

AGRICULTURAL.

USES AND CULTURE OF RUTA BAGA.

To the Editor of the Farmer's Register:

The Swedish turnip, or ruta baga, is a most valuable vegetable for all kinds of cattle. Some horses refuse it, but generally they are fond of it. When designed for horses, the roots should be well washed and chopped up—but for cows and hogs this is unnecessary. Indeed it is thought that cows thrive better upon the roots in their dirty state; and when given whole, they are not so likely to choke them. The teeth of sheep may be injured by roots in very dirty condition—but all these cattle eat more slowly and surely, I think, if the turnips are thrown to them in an undivided state. I used a turnip cutter when I first began to feed them, but discontinued it as troublesome and unnecessary.

The Swedish turnip, when first eaten by milch cows, gives the milk and butter a flavour something like that of garlic. This is not unpleasant to some persons, and becomes less obvious as the digestive organs of the cattle more perfectly assimilate the food. It may be obviated, however, by dissolving an ounce of salt petre in a pint of water, and putting a table spoonful of the solution into each milk pan as the warm milk is emptied into it.

In the winter season, the butter from cows judiciously fed upon ruta baga, has the flavour and appearance of grass butter. Half a bushel per day, divided into three messes, is a fair allowance. I have sometimes fed a bushel and a half to each cow per diem. The vegetable is very grateful to the animal, which while eating it, requires little water to drink. I have known cows refuse to drink water for several weeks when freely fed on Swedish turnips. Straw, corn fodder, or coarse hay, is at the same time essential to enable them to chew the cud.

The skin remains slack, and the health more vigorous and decided, by the use of these turnips; and the amount of barn-yard manure is much increased. It is best to feed twice or thrice a day. In fattening cattle, Swedish turnips, sprinkled with corn meal, gives the meat a finer quality, juicier and relish. It is also an economy where corn is high in price.

The ruta baga is generally thought to be a troublesome crop; and many relinquish its cultivation from the difficulty of its management, *when not thoroughly understood*. The ploughing, or ridging, drilling, hand-hoeing, and care, are peculiar, and much unnecessary labour and pains often at first embarrass its cultivator. But when once well comprehended, the crop is usually estimated highly.

We generally plough up barley, wheat, or rye stubble, immediately after harvest; then roll and harrow it well. If we have fine manure, (we often use dirt and bones,) this is hauled out and spread, and the ridges (two furrows cast together) are ploughed at once. These are rolled flat, and the seed filled upon the top of them with a machine (a turnip drill) contrived for the purpose; or a porter bottle with a quill fixed in the cork, having a hole of sufficient size in the small end of the quill. If the manure is long, and intractable, the ridges are ploughed first, the dung is then carted and spread between them, and the double furrows are afterwards split, so as to cover in completely the long manure. The seed is sown tolerably thick. When the plant has four leaves, the supernumeraries are cut out with hand hoes, leaving the finest plants from six to twelve inches asunder. Eight inches is the average width between the plants: if they are allowed to stand thick, the crop is ruined, and no fear should be entertained to cut out freely. Before hoeing, a light triangular harrow is

run between the rows to level the earth, and clear the ground from weeds. An implement with a slide behind and hinges in the front, so that the width can be changed at pleasure, according to the growth, is most convenient.

A mistake is often made with the turnip crop, in *hilling up* the roots by plough or hoe. The earth, on the contrary, should always be taken from the turnip. Its tap root is quite sufficient for its nourishment, and the bulb grows larger as the earth is *drawn from it*. The calculation is to hoe and cultivate the ground until it is quite level, harrowing or horse hoeing between the rows, and hand-hoeing between the growing turnips. We sometimes sow barley, wheat, or rye, among the ruta baga for a permanent crop, and cover in the seed when we give the turnips the last dressing with the harrow or horse hoe. I have seen very good crops of grain after the turnips, and 300 bushels of turnips per acre. In planting Swedes for seed, care should be had that no other plants of the same family be permitted to flower near them, or in the same garden. Other kinds of turnips, cabbage, and radishes, will change the character of the seed; and, of course, the quality of the roots will be subsequently altered from that of the original. A friend—G. H. Walker, of Hongford, Philadelphia county—who is exceedingly careful in all such matters, promises me to forward you some of the true breed, which you will do me a favour by distributing among our friends on James River.

In your climate, except in very severe winters, like the last, you have the advantage of being able to leave the turnips in the field, to be pulled as they are wanted for use. Here we are obliged by the severity of the season, to pull and top them by the middle of November, and to hoard them away in cellars or caves, where they sometimes heat, and require much handling.

