

ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND EXPERIMENTAL FARM.

THE CULTIVATION OF SUGAR BEETS.

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INTRODUCTION.

Sugar beets for cattle feed can be grown probably in any part of Ontario; but owing to favorable climatic conditions, they can be grown for the production of sugar more profitably in certain portions or sections than in others. Experience in counties where the sugar beet is extensively grown shows that it attains its greatest perfection where the temperature for the months of May, June, and July has a mean of 70° F.

A line running from Sarnia in a southeasterly direction to St. Thomas and then curving gradually in a northeasterly direction through the counties of Norfolk and Haldimand to the city of Hamilton would locate the northern boundary of the United States theoretical beet-sugar belt passing through Ontario. The section of Ontario to the south of this line, comprising Essex, Kent, Bothwell, Elgin, Welland, Lincoln and the southern portions of Lambton, Middlesex, Norfolk, Haldimand and Wentworth, possesses favorable climatic, and, for the most part, soil conditions for the highest development of the sugar beet.

It is not to be understood however, that there are no other sections in Ontario where sugar beets can be grown for sugar production. Temperature and length of season both north and east are more or less influenced by the lakes; consequently, in sections where land can be cultivated for planting by the 1st of May and where favorable beet harvesting weather can be depended upon through October and the early part of November, beets may be produced as successfully as within the above named section.

To grow sugar beets with a high content of sugar and a paying tonnage, which are requisites of the beet sugar industry, requires a high degree of agricultural skill. It is indeed a great mistake to suppose that because a farmer may be able to grow sugar beets for feed, he can also grow them for sugar production. The former means bulk, while the latter means quality and bulk. To produce quality, i.e., a high content of sugar, requires knowledge, experience, and skill. By a very little difference in the soil, in the cultivation, in the kinds