

# Soils and Crops

Address communications to Agronomist, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto

## Rape For Sheep Pasture.

Rape is the ideal forage crop for sheep. It not only lends itself admirably to intensive systems of sheep farming but it yields more and better green food to the acre and at less expense than any other crop in the long list of succulent summer foods. It tides the flock over the dry, hot season, when grasses are dead and fields brown, and it continues to grow and furnish luxuriant grazing late in the fall. It is extremely feasible to sow rape for fall pasturage and turn the flock onto the succulent plots when the common pastures are exhausted, or destroyed by early frosts. Nothing equals it for ewes and lambs during the nursing periods, and for weaning lambs it is incomparable, carrying them from mother-milk to self-sustaining lambs with scarcely a sign of shrinkage. Rape is unexcelled as an autumn food for starting mutton sheep and lambs on the profitable road to full grain feeding.

The feeding value of rape cannot be too highly exploited; it is not a feed of week or month, but may be sown at successive intervals so as to provide continuous pasturage from early June until late autumn. One acre of rape fed in connection with a limited grain ration will produce as many pounds of mutton as two thousand five hundred pounds of corn and oil meal. Growing lambs and breeding ewes made greater gains in live weight on less supplemental grain feed when pastured on rape than similar lambs and ewes on clover pasture.

A field of rape and sufficient portable fencing to provide the flock with fresh grazing as the occasion demands will be of great value in maintaining the breeding ewes and conditioning the lambs into that desired quality and excellent condition so important on the market. The portable fences permit of frequently changing the ewes and lambs that are being conditioned to new areas of the rape field as soon as the crop is consumed. When first turned in upon a field of rape sheep and lambs should become gradually accustomed to the change and allowed to have continued access to it, unless in time of storms, and when once removed, care must be taken not to put them back upon it when hungry. If the sheep get a moderate amount of grain feed in the morning before they are turned on the rape field the danger of bloat and digestive derangements is to some extent lessened. Access to salt and to other kinds of pasture crops is desirable when the flock is pastured on rape. Two kinds of rape seed are upon the market; one is the summer, the other the winter, annual, or biennial rape. The summer rape is not suitable for grazing, being grown commercially on a small scale as a food for birds. One should insist that Dwarf Essex seed be supplied. The usual cost of rape seed is about eight cents per pound. As a rule, three or four pounds of Dwarf Essex seed per acre, sown in rows twenty-eight inches apart will give the best results. Rape thrives best on a rich, fertile soil and better yields always result on land that is well manured and fertilized and given thorough preparation before the crop is sown. If planted in rows and cultivated it will produce a maximum growth of forage.

Rape is a quick, rank grower. If the moisture conditions are favorable for the seed to germinate quickly the field will be fit for grazing in seven weeks after sowing. Soils having a cold, wet subsoil are unsuitable for rape. I find that the crop does best on an easy-working clay loam, well underdrained and rolling enough to prevent standing water in case of excessive

rainfall. Land intended for rape production should be plowed early and thoroughly prepared before seeding. Newly plowed land never grows good rape, as the moisture evaporates too rapidly and the growth and development of the plants are checked. Rape can be very successfully grown if sown at the last cultivation of the corn crop. We have seeded one or two acres of rape with corn for several years and find that a large crop of forage can be secured in this manner without additional preparation of the soil. Where the corn crop is removed and put in the silo the land is soon ready for pasturing. When the rape plant is about twelve inches high it is ready to turn onto, and if not grazed too closely it will continue to produce forage until frozen down late in the fall.

Rape is an efficient weed destroyer. Where one desires to check the weed growth on a badly infested field the preferable plan is to sow rape before the weeds mature. This thorough tillage of the soil at this time materially checks weed growth and the heavy foliage of the rape shades the ground so that the weeds seldom grow and mature a seed crop the same year. Ordinary frosts and cold snaps will not interfere with the edibility of rape. The sheep may safely be pastured until cold weather comes. To prevent a waste of forage, plans should be made to stock the forage pastures sufficiently to utilize all of the forage possible before weather conditions prevent the flock from remaining outside.

