

# FARMER'S ADVOCATE

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## THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

—AND—  
Home Magazine.

WILLIAM WELD, Editor and Proprietor  
—FOUNDED 1866.—

The Only Illustrated Agricultural Journal  
Published in the Dominion.

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### Spring Wheat.

Many are the enquiries sent to us from different parts of the Dominion, asking which is the best kind of spring wheat we can recommend to them. To the farmers in Ontario residing anywhere south of the G. W. R., we would say, do not sow any. Judging from the past 12 years' experience and observation, we should, at a rough estimate, consider that all the spring wheat raised south of that line could not have cost the farmers less than \$1.50 per bushel. Of course, we have no statistics to show this; but to arrive at a correct estimate, one cannot judge from the very few reports of farmers that have had fair returns. We must add thousands of those farmers that have had miserable returns; also those whose crops were total failures. Corn, hay, grass, &c., in fact, any other kind of farm produce, has paid, and will pay, better than spring wheat, in the part above mentioned. To those living north of the G. T. R. in Ontario, or in Quebec, Manitoba, the Maritime Provinces, or British Columbia, we say sow the variety that is doing best in your locality. We are careful to examine the best and most reliable reports from the best seedsmen, and receive accounts from the American Government; and they spare no expense in procuring and trying every kind, and from no source can we hear of any new kind to recommend to you. We hear that agents are out in some parts of Canada with some new varieties, but we advise our subscribers not to waste their time or money. If there is anything worth having, the seedsmen will supply you. The best

class of seedsmen and nurserymen will be found in the advertising columns of this journal; send to them for their catalogues.

The \$750,000 wheat, or the Ontario Government wheat, has not done any better than other varieties during the past year. The White Russian wheat cannot be distinguished by us or you from the Lost Nation. In the northern part of Ontario it has done well; the Red Fern has also done well; and Fife or Glasgow wheat has done about as well. In some localities one may have surpassed the other, in other localities the same variety has been most condemned. It is our impression that the days of raising and depending on spring wheat, as a source of profit, in Ontario, are fast passing away, and those that abandon its cultivation first will be the best off. Manitoba and the Northwest Territory can raise spring wheat cheaper than we can. We can raise beef, mutton, wool, butter, cheese, poultry, fruit, &c., cheaper and better than they can. Devote your attention to these, and let the farmers that say they cannot learn anything from agricultural papers stick to their spring wheat. Leave your land in grass, or sow corn, barley or oats, and feed the produce to your sheep, cattle, horses or poultry, and you will find the profit in your favor.

A good farmer will conduct his farm on the same principle that a manufacturer will—that is, to make money. No successful manufacturer of reaping machines makes everything; he now purchases much of his goods in parts. Raise your parts—wool, butter and cheese—and buy your spring wheat from those who can raise it cheaper than you can.

Some are even yet enquiring if we know where they can procure the Eldorado or Egyptian wheat, despite the loss that all the farmers we have heard of had with it everywhere. It has been tried in various parts of Canada, and the only place where it has been partially successful is near Thornbury. It is the best looking spring wheat we have ever seen, but will not succeed, therefore we will not recommend it.

### Selection of Seeds.

There is nothing of greater importance to the farmer than the selection of seeds. Not even the tillage of the soil and the preparation of the seed-bed require greater care and the exercise of more skilled judgment than the selection of pure seed and of the variety best adapted to the soil and climate. The farmer's profit in tillage or in mixed husbandry depends principally on the productiveness of his crop. A perfect seed is an individual member of a certain species, inheriting all the good qualities belonging to the species, and capable of transmitting those qualities in equal perfection to other generations. The influence of cultivation, soil and climate often changes the nature of seeds so as to impress upon them characters different from the species to which they belong, and in this way varieties are produced. The valuable pro-

perties thus acquired by cultivation, climates and other causes, are, for example, increased hardiness and symmetry of appearance, in the case of roots, and weight of kernel and stiffness of straw in the case of grain. It is well for the farmer in his selection of seed to acquaint himself of the peculiarities of certain varieties, and adapt them to his special circumstances. For seed grain for an exposed situation, select a variety that ripens early, and is by nature hardy. For rich soil, on which the crop would be apt to lodge and the grain be consequently light, let such be selected as will produce short, stiff straw—always selecting that which is most suitable to the circumstances.

For the production of a healthy, vigorous plant, the seed should have in itself a sufficient store of nutriment to supply the wants of the young plant until its roots and leaves are fully developed. This needed nutrition cannot be supplied unless the several parts of the seed be fully developed and its vital powers be unimpaired. It has been shown by experiments, carefully conducted for the purpose of testing the vitality of seed of different ages, that at least half the vital powers of our cultivated seeds are lost after the first year. To this general rule there are a few exceptions, but, as a rule, it is well to select fresh seed.

Not only should seed be so fresh as to possess all its vitality, it should also be fully developed. A puny seed cannot put forth or nourish a healthy, vigorous plant. See in selecting seed, that it has been fully matured. Of this accurate judgment can generally be formed from its plumpness and color. Seed should, as much as possible, be selected that is of uniform size and color. In selecting a sample of grain, this rule is a good one; but it does not hold good in regard to small seeds, such as clover. And in many instances you must, after the most careful selection, rely greatly on the known character of the seed merchant.

The purity of seed is another matter of great importance. Farmers have little idea of the extent to which seeds of weeds are sown by them with their crops. Respectable seedmen take great care to have the seed they sell as free from the seeds of weeds as is in their power; but the farmer selecting for himself must also use every precaution. Some deleterious weeds, that are thought by superficial observers to be indigenous to the soil, have been introduced with imported seeds.

### Diseased Stock.

The Chicago Drovers' Journal, of Feb. 10th, is rather annoyed at the article headed "Danger," in our last issue. It plainly admits that they have diseases, but say they are in unimportant districts. If our contemporary would look at his own admission and consider the results, he would at once say that our object in preventing the introduction of any of the diseases into Canada in any form would tend much to the welfare of the States. For if we are not successful in keeping our stock free from disease, the Americans could have no country in the world from which they could depend in obtaining healthy stock to re-stock the localities where disease had rendered stock raising unprofitable.

He also says that "hogs purchased in this market (Chicago) for Canadian packers are the finest the land affords, without any exception."