You can sow later than we do, for the plant is one of a cold climate, and grows rapidly after the first frosts. I am, however, now (June 30) eating ruta baga raised this spring in my garden by mistake; the seed being sown instead of Savoy cabbage. I find them very palatable.

This turnip bears something the character of the pippin apple, which increases in sweetness and flavour by being kept. When the Swedish turnip is first taken from the ground in autumn, it has a raw or rank taste, when prepared for the table; but towards the middle of winter, it improves very much. It is now sought after in our markets, often selling for 50 cents per bushel, for the use of the table, in mid-winter and spring.

Its color is a fine rich looking yellow when boiled, and the only objection I know to it is, that during the process of cooking it gives out an unsavory odour. This is of less importance when the kitchens are separated from the dwelling house. J. H. GIBSON.

Philadelphia County, July 2, 1835.

SMUT IN WHEAT.

The following extract from an article in the New York Farmer of 1831, by one of the correspondents of that paper, will show the necessity of guarding carefully against every means by which seed wheat can be infected with this disease. Results similar to this are frequently witnessed.

"A neighbour of mine, having purchased some very excellent seed wheat, the same was delivered in the farmer's bags of whom he had bought the wheat, with a promise that he, the purchaser, would return the bags immediately after the grain was sown or deposited in the drill. My neighbour complied with this request, and having drilled about half the quantity, from those bags in which he had received

the wheat, he took opportunity on the following day, which day had been very wet and unfavourable for drilling the remainder, to empty those bags, in order that they might be returned. Thus was this excellent, clean, and tall then unadulterated seed wheat, put into his (the purchaser's) own bags, which before had contained some very foul and diseased smutty wheat, as he together with his farm servants, acknowledged the fact. On the third day the remainder of the wheat was drilled on the same soil, and in the same field, but not from the clean bags of the seller of the seed wheat.

"Now, mark the result at harvest. The clean seed wheat, which had been emptied into the farmer's own filthy smutty bags, produced about one twentieth part of smutty ears; whereas, from the former day's drilling, not a single ear of smutty wheat could be found."

SEA-WEED MANURE.—Fleets of boats, to the number of sixty or seventy, are daily arriving at Galway (Ireland,) with sea-weed for manure, from Bunnamara, Arran, and the county of Clare, which is purchased with avidity, and conveyed on carts all over the country, in various directions, even to the distance of forty or fifty miles into the interior.—Galway paper.

TURNIPS.—Sandy loams in good heart are most favourable to their growth, though they will thrive well on strong loams, if they are not wet; but on clayey, thin, or wet soils, they are not worth cultivating; for though a good crop may be raised on such ground, when well prepared and dugged, more damage is done by taking off the turnips in winter, in poaching the soil than the value of the crop will repay.

THE SUBSCRIBER

Has received per BRIDE from Liverpool, and CHILTON from Hull,

200 TONS fishery SALT

20 Bags fine do

Lines, Twines, Mackarel and Herring Nets

40 tons well assorted IRON

Boxes Window Glass, assorted

Kegs Nails and Spikes

Boxes Soap

Do. Candles

Do. Starch

Fig Blue, Roll Brimstone

Crates well assorted CROCKERYWARE

Oakum, Cordage, and Canvas

60 M Bricks

200 qrs. Wheat

150 Kegs Paint

Linseed oil, sole Leather

Blacksmiths' Bellows & Anvils, sup'r quality

CLOTHS, bleached and unbleached Cottons,

Prints, Shirtings, Aberdeen stripes, Flannels

Slop Clothing, Hats & Straw Bonnets,

with a General Assortment of

DRY GOODS,

Suitable to the Season.

ALSO: ON HAND—

Anchors & Chain Cables, assorted

Indian corn Meal, Rye Flour

Palm Leaf Hats

Tar, Pitch, Rosin and Turpentine

Pots & Ovens and spare Covers,

All of which he will dispose of on reasonable

terms.

July 1.

GEORGE SMITH.

LAW and other BLANKS of all descriptions, for sale by the subscriber. JAS. DAWSON.

July 1835.

THE SUBSCRIBER

HAS now commenced selling his VALUABLE STOCK of

DRY GOODS, HARDWARE, &c.

at prices unprecedented in Picton, and will continue to do so until the 20th of October.

Traders and others will find it to their advantage to take an early opportunity of examining the articles and prices; as no opportunity can offer, that persons wanting articles in his line can be supplied on as favourable terms.

R. ROBERTSON.

Picton, 29th Sept., 1835.