If a larger area is planted than the sheep can consume, young hogs may be turned on the field to assist in consuming the crop.

## Danger From New Diseases of Wheat.

Aside from rust and smut, Canadian wheat crops have been found remarkably free from destructive diseases. Recently, however, there have been discoveries in the U.S.A. of two new diseases, "Flag smut" and "Take all," about the presence of which there has been considerable alarm. Now up to the time of writing, Canada has not been invaded by either of these new troubles. But growers should be ever on the lookout for these and any other obscure trouble with which their practice has not made them thoroughly familiar.

"Flag smut," so called because the smut occurs on the flags or leaves of wheat, is easily recognized by the long streak of smutty stripes running along the leaves. The affected plants also show a peculiar tangled and twisted appearance as if the leaves were wound around the stem. Any suspicious plant should be sent to the Division of Botany, Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

"Take all," as the name implies, takes all and is probably the most serious wheat disease known with the exception of rust. In certain countries, indeed, it is the more serious, as is emphatically claimed by the practical grower as well as the scientific observer. The recognition in the field is not difficult. "Take all" is a root disease spreading from below up the stem for about 1 to 2 inches, discoloring the stem dark brown. The affected plants may be pulled up very easily, their anchorage in the ground is very loose as compared to a sound plant. The affected plants turn yellow and finally die, taking straw and all. Both diseases are most likely conveyed by infected seed grain, hence it is most important to "rip" these diseases in the bud" and report all suspicious cases at once. The use of foreign wheats for seed is cautioned against; particularly wheat from Australia is under suspicion.

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# SPROUTS

In order to make a record, a hen must lay not only long but heavily. In order to lay heavily she must have sufficient body capacity to digest large amounts of food rapidly. Large capacity in a laying hen is shown by a body that is deeper at the rear end of the keel than at the front end. The under line should be fairly straight, and the back should be comparatively horizontal.

A small capacity hen stands erect. The body is either very shallow or, in the case of beefy individuals, the abdomen shows a pronounced sagging at rear of keel.

The comb, wattles and ear-lobes enlarge or contract, depending on the ovary. If the comb, wattles and ear-lobes are large, full and smooth, or hard and waxy, the bird is laying heavily. If the comb is limp, the bird is not laying slightly; she is not laying at all when the comb is dried down, especially at molting time. If the comb is warm, it is an indication that the bird is coming back into production.

When a bird stops laying in the summer she usually starts molting. The later a hen lays in the summer or the longer the period over which she lays, the greater will be her production, so that the high producer is the late layer and hence the later molder.

The length of time that a hen has been molting or has stopped laying can be determined by the molting of the primary feathers. It takes about six weeks completely to renew the primary feathers next to the axial feathers, and an additional two weeks for each subsequent primary to be renewed.

A good layer is more active and nervous, and yet more easily handled than a poor layer. A high layer shows more friendliness, and yet more closeness, than a poor bird. A low producer is shy and stays on the edge of the flock and will squawk when caught.

A high producer one year is, generally speaking, a high producer in all other years.

## Muscle Massage in Rickets Given by New Method.

As an aftermath of undernourishment during the war period, rickets has become a common disease among children in Germany. To stimulate the flabby muscles of these little patients, without risking malformation of the softened bones, many curious devices have been invented. In treating the jaw and neck muscles, for example, the subject is laid on an inclined board, while the nurse stands at the head and manipulates a harness of two straps.

Do not specialize too much, lest your strength become your weakness.

By all means show that you are alive; but do not by kicking but by pulling.

## The Welfare of the Home

### Don'ts for Mothers.

It is quite apparent that a certain number of babies must be artificially fed. To this end we will endeavor to point out some of the dangers, which we trust will serve as a guide.

