shall for general purposes be the equal of the steel article in the following way: Parchment paper is cut in horseshoe form and built up to a suitable thickness by the use of a mixture of turpentine, Spanish white shellac and linseed oil treated with litharge and the whole is placed under an hydraulic press. This produces very light and uniform pieces and it is an easy matter to stamp out the nail holes and grooves. Instead of nailing to the horse's hoof they can be applied with an adhesive composition whose principal part is a solution of rubber in bisulphide of carbon. Paper waste could also be moulded into the shape of a horseshoe by use of the press, but the result is not so good as with the above.



Underneath Threat.  
Mrs. Fish—"Get out, you horrid tramp or I'll set the dog-fish on you!"

## Wax for Phonographs.

The carnuba, or wax palm, has many commercial uses, but its chief value is its production of wax for making phonograph records. The best quality comes from the tenderest leaves. They are cut at three different periods during the wax season, which extends from September to March. It takes about two thousand leaves to make twenty-five to thirty pounds of wax. The leaves are dried in the sun and when thoroughly withered are beaten with flails to remove the wax. The raw product is melted in boiling water and strained to remove foreign matter.

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## A Mystery.

I can't imagine why I feel As badly as I do Most every day at nine o'clock From then till half past two, I'm hardly able to sit up! But then I'm glad to say, I'm always better when the time Has come for us to play!



Down South. "Gee, Bill, I'm glad we don't live up north where it snows!"

Nature will soon appear in her spring clothes. As Nature's dress-maker, the farmer should use every effort, for his own interest, to see that her clothes are not too scanty.