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What Farmers Ask Me

NEW FARMER'S ENQUIRIES

Q.—I am a new arrival here and bought a farm, breaking 30 acres in 1913. I put it into Marquis wheat, 5 acres; barley 5 acres, and balance to "Regenerated Abundance" oats. I am disappointed in returns, the wheat and all was in early, about April 29. The crop dragged along and did not ripen well, in the spring it dragged along in the same way. Is it the methods, the soil, or the climate that is the cause? I was sending to the seed man's for Banner oats, but farmers here say that Banner and Newmarket are too late for this country (west of Innisfail). Is there any method of cultivation that will hasten crops along, or do you know of better seed oats for here? Have you had any difficulty getting these oats to ripen before frost? I shall be glad of your reply as I am perplexed.

A.—I am going to try alfalfa. I am putting in potatoes, garden seeds, etc., and will the following year sow alfalfa. Is that your preparation of the soil? What kind of alfalfa should I sow? Next year, of course, I will try it, but I can get my ground ready. I have drained a slough of about 25 acres, drained it thoroughly. Ditch is two feet deep right thru it. The soil was very mossy, but draining has killed the moss and I burnt it same year. Last fall again I fired it; I may burn it again in the Spring. The soil appears spongy, yet moist. I am going to break ten acres, if I can plow such stuff. Have you any advice to offer on such soil?

Then, again, I want to grow on it hay for cattle. I have in mind timothy, some say red top, others say mix it. While one man says timothy, red top and alsike clover mixed. Can you advise me on this? Should I seed it the same year as I break it to hay or let it lay a year? How can I get clover started on high land? What kind is sown?

A.—We have found comparatively heavy seeding the only method of hastening maturity on the heavy black soil of your district. We sow on summer fallow 3 bushels of "Abundance" oats and 3 bushels of "Marquis" wheat to the acre. The amount of seed that you can use will depend upon the amount of moisture present in the soil a seed time, as, of course, there is no way of determining the rainfall of the future, and one must be guided only by the moisture in the soil in the spring. If your land is well worked I am of the opinion that the above quantities of seed will prove satisfactory during any average year in your district. You will find Ligowo oats earlier than Banner or Abundance and if you are intending growing spring wheat and require an earlier variety, you can secure it in the variety called "Prelude," which is ten days earlier than Marquis and yields about ten bushels per acreless.

I would advise you to write for Bulletin No. 12, "Alfalfa Growing in Alberta," which, I think, will answer your questions in regard to alfalfa. I would suggest that you grow Red Top, on the wet land you refer to, i.e., the slough you have drained. This grass may be seeded at the rate of about ten pounds per acre the same year the land is broken. Red Top is naturally a wet land grass, while either alsike clover nor timothy do well on very wet soil. If, however, water does not lie on this land for any length of time, then timothy should succeed and should be sown at the rate of about five pounds per acre.

We are growing alsike clover seed with a nurse crop of barley on our high lands and are having no difficulty getting it established.

BREAKING TIMOTHY SOD

Q.—I have ten acres of land lying in timothy, this being the second year that it has been cut for hay (it has not stood out very thickly as yet). I wish to know whether I can get the land in shape for growing a crop of wheat next year. I have been told by a neighbor that if I was to break it up before the fall and let it be in the furrow over the winter, in the spring digging it and seeding it down, that I will

get a satisfactory result, but I am a little dubious of this. My own experience of breaking up timothy pasture has been as follows: In the latter end of September, last year, I broke up four acres of old timothy land that had become very poor, due to stooing out very much. I broke up this land, digging it down, harrowing it, and let it lie over the winter. On April 26, of this year, I plowed it to a depth of six inches, ack setting, as you may say, harrowed it in and put it into barley, and the result is, I assure you, excellent, so much so that I intended to do the same this year with the other piece I wish to grow wheat on, but would be glad to have the benefit of your experience. What do you think about it?

A.—Your scheme for fall breaking is quite feasible, and I would suggest that if you have time that this fall broken timothy sod should also be disced this fall. We are handling our timothy by breaking in the late summer and early fall, and do not backset, and get first-class results and since there is plenty of moisture this year I think you could hope for a satisfactory yield of wheat next year.

SPRING BREAKING FOR OATS

Q.—I have a farm at Earl Grey, Sask. The soil is average loam, black, and to a depth of about ten or twelve inches, but not of a very heavy type. Sub-soil of yellow clay. The land is about 75 per cent open, the balance being covered in patches by a growth of 25 or 30 year-old poplar which, to my mind, largely protects the land from drought.

I wish to put in as large an acreage to wheat next spring as possible, and on account of the very dry season was not able to have much breaking done last summer, but with the early fall will have all my land, which is under cultivation, in shape for the seeder as soon as spring opens up. I have about 60 acres that I can have broken by May 15 if we have an average spring. Could oats or barley be put in on this with any profitable results and without detriment to the land in some such way as flax is sometimes put in? I do not wish to tackle flax.

A.—It is very bad farm practice to break prairie land in the spring and crop it the same year. Where a homesteader's capital is limited it is sometimes necessary to do this, and the only crop that seems to give at all profitable results is flax. In an average year oats and barley would be a complete failure, and even flax would give better returns if the sod was cultivated one season and sown to flax the next year.

SILOS AND SILAGE

Q.—I understand that you have silos on the farm at Indian Head. I am a farmer, and am into mixed farming to quite an extent, grow about 20 acres of corn each year and do some in the dairy line. I would be pleased to have any information as to their success in this cold country. I have 60 head of cattle and have been thinking of a silo for some time. What size would you recommend, and what building material is it best to use? Kindly give me any information as to the best and cheapest cement or frame.

A.—Corn is a valuable crop both as fodder and as a cleaning crop on the land. From the result of experiments carried on at the Brandon Experimental Farm it would seem that much better results were obtained by feeding the corn thru the silo than from the stook. A silo has been in operation on the Indian Head farm for some time, and it is giving good satisfaction. It is of stave construction and, while a little freezing takes place around the outer edge of the silo, this is overcome to quite an extent by keeping the ensilage a little higher in the centre than on the outside and taking it down in this fashion. What little ensilage may freeze on the side should be broken off and thrown down with the unfrozen stuff into the stable, where it will usually thaw out sufficiently to feed. In regard to construction of the silo, a bulletin can be obtained on "The Stave Silo," which will go into this in detail.

are ordered direct from the publishers. Any local association that has a copy of each of these books in their library will be able to provide a number of very interesting and instructive addresses at the meetings during the winter.

OAT COMMISSION REDUCED
Grain Exchange Agrees to Fix Charge at 2 Cent Next Fall

There was a large and very representative meeting of the Grain Exchange Tuesday afternoon to consider the question of the commission charged for handling grain.

The discussion was participated in by a large number of the members, and the net result of the meeting was that, in an endeavor to meet the views of the Grain Growers' Association, and taking into consideration the evolution of the grain trade in the last few years, the exchange decided by unanimous vote to reduce the commission charge for handling oats from 1c per bushel to 2/3 of one cent per bushel, with 1/3 of one cent between members of the exchange, this reduction to take effect on the first day of September, 1915.

The rate of 1c per bushel commission on wheat, barley and flax remains unchanged, as there has been no general complaint against these rates as unfair or unreasonable.

INCREASED PRODUCTION THE SLOGAN

With the object of encouraging the farmers to strain every nerve for a banner yield of grains and an increased output of livestock in 1915, the Dominion Department of Agriculture has arranged to hold a number of conferences between farmers and agricultural experts. Arrangements to this end have been made with the Manitoba department of agriculture, and three experts chosen by the federal authorities will tour the province in February. They will give lectures and will try to get the farmers to express their own views. It is held that Manitoba stands at the gateway of an unexampled opportunity, which needs to be thoroughly realized in order to be best used.

It is proposed to hold conferences at about thirty places in Manitoba, where addresses will be given by the three experts before mentioned. One will deal with grain growing, another with livestock, and a third will point out the general prospects of agriculture as they have been affected by the war. The expense of this undertaking will be borne wholly by the Dominion government. The speakers have not yet been selected.

WHERE TO BUY

The name of the Sarnia Fence Co. Ltd., Sarnia, Ontario, should have been included in the index of Guide advertisers which was published in The Guide of October 28, 1914.

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