



Flax Compared with other Crops.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—I purpose briefly to consider the result of the culture of flax as compared with other generally cultivated crops, so far as I can judge from personal observation, in this section of the country. It is asserted that to till the land properly, we may obtain an average of two tons per acre, which sold for \$14 per ton, amounts to \$28, deduct from this \$3 for seed, and \$5 for harvesting expenses, and we have the net result of \$20 for cultivation. To cultivate the same land to equal perfection, and sow with barley, we have an equal chance to receive 35 bushels to the acre, which at 70 cents per bushel, would realize \$24 50, and for one ton of straw, \$5 50, giving a total of \$30; deduct from this for seed, harvesting, &c., \$3 50, we have \$26 for cultivation and rent for estate. Sow up with oats, and we would obtain 55 bushels, which at 30 cents per bushel, would make \$16 50; add to this \$9 for one and a half tons of straw and chaff, which gives a total of \$25 50; and deducting \$3 50 for seed, harvesting and threshing, there will remain \$22 for labour. Similarly take peas, and you are likely to obtain 30 bushels to the acre, which at 60 cents per bushel, gives \$18, add for straw, \$5, makes a total of \$24; from this deduct \$4 for cost of seed, harvesting, &c., and \$20 is left to the producer,—an amount equal to the flax. We must not forget that green crops are beneficial to land, whereas white ones are the reverse, which gives the balance in favour of peas. We shall not take wheat into consideration, as at present it is a precarious crop; but were all things equal, there would be a greater financial profit resulting from its cultivation (at the present prices) than from any of the above mentioned crops.

The above remarks show a balance in favour of other crops, as the straw is indispensable for feed and manure; but it is expected that the price of coarse grains will be lower since the abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty, which may somewhat equalize the results. There are other great considerations which should induce farmers to cultivate flax, such as the employment of capital in the extension of home manufacture. It is obvious that it is to our interests as Canadians to encourage the cultivation of such produce as will tend to develop the greatest amount of manufacturing resources, especially if the benefit to the producer be sufficient to sustain him in his effort. Factories require operators, and their establishment would increase immigration—would build up our little towns, increase trade, and create a better home market for general produce. We would be unworthy the name of citizens were it our sole aim to enrich ourselves at the cost of the country, by impoverishing our soil, and by causing our families to seek homes in other lands.

There is room for a vast increase in woollen, flax, and cheese manufactories in Canada, and capital sufficient to sustain them, but there is a lack of those who are willing to invest in them. We have too many capitalists whose highest aim is to take advantage of other men's misfortunes, extorting from them the highest rate of interest, thereby sapping the very vitals of the business element of our country, and involving it in bankruptcy. If some of the above class would invest in manufactures, they would not only increase their wealth, but would become public benefactors. It must be confessed that our American neighbours show us an excellent example in the employment of capital. They have more determined enterprise, are willing to invest in and encourage all branches of manufacture, hence their ability to pay such high prices for our produce.

Let us as farmers strive to redeem ourselves in this respect, and encourage manufacture, for upon this depends the future welfare of our country. We can adopt the co-operative or joint stock principle, and become our own manufacturers, and thus establish a sure market for our produce.

W. W.
Brampton, April 24th, 1866.

Culture of Indian Corn.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER

I hail THE CANADA FARMER to my home as a friend, as it is the only medium whereby we, farmers of Canada, can convey our ideas and practical results of the byre and the field. Thinking a few notes upon the culture of Indian corn may not be uninteresting to the many readers of the CANADA FARMER, I take the liberty given by the editor, requesting short accounts from farmers and others. *Kind of soil and preparation for planting*—Sandy loam and black sandy mould are the best adapted for sure and abundant crops of this excellent cereal. The second crop from sod is best; as soon as convenient after taking off said crop, (after fall wheat is best,) plough up the land, and harrow well during the fall; if a good crop of wheat is got, no manure is required, and as soon as other spring work is got along with, plough up the land the second time, finish up before 24th May, and mark out for planting from 3 to 4 feet both ways, according to the variety selected for planting, but by no means select any of the white kinds, if quality is desired, (20 years experience has taught me this.)

Now we are ready for planting, (at a distance from any lake,) be sure to plant the medium size yellow, as it ripens early, the larger kind generally is too long in ripening, the fall frost is apt to cut it. Plant 24th May, 3 1/2 feet apart each way at right angles, if there is no cut worms in land, put four kernels in each hill, of well selected seed. This is very important as the germinating powers of Indian corn is easily killed I always plant the corn dry, just as it comes from the cob, discarding the corn on each end of the cob. If a large and perfect crop is desired plant no pumpkins with the corn. 50 to 70 bushels of shelled corn per acre is my average yield. Between 6th and 10th June pass the one-horse cultivator (Henry Collard's, Gananoque, C. W., is the best,) both ways between the rows; also draw a little fresh earth with hand-hoe to each hill; a top-dressing is now required; I find nothing better than pure gypsum, say a large spoonful to each hill. 80 to 100 lbs. per acre leached ashes is a good substitute. About the 20th June go through the same process, save the top-dressing. If any weeds show themselves, pass through again, allow nothing to grow but the corn. Corn does not require hilling up, nor pulling out suckers to ensure a good crop.

