

Alfalfa Growing

(Continued from 1st. page)

the cities, but on the farms. It not only furnishes the best of feed, but lots of it, puts the land in the best mechanical condition and furnishes nitrogenous matter for other crops to feed upon.

There have been failures and partial failures and these will continue for some time to come, until we know what to do and what not to do.

I will give a little of my experience with alfalfa. First select a piece of land that is well drained, that is, a piece of land that the water does not stand on. Alfalfa is somewhat like a steer, give it all the water it will drink and it will thrive, hold its head under water and it will drown. Second, have a piece of land from which three or more crops have been taken so that it is well pulverized and the root fibre is worked out of it. Now the next in order is a good summer fallow, plow in May or June to the depth of six or seven inches, harrow down at once to conserve moisture as fast as weeds appear destroy either by discing or harrowing, or both, during the summer. Allow no weeds to mature. If there is some well rotted barn yard manure, which there usually is, from five to ten loads per acre is not a bad thing to apply, more will do no harm. The following spring as soon as the land can be worked, put the disc and harrow to work as before, this will warm up the land, destroy weeds, and bring other weed seeds to the surface so that at the next cultivation these in turn would be destroyed. This should be from the middle to the last of May. Land thus treated, other things being equal, should be in the pink of condition, and even in a dry season should have moisture enough conserved to maintain and bring forth good results.

The next is the seed. Seed should be secured from the most reliable sources, and free from weed seeds, especially dodder seeds. It can either be sown with a seed drill or broad cast at the rate of say, from 12 to 15 lbs. per acre. I prefer a drill and put it down not more than an inch.

Sowing should not be done until danger of frost is over, as young alfalfa plants are very tender, but very hardy when fully matured. Right here, I may say that in my opinion a great many failures are due to the lack of the necessary bacteria, which will have to be supplied either by way of nitro-culture, or soil from an established alfalfa field. If from soil, from one to two hundred pounds per acre, sown broad cast either before or at the time of sowing the alfalfa seed. If from nitro culture the department of agriculture will furnish the amount and instructions necessary for the area intended to be sown. The above are some of the things that, in my opinion, should be done. I will now set forth one thing that should not be done, should all of the conditions that I have stated be complied with, there is one thing if practiced to a great extent will spell failure. That is close pasturing during fall and winter. I may say that there are in my opinion, three main reasons why I failed for so many years, viz., sowing on new land, lack of inoculation, and last, but by no means the least, heavy pasturing.

Whatever is done do not sow alfalfa with a nurse crop. I think the proper name for the supposed nurse crop is murder crop. I should also emphasize the necessity of clipping off the weeds and also the young growth of alfalfa once or twice during the growing season. This will check the weeds and stimulate the growth of the clover.

Now let us presume that we have a crop of alfalfa to cure. We will then proceed to treat this part that your enquirers are interested in, that of curing alfalfa.

This, like the other points covered is of vital importance, we may have a good crop of alfalfa, yet for the lack of good weather or being handled in an improper way, the crop may be rendered almost valueless for feed, which is chiefly what we are raising it for. Climatic conditions have all to do, or nearly so, with the curing process, although a little muscle helps out wonderfully when not quite cured with weather cloudy and looking like a storm. I do not know of any method whereby alfalfa can be cut and put right in the stack without spoiling, but I know of quite a number of men who claim that 25 or 50 lbs of salt to the ton will prevent, to quite an extent, alfalfa from mustering when put together a little out of condition. I think your reader must have been thinking of the silo. If this is the case, I cannot give any information on handling alfalfa for it.

I don't know any place where hay can be cured better than in Alberta, for usually in the latter part of June and the beginning of July we have good weather, the days are long and warm with a little wind which makes it ideal for hay-making. I think that at Airdrie, the first cutting will come off oftener in the first week of July than in June.

The method that I have, and am following is this: If I am intending feeding it to cows, weather permitting, I cut when the first blossom appears, if for horses I leave it until it is about one-third or one-half in blossom, let it lay for a few hours in the swath, then rake into windrows. I then take my fork and put it into small cocks, of about as much as a man would want to lift upon a rack at one forkful. If for any cause the alfalfa does not cure as fast as I think it should, (right here is where the muscle mentioned comes in in good shape) I take my fork and turn it over without tearing the cock to pieces. When handled in this way, most of the leaves remain on the stacks, and go to the right where they belong, and it put together right it comes out green and is a tempting morsel for all kinds of cattle and horses. The feeding value depends largely upon the weather and the way it is cured.

Every farmer owes it to himself, his posterity and the country in which he lives to prepare, plant and care for a small patch of alfalfa. If he will do this, it is my opinion that the time is not far distant when it can be sown without soil inoculation from afar, and it will grow anywhere. I have about 20 acres ranging from three years to a patch planted on the 27th of June last and is all that I could desire—a success. Thos H. Woodford.

—Have your—

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The Local Improvement Act, Village Act and School Assessment Ordinance

Notice is hereby given that the Local Improvement Act, Village Act and School Assessment Ordinance, 1908, as amended, is now in force. The following is a list of the districts affected by the Act, and the amount of the assessment for each district for the year 1908.

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SYNOPSIS OF Coal Mining Regulations

Coal mining rights of the Dominion, in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, the Yukon Territory, the North-West Territory and British Columbia, may be leased for a term of twenty-one years at an annual rental of \$1 an acre, not more than 2,560 acres will be leased to one applicant.

Application for a lease must be made to the Agent or Sub-Agent of the district in which the rights applied for are situated. In surveyed territory the land must be described by sections, or legal sub-divisions of sections, and in unsurveyed territory the tract applied for shall be staked out.

Each application must be accompanied by a fee of \$5, which will be refunded if the rights applied for are not available but not otherwise. A royalty shall be paid on the merchantable output of the mine at the rate of five cents per ton.

Every lessee of coal mining rights which are not being operated shall furnish the district agent of Dominion Lands with a sworn statement to that effect at least once in each year.

The lease will include the coal mining rights only, but the lessee may be permitted to purchase whatever available surface rights may be considered necessary for the working of the mine at the rate of \$10 an acre.

For full information application should be made to the Secretary of the Department of Interior, Ottawa, or to any Agent or Sub-Agent of Dominion Lands.

W. W. CORY,

Deputy Minister of the Interior.

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