DON'T ask your neighbor nor your relatives how you should modify the milk for your baby. They mean well, but remember it requires scientific knowledge to dictate just how each and every baby should be fed. Consult your family physician.

DON'T feed the baby every time it cries. Remember the capacity of the stomach of a new-born baby is very small. It only holds from one to two tablespoonsful, and should not be over-loaded, and the feedings should be far enough apart to give the infant time to rest and to digest what it has taken. Most specialists now agree that, as a rule, feeding every three hours until the fifth month and then feeding every four hours is enough, although some maintain that for the first month every two hours is not too frequently.

Furthermore, during the hot weather, your baby may be thirsty but not hungry, and therefore, every baby should have a little water every day. From one to two tablespoonsful may be given between feedings, two or three times during the heat of the day.

If you insist on nursing the baby every time he cries, the baby is going to cry until he gets fed.

If your baby does not go to sleep soon after being nursed, or does not quietly coo when laid down, it is probably an indication that it has not had quite sufficient, and in that case you should consult your physician or otherwise take more liquid nourishment, particularly milk, and a little more gentle exercise in the open air. DON'T leave baby's milk standing in the kitchen exposed to germs. If you have no refrigerator place it in a vessel with a cloth around it, preferably woollen or jute, which should be kept damp at all times, and keep in a cool part of the house, or cellar, constant evaporation continually holding down the temperature.

DON'T use your baby as a plaything, and don't permit other people to do so, with the pretense that they are entertaining the baby. As a matter of fact, in the majority of cases, the baby is entertaining them, when it should be resting. Leave the baby alone as much as possible. It can entertain itself better than you can. Place it on a rug, covered with a clean sheet, on the floor or on a soft mattress, where it can kick its limbs and demonstrate to you in a very short

## Financial Notes

Ottawa.—The work of finding out the value of the Grand Trunk Railway System common and preferred stock will be commenced about the middle of September.

Regular Dividend on Canadian Bank of Commerce.—The directors of the Canadian Bank of Commerce have declared the regular quarterly dividend of 3 per cent., being at the rate of 12 per cent. per annum for the quarter ending August 31st, payable September 1st to shareholders of record August 16th. The transfer books will not be closed.

Bridgeburg.—Every U.S. shopper crossing to the Canadian side returns with sugar from 100 pounds to 1 pound since the lifting of the exportation ban by the Canadian Board of Commerce. As sugar is now selling at 24 cents per pound, many Buffalo merchants are buying sugar in Canada and selling it in the United States as high as 30 cents a pound.

Vancouver.—Within the next six months, a fleet of sixteen steamers of the Canadian Merchant Marine, aggregating 180,000 tons, will be operating from Vancouver, according to a message received from Ottawa. Twelve of these boats have been built on the coast and the balance will be taken from the Atlantic.

Slightly Better Export Demand for Wool.—Recent despatches from the wool wool markets of Europe indicate a slightly better demand, but as yet there is no established price, says the monthly letter of the Canadian Bank of Commerce. The outlook for growers is not, however, wholly pessimistic, as stocks of finished textiles are being rapidly depleted, and slightly lower prices are hastening that process. In a short time manufacturers will be compelled to obtain raw wool; and as they again become buyers, a price will be set that may not approximate that of last year, but will nevertheless be relatively high as compared with the prices current prior to the war.

On the basis of 1919 prices, Canadian woolen mills use materials to the value of \$15,500,000, to obtain a finished product valued at \$25,000,000. The range of goods is extensive, including tweed suitings, serges, broadcloth, homespuns, cloakings and overcoatings. Those in close touch with the industry look with confidence to the future, and have no doubt but that their home trade will be retained even should pre-war conditions return, with intensive competition from European mills.

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## SWARMING BEES

By H. W. SANDERS.

The swarm is a phenomenon peculiar to bees. There are other insects that live together in colonies, but usually their methods of natural increase take place in connection with a period in their life-history in which the colonial life is for the time being suspended. The humble bee, for example, passes the winter in a dormant condition like the majority of insects; the queens being the only survivors and the rest of the bees perishing. Then in the spring these humble-bee queens each start up a nest of their own. With the honey-bee, however, life is impossible except in the form of a colony and therefore it must make good the losses of winter and season, by increasing, not only the number of individuals in each hive, but the number of hives, or colonies, by swarms issuing from the more densely populated ones. Without this method of increase, bees would long ago have become extinct, for there is a certain amount of mortality of colonies all the time.

Swarming is marked by the most remarkable exhibitions of instinct in the life of a colony. We know that by the time the season is far enough advanced for swarming to take place, that all the bees from the season before have come to the end of their lives. They only live long enough after winter to nurture the first batch of their successors, and from that time forward the succeeding generations are very rapid throughout the active season. We use the word "generations," but strictly speaking, it is not accurate, for the queen, which lays all the eggs in the colony, frequently lives several years. It is not, however, the fact, as has often been supposed, that the queen "leads out" a swarm or that she has any special function in the matter. A swarm will emerge with a virgin queen who has only been out of the pupa stage a few hours and such a swarm will behave exactly in the same manner that their predecessors did in past years. All we can say about it is that they know by instinct what to do, and that is another way of saying that we do not understand it.

Raise Thousands of Young.

A strong colony of bees build up their numbers very rapidly in the spring of the year. From the time when they come out of their winter quarters, and the weather becomes mild enough for them to break the cluster they form to keep warm, until the first flowers begin to yield honey, the bees raise thousands of young ones, the process of which consumes the remainder of the stores of honey laid by during the previous season. When the nectar from the new season's crop begins to be secreted by the flowers in any considerable quantity, which usually occurs at the end of May or the beginning of June, the bees are beginning to feel rather crowded and it is the crowded condition that constitutes the most obvious stimulus to swarm. The amount of ventilation afforded by the entrance, and varying with its size, is also a factor in the case, and bee-keepers are advised to give plenty of ventilation in warm weather, and to give plenty of room for adding supers in order to hold back swarming, for swarming often cuts down the honey yield in a serious manner.

Preparation for Swarming.

The actual process is interesting. The first step is the raising of queen cells within the hive, for as the old queen always accompanies the swarm the hive will need a new mother. The queen is hatched from exactly the same egg as a worker bee, and in fact a worker is but an incomplete queen. To bring such a worker egg to full maturity a large cell is built, known to the bee-keeper as a "Queen-cell," and in this the baby queen passes her larval and pupa stages supplied with a much greater abundance of food than a worker is given. The result is that the queen not only reaches full maturity and is capable of mating and fertile-egg laying, but the process is shortened and in place of three weeks the mature queen will emerge in about fifteen days. The bees do not, however, wait so long before swarming, and as a general rule the swarm will issue on the first warm day after the queen-cells are sealed, that is, after the embryo queens have reached the pupa stage.

Besides the raising of a queen to succeed the existing one, the bees make various other preparations. The bees quit working, and "loaf," as beekeepers often say. They hang outside in great bunches, and the weather is warm, and in general the normal life of the colony is disrupted. A couple of days before swarming the queen ceases to lay, so that she may be able the better to endure the long flight to the new home, and the bees send out scouts to search out a suitable place for the swarm to begin house-keeping. It may be a hollow tree, a cleft in the rocks, the chimney of a vacant house, or some such place, but there is no doubt that the bees select their destination beforehand, for the swarm eventually takes wing and flies directly in a straight line to the new spot and enters without hesitation.

A neighbor of ours last season found a number of bees entering a cleft in a wall, was placed to carry off rain from a sleeping-porch, and sure enough two days later a swarm arrived and took possession. A nearby bee-keeper smoked them out and hived them be-

fore they had made themselves too much at home.

