

Applying Superphosphates.

EDW. COLEMAN, GENTLEMAN. — On page 725 there is an account of some experiments with fertilizers by T. Sharpless. The result was quite different from those in my experience. I have used superphosphate for several years to grow my corn crop on sod, and have never failed to get pay for the fertilizer and all cost of application, in the increased crop, and many times I get quite a profit. It has sometimes increased my crop 33 per cent. I think the reason Mr. Sharpless received so little benefit was the result of his method in applying the fertilizer. In order to receive the most benefit to the first crop, all fertilizers, whether special or farm manures, should be applied on grass lands, as early as September the fall previous, or if not at that time it should be applied on the surface after the land is ploughed. I believe, as John Johnston long ago said, "that a rich soil contains all the elements for a good crop of corn." Sometimes on sod land the young corn requires stimulating a little until its roots get hold of the soil, and superphosphate, if applied in the hill, will do this. It generally puts the crop two weeks ahead early in the season, which is very important in this section. I always apply superphosphate in the hill on sod land at the rate of 250 or 300 lbs. per acre—never more than the above amount—and it has never failed to pay well. On old land the result has not been as favourable. As a general rule, I am in favour of surface application of all fertilizers. HENRY LANE, Addison County, Vt.

—In the statement of experiments with phosphates by Mr. T. Sharpless, he says he sowed it upon the sod and ploughed it under six inches deep. It is a wonder that it had as much effect as it did. It should have been applied upon the surface after ploughing, or as near the seed as practicable and not prevent germination. What would be the result if just food enough was given to a young animal to preserve its existence and cause a feeble growth until it had reