

SEED.

Only well developed, well-matured, uniform, sound seed of strong vitality should be used. Beans from plants infected with the common disease known as anthracnose or pod spot, should not be used for seed. Diseased seed will usually produce diseased plants and infection may be spread to healthy plants. Hence it is advisable, where possible, to select the future supply of seed from the growing crop, from healthy parent stock.

The vitality of the seed can be learned by conducting a germination test. This test can be made at home by planting a uniform sample of the seed in a pot of moistened soil placed in a bright warm position, the living room being a very suitable location.

Good seed should produce uniformly strong sprouts in a period of five or six days.

VARIETIES.

Some of the best yielding varieties of field beans are Pearce's Improved Tree, Schofield Pea, Medium or Navy, Common White Pea and White Wonder. These varieties require from 112 to 115 days in which to reach the proper stage of maturity for harvesting.

CULTIVATION.

After planting, but before the plants appear, which will usually be from three to six days depending largely upon the weather, it is advisable to harrow the soil lightly with a slant-tooth harrow or even a light smoothing harrow. This operation will break the crust, destroy weeds, help warm the soil and stimulate rapid germination of the seed and growth of the plants. As soon as possible after the beans are up, and can be seen in the row, the single and two-row cultivators should be used. It should be the aim of every grower to keep the soil stirred on the surface. Thus as promptly as practicable after each rain and in time to prevent the forming of a crust the soil should be stirred by means of the cultivator. The work of cultivation also should be kept well in hand early in the season so that little cultivation need be given after the blossoming stage of growth has been reached.

HAND WORK.

Usually a certain amount of hand-hoeing is necessary and this operation may be very much reduced by prompt and thorough hoeing in the early part of the growing season.

HARVESTING.

Where there is enough help or where small areas only are grown the beans may be pulled by hand. For large crops of beans it is generally profitable to use bean harvesters which consist of the ordinary two-wheeled cultivator equipped with two flat knives placed to form a V cutting two rows at a time and placing both rows into one windrow. The beans may be bunched by hand or by means of the side delivery rake which places from three to five rows together. After cutting, the beans should be kept clean and should be stored with as little weathering as possible.

THRESHING.

Specially constructed threshers are available. Sometimes with special arrangement the common thresher can be used; however, by this means there is more loss through beans being broken or split. These cannot be sold either for commercial or for seed purposes. For small quantities or for a special variety grown for seed it is often advisable to do the threshing with the flail.