### A Beautiful Sight.

Finally upon a warm day, usually in the morning, a mass of bees rushes violently out of the hive, and after circling wildly in the air for a time they cluster on the branch of a tree, on a post, or some other convenient place. The queen is usually amongst the last to leave and her presence is necessary before the swarm will continue on its way. If by any chance she gets lost the bees will return to the hive from which they came. This fact is made use of in some of the plans for swarm control, and by clipping the queen's wings so that she cannot fly, the return of the swarm is ensured. However, the bees often kill such a clipped queen when they find she cannot swarm, and then swarm with the first virgin that emerges, so that the plan should only be used where the bee-keeper can be at hand to perform the necessary operations.

It is a notable and beautiful sight to see a swarm emerge, and for a few moments the air seems to be filled with bees with flashing wings, whilst the sound can be heard at a considerable distance. Our own bees are located quite a little distance from the house, but we have been on some occasions apprised of the swarm by hearing the loud humming from indoors.

A swarm may hang clustered for a few moments only, or for several hours. Usually at least a couple of hours will elapse before they are likely to decamp—indeed, cases are on record where swarms have emerged and have built their combs and remained in the open air on the clustering place. One is tempted to wonder whether these swarms issued before the scouts had located a suitable place for them to go, or if not, what the stimulus is that makes the bees break up their cluster and proceed upon their way. However, the fact is that they will, sooner or later, decamp unless hived.

### Hiving a Swarm.

This process consists of shaking the bees into an empty hive, or in front of it. In the latter case, if a few of the bees start to re-enter the hive the remainder will follow without trouble. If the bees are shaken onto a cloth or other smooth surface the process is facilitated. If the branch of the tree on which a cluster is hanging can be spared it is often possible to cut it off, and to carry the branch, swarm and all, to the hive. It is then dumped in front onto a cloth and the bees are almost sure to enter. If a branch cannot be removed, or if the bees are clustered on a post or other unremovable place, then the hive is brought near and placed on the ground with a cloth before the entrance, the bees are gently dislodged with the hand and fall in a bunch before the hive. Then smoke is blown on the place where they had been, to prevent any from returning, and soon they will be all in their hive.

There is very little danger of stings in handling swarms, for the bees are all filled with honey in preparation for the building of comb that is the first essential in their new home. When in this condition a bee will seldom sting. Nervous people often dress up very elaborately to hive a swarm, but the experienced bee-keeper will seldom trouble himself with anything more than a veil to protect his face, and we have often taken swarms in the bare hands and placed the bees at the hive entrance. The novice, however, had better take precautions.

In practical management, the prevention of swarming is as important as it is to the bee-keeper, as it is to the beekeeper. In fact, it is a setting of honey. Where, however, a swarm actually does take place it is good practice to remove the parent colony to a new stand and to place the swarm on the place previously occupied by it. The swarm is thereby reinforced by all the bees that have marked the old location as their home, and will produce a fair crop of honey, whilst the "parent colony" is weakened sufficiently to prevent afterwards, and will therefore not be weakened still further by them.

In the production of extracted honey, swarm control is accomplished by raising brood to the upper portion of the hive, but in comb-honey production this is impossible, owing to the necessity to crowd bees into the little section honey-boxes. For the comb-honey man, therefore, swarming is a problem and the text books of bees are full of plans of different merit, for its control. In general it may be said that extracted honey production is to be recommended, and the comb-honey left to experts who can specialize on this line.

### Questioning the Soil.

Before attempting to grow alfalfa and soy beans on our farms it is well to put the question of inoculation to the soil itself in a practical way. By planting a few rows of soy beans in various parts of the corn fields it is easy to examine the roots of the plants and determine if the soil will need inoculation to make the crop in a similar way by using a quart of seed per acre in the clover and timothy seed mixtures in seeding ordinary meadows. If the plants make good growth and develop tubercles upon the roots, it is safe to assume that inoculation is not essential to make the crop a success.