Within four months of planting the crop is ready for harvesting; just before doing so, pass through the field and gather the best ears for seed, leaving enough husk on to tie them, and hang up in a pure dry place. I have been frequently asked the secret of raising such good crops of corn. The above is my mode, told in the plain and homely language of a farmer.

Yours truly,

HENRY EDWARDS.

Lobo, 20th April, 1866.

Flax Culture.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER:

SIR,—It is to be regretted that the fall wheat has suffered from the winter frosts this season, and to those who are sufferers in this respect, flax presents itself as a most valuable crop to supply this loss, as the land is in the best possible condition for a crop of flax, with either a slight ploughing or applying the cultivator. The opportunity, too, of being able to secure the best of Riga seed, lately imported by the Government, at a much less rate than even cost price, should also be an additional inducement to farmers to try this crop. While they may safely look for several inches longer straw, they may also expect at least from \$4 to \$5 a bushel another year for all the seed they can raise for sowing purposes.

In the counties of Halton, York, and Peel, where so much complaint is heard of the failure of the fall wheat, farmers should feel encouraged to make a trial of this new and valuable branch of Canadian industry, when facilities are at their door for having it prepared for market. The Scutching mills at Norval, Scarborough, Weston and Streetsville, in connection with the extensive linen manufactory at the latter place is a sure guarantee of a market for both seeds and fibre. In some instances parties have already ploughed up as many as 20 acres of their fall wheat and are substituting flax. In the neighbourhood of Fergus, farmers are known to have sown as much as sixty bushels of seed this year. While we find this going on, others need have less hesitation in putting a few acres. In no other instance have they the same encouragement afforded them. Seed is offered by the mill-owners without paying for it until after harvest, and a sure market when the crop comes off the ground.

JOHN A. DONALDSON.

The Wheat Crop.

To the Editor of THE CANADA FARMER.

SIR—Since wheat has so frequently failed to realize the expectations of the farmer, it behoves him to direct his attention to some crop that will yield satisfactorily in soil that does not do so well in wheat.

Now, it is an established fact that ground that does not contain the properties essential in growing wheat, may yet possess those which are capable of producing an excellent crop of flax; and an instance has just now come to my knowledge, to which I wish to draw the attention of those concerned, of a farmer who has ploughed up a wheat field in which he was disappointed, and this with the resolution of putting the whole in flax; and, as there is going to be a scutching mill in Weston this summer, where I have been informed, a certain quantity of the straw will be purchased reaped or cradled—seed being now distributed, I cannot but think this an excellent opportunity for those thus situated as to wheat, to adopt this plan of turning such ground to advantage, and of giving it a change that will be beneficial. Hoping that this suggestion will not be thrown away on your readers, I am, &c..

AGRICULTURIST.

York, 2nd May, 1866.

TANNING SHEEP SKINS.—“A constant Reader” makes the following enquiry:—“Could you, or some of your numerous readers, give a simple and effectual method of Tanning Sheep or Lamb Skins with the wool on?”

COMMUNICATION ACKNOWLEDGED.—A huge, closely-written sheet has reached us from “Beaver River” of Collingwood. Our correspondent glides lightly over no less than six different subjects, and winds up with a poetical effusion—chiefly remarkable for its length,—for it contains no less than thirteen verses. There are probably in the sheet two or three practical suggestions worth printing; but they resemble a few grains of wheat mixed in a bushel of chaff. They cost a great amount of time and labour to find them, and when found are not worth the trouble bestowed in the search.

HAMBURGH HEN'S EGGS.—“W. Efford” of Colborne, makes the following enquiry:—“Can you, or any of your correspondents, inform me where I can obtain a dozen of Hamburgh Hen's Eggs, and at what price?”

ANS.—We are unable to supply the information. Some of our readers probably can.

SHEEP GRUBS.—“James Wood, of Baillieboro” desires “some information respecting the treatment of sheep, when afflicted with grub in the head.”

ANS.—If our correspondent refers to Vol. I., page 103, of THE CANADA FARMER, he will find an illustrated and exhaustive article on the subject, from which he may obtain all the information he desires.

GRAFTING WAX.—“A Subscriber” makes the following enquiry:—“Will you kindly inform me the proper proportions of Resin &c., to make grafting Wax?”

ANS.—The composition to which you refer is prepared after a variety of receipts. A good grafting mixture results from thoroughly incorporating four parts of resin, three parts of beeswax, and three parts of lard. These ingredients should be well mixed while warm.

CARDING MACHINES.—“C. W. Jones” of Madoc writes:—“I take the liberty of referring to you for information which I find it impossible to procure from any other source. I wish to purchase a Carding machine, but do not know where they are manufactured. Could you inform me whether there is a factory of the kind in this country, or where they can be purchased in the States.”

ANS.—We are unable to supply the information. Manufacturers of such machinery ought to advertise in this journal.

IMPROVED CHURN WANTED.—“Robert Blair” of Grand Bay, Saguenay, writes as follows:—“Can you inform me through the columns of your much esteemed journal where I can procure a churn on the most improved plan, capable of churning one hundred pounds weight of butter at one time, to be worked by horse or other power.”

ANS.—We cannot supply the desired information. Makers of churns and Dairy utensils, generally, would do well to advertise in our columns.