

Alfalfa in Halton County

So great is the interest taken in alfalfa in Halton Co., Ont., in the more progressive districts that it is said that the women folk there are in the habit of discussing the wonderful merits of the crop at their afternoon teas. It is certain that the farmers themselves must have been discussing alfalfa for some time past, as in some of the townships several acres of alfalfa are found on almost every farm, and where proper methods have been pursued the farmers without exception enthusiastically proclaim the wonderful feed producing qualities of the crop.

Mr. J. Lynn, of Nassagaweya township, informed one of the editors of Farm and Dairy recently that three years ago his father put in 20 acres of alfalfa. Ten acres was on low, wet ground and was not a big success. The other 10 acres on higher land did well. The following year after taking the first cutting the field afforded splendid pasture for the rest of the season. Equally good results were obtained the second year and in neither case did the alfalfa seem to be injured by pasturing. Most of the alfalfa was fed to the horses, and Mr. Lynn states that alfalfa is a particularly satisfactory horse feed.

ALFALFA WITHOUT A NURSE CROP
"I never missed a catch of alfalfa in my life," said Mr. W. O. Morse of the same township. "I start early in the spring and work over the soil every week or 10 days until the end

of June in order to give all weeds a chance to germinate and then cultivation exterminates the young weeds. If my land were clean I would sow the seed alone without a nurse crop as soon as the soil is in fit condition in the spring, and in this way I get a good cutting the first year, and have sufficient growth of the second crop to protect the alfalfa through the winter."

Particular stress was laid by Mr. Morse on the value of alfalfa as a weed exterminator. "It is the only thing," said he, "I know of that will exterminate blue weed, with which my farm is infested. The thorough preparation of the soil for the crop will kill a great many of the seeds, and as we cut the alfalfa two or three times the seed never gets an opportunity to ripen. Blue weed is a biennial and it will disappear in a couple of years." Mr. Morse has grown alfalfa for 10 years and is becoming more enthusiastic each year over the crop, and by next spring plans to have the greater portion of his small farm seeded to alfalfa. The soil on this farm is of a light gravel that will not produce other crops satisfactorily.

WILL NOT PASTURE ALFALFA

One point in which Mr. Morse most decidedly differs from his neighbor, Mr. Lynn, is in the matter of pasturing the alfalfa. Speaking with Farm and Dairy's representative on this point he said, "If you examine an alfalfa field you will notice that the crowns of the plants come up

higher above the surface than do those of red clover, or the grasses. Close pasturing, particularly by horses, injures those crowns causing the death of the plant. If pastured at all alfalfa must be pastured very cautiously, and it is my opinion that no pasturing is better yet."

Mr. Chas. Twiss will put in seven acres of alfalfa this spring. He has had a small acreage seeded to the crop and is well satisfied with the results. His neighbor, Mr. Albert Hull is also putting in seven acres. Part of the soil on Mr. Twiss's farm is a light sand, full of twitch grass, and experience has taught him that alfalfa will kill this weed. Mr. Twiss informed our representative that he had gotten his first enthusiasm for alfalfa from his uncle, Mr. Robt. Twiss, of Wentworth county,

who regards alfalfa as an AI feed for both milk cows and hogs. This gentleman feeds his cows on corn silage without meal with splendid results. For pig feed Mr. Twiss steams the alfalfa in a large vat and mixes with it meal and whey. He keeps 200 hogs. Very little meal is put into this alfalfa ration until the hogs are to be finished for market, when the proportion of meal is increased.

We have used several varieties of corn such as King Philip, Salzer's North Dakota, White Flint, and Mammoth Southern Sweet, and all have yielded good crops. We generally sow about three pecks to the acre, which may be a little thick. The surplus, however, is easily thinned out with a hoe.—Daniel Henderson, Lanark Co., Ont.



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