

Fighting Late Blight

J. G. Cox, Colchester Co., N. S.

"Keep everlastingly at it," should be the motto of the farmer who is fighting potato blight, or rot, which is the same thing. Some farmers hold the erroneous idea that it doesn't make much difference if the tops do die down after they reach a certain stage in their growth. This is a great mistake. The tops should be kept growing as long as possible so as to give every possible chance for the "rubbins" to develop into good sized tubers.

The danger of an attack of blight is not yet past. The warm nights of early August, especially if the weather is foggy, make ideal conditions for the growth of blight. In fact, on a warm, foggy evening, the odor from a potato field that is attacked by blight is quite perceptible. The disease can be detected in this way before any appearance of infection is noticeable to the eye.

GET BUSY AT ONCE

This is the time to get busy. One spraying at this stage will do more good than two later. The object of spraying is not so much to destroy the fungus when it has become established in the potato plant, but rather to prevent the disease getting a hold. In fact, once the plant has become thoroughly infested, spraying is not of much use.

The prime object of the spray is to destroy the germinating spore. When the thread-like protuberance (we might term it sprout) which the spore sends out comes in contact with the spray, it is

killed. This shows the importance of getting after blight as soon as it is noticed in the field. The spray should be on the leaves before the spores have become disseminated. The extent of the damage done by late blight depends in a large measure on the weather. When the air is humid, blight develops rapidly. At such times the potato patch should be sprayed every 10 days. If the weather is drier, once in two weeks will be often enough.

PREPARING THE MIXTURE

We spray with the ordinary Bordeaux mixture; five pounds lime, four pounds bluestone, 40 gallons of water and half a pound or a little more of Paris green as a lunch for the bugs. We have found that it takes about a barrel and a half to two barrels of spray to cover an acre. We can then figure up how much we will need for our patch. We put the required amount of lime in a cask and slack it, and then fill the cask partly full, say 25 gallons. Then so many gallons of this solution will be the equivalent of so many pounds of lime.

When dipping out of this cask we stir the solution well. In the meantime, we have made a stock solution of the bluestone, so many pounds to so many gallons of water. We strain the milk of lime into the sprayer barrel, dilute to 25 gallons or more, add the required amount of bluestone solution and Paris green, and dilute to 40 gallons. Having the lime and bluestone solutions prepared more ahead, enables us to perform the actual spraying operations much more quickly.

We use a spraying outfit that is both cheap and

effective. We mounted a barrel sprayer on an old express wagon, having a piece of half-inch gas pipe across the rear, with nozzles attached to do four rows at a time. This is an outfit that any farmer can have, and when blight is bad will pay for itself in one season.

Consideration of Pedigree

L. K. Shaw, Welland Co., Ont.

I would rather have an animal whose pedigree showed a long line of ancestors of uniform high excellence than one whose dam made a great record, but whose grand-dam was comparatively unknown. I would rather have a sow whose dam, grand-dam and great-grand-dam had been of high excellence than one whose dam was champion at Toronto exhibition but with no ancestors worth mentioning behind that. And so on through all classes of stock.



A Triumph of Invention That Saves The Farmer Much Back Breaking Toil

Taken one year with another, potatoes will return a larger profit per acre than any other common farm crop. In Ontario, particularly, is there a great field for potato growing as so far Ontario farmers come far short of supplying their own home markets. The hard work in connection with the potato crop has been largely eliminated by such labor-saving machinery as the digger here illustrated.

One reason for this preference of mine is that I fear "sports." "Sports" are hard to explain, but in animal breeding we frequently run across them. Who has not heard of cows with tested but unsuccessful ancestry, themselves making large records? What pig man is there who has not at times had an exceptionally fine individual in a litter that from its ancestry promised little? These are "sports" and "sports" do not reproduce their own high quality in an appreciable number of instances. How many of our world record cows, for instance, have daughters that do as well as they do?

Another reason why I would fear to breed from animals who themselves carry all the reputation of the strain, is that their offspring continually revert back to previous ancestors. If I knew that in a certain strain the animals had been of high average excellent, but nothing very exceptional, I would never have to fear reversion to inferior stock. With the "sport" it is different.

Another mistake commonly made is to go back too far for good ancestors. For instance, I recently attended a Shorthorn sale at which some very commonplace animals were sold. The auctioneer made much of the fact that about eight or 10 generations back their ancestors had been the best of Cruikshank stock. The buyers apparently believed that that old-time ancestry was worth a lot of money whereas the influence of a good animal as far back as six generations is practically nil.

Summer Feed for Big Records

"Well, two of my cows have made 10,000 pounds of milk a piece in 4½ months and they are only four-year-olds at that."

Is it any wonder that Mr. Joseph O'Reilly, of Peterboro county, is satisfied with his venture in pure-bred cattle? A short time ago a representative of Farm and Dairy was in conversation with Mr. O'Reilly, who was warm in his praises of the merits of pure-bred cattle. He has disposed of all his grades and now keeps nothing but pure-breds. Although his entire herd, young and old, numbers but 10 head, it is of the right stuff.

As to the two cows already mentioned, Mr. O'Reilly, naturally enough, feels proud of the work they are doing. "I don't see any reason why they shouldn't hit the 20,000 pound mark," said he. "Besides these two I have two heifers

that are doing well, in fact I just have the four milking, and the four are now averaging 60 pounds a day."

Considering the burnt-up condition of pastures in general, we were anxious to know just how Mr. O'Reilly was able to get such results.

"I sowed several acres of soiling crops, peas and oats, this spring," was his reply to our query, "and as soon as the pasture commenced to get poor I saw to it that the cows didn't go hungry. Just at present, in addition to the peas and oats, I am feeding my two best cows 15 pounds daily of Pro-fat molasses meal (a mixture of brewers' grains and molasses). These cows are averaging 70 pounds daily, so I know it pays me."

"In fact," continued Mr. O'Reilly, "when the tester was around not long ago, the cows were coming up in their milk so fast that he was afraid he wouldn't get a fair test; I had commenced feeding the brewers' grains just two days before he arrived. One of the cows went up to 90 pounds while he was with us. My other cows get less grain, seven or eight pounds."

Mr. O'Reilly is an alfalfa enthusiast. "When the peas and oats give out," said he, "I intend to feed green alfalfa until the corn is ready. A few days ago I gave the cows two or three feeds of alfalfa and the increase in the milk flow was quite noticeable. I consider it the best soiling crop we can get."

A "KINK" WORTH KNOWING

How to get the most out of damaged hay is another thing that Mr. O'Reilly knows something about. "Last summer," said he, "owing to the continuous wet weather, some of our alfalfa got pretty waddy before we were able to get it cut. During the winter the cows didn't seem to take to it very readily. I bought some cheap feed molasses and sprinkled some of it over the alfalfa at each feed; the cattle cleaned it right up."

By keeping cows of the right type, growing soiling crops and feeding grain to the heaviest milkers, Mr. O'Reilly has certainly solved the problem of supplementing short pastures. Good cows he considers the most important part of the combination. He is starting in a small way, but he is starting right.