## MAKING BOUQUETS

We all know people who tell us that they "just love flowers," and yet we wonder, when we see the way they handle them, just how much the blossoms really do mean to them. Those who really care for flowers never handle them roughly, nor are they ever guilty of neglect. They want to enjoy them so long as there is a vestige of beauty left. Neither do they ever pluck more blossoms than they can care for, nor lift roots as well as blossoms. All these little traits indicate how much they really appreciate flowers.

During the last few years we have been aroused to a deeper interest in the art of the Japanese, who can teach us many things. They have a knowledge of plant life that is generally recognized. Each season they introduce new varieties of plants that have a definite individuality. Their colors are true and the constitutions of the plants are strong and vigorous. This is all the result of the attention they pay to detail, one thing we are apt to overlook.

They are not only horticulturists, but they are artists as well, and in no way is the real artistic side of their nature more in evidence than in the way they arrange their cut blossoms. The grower may be a more or less practical business man, but the man who handles the blossoms is an artist who studies their arrangement.

The scheme of decoration must be harmonious, the composition pleasing, the receptacle must be the right kind of shape, the surroundings must be suitable. These are only some of the things to consider; there are seven rules:

- First. Avoid all angles.
- Second. Use much foliage and few flowers.
- Third. Only on rare occasions use more than one variety of flowers in any single arrangement.
- Fourth. Use only the foliage belonging to the variety of blossoms you are arranging.
- Fifth. Never crowd a composition.
- Sixth. Study the composition from four sides.
- Seventh. Place each branch or blossom as nearly as possible in the same position that nature placed it in the growing plant.

The last rule seems to me the key-stone to the success of the Japanese in handling flowers. They realize that we cannot excel nature in creating beautiful effects, but we can follow in her lead.

In the country, where there is an absence of brick walls and where nature has been the decorator, we see few straight lines and many curves. We also see a variety of coloring, but with the green predominating. While there may be a great mass of foliage, there is no effect of crowding. Again, no matter from which angle we view a vista the effect is pleasing.

A great deal of the success in making a pleasing arrangement of cut foliage or blossoms depends upon the receptacle in which they are placed.

A vase or bowl should bear the same relation to the flowers it holds as the frame to a picture—it is a setting which should enhance the beauty. The receptacle itself should never be ornate; the outlines should be simple and the color subdued. There are so many artistic shapes that are quite inexpensive that it is hard to give definite suggestions as to which are most suitable. Most of the pottery vases are good—the dull greens or grays are always desirable, so are many of the brass shapes. Of course, the latter need constant care in order to keep them in shining order; however, if the subdued tones are chosen, especially pieces having a green cast, you will find it unnecessary to keep them bright and shining, for they are more beautiful when dull.

Flowers are never well displayed in an elaborate cut glass vase. Plain glass shapes of simple design, through which may be seen the stems of the flowers, are effective. A large glass bowl of nasturtiums is always charming. The color scheme should be always considered. How lovely are a few yellow tulips or jonquils in a copper or brass urn; the brilliant yellow of the blossoms, the sage green of the foliage and the dull tones of the metal blend so wondrously.

Nasturtiums or violets, of course, should never be put in anything but a low receptacle. Apple blossoms and pink clover are poems when arranged in a common ginger jar; the gray-blue of the porcelain and the shell pink of the blossoms make a charming color scheme.

Wild flowers present the greatest problem. Away from their natural habitat, they lose much of their charm; they are most attractive when arranged in inconspicuous bowls, which, in color, are suggestive of the woods. To get the best effect, flowers must be not only carefully arranged in the bowl or vase which is in harmony, but have the right setting.

Beef Once 1 Cent a Pound.

Good beef sold for a cent a pound in the reign of Queen Elizabeth in England.

A two-faced man usually tells barefaced lies.

Upward of 350,000 distinct species of insects have been described, the majority of which are, in some way, injurious, and at least as many more remain undescribed.

**Cord or Fabric**

**Always Near**

A mile and a half, or a day and a half, or a world and a half away.

Your journey back, will be safe and sure if your car is equipped the Partridge way.

**PARTRIDGE TIRES**

Game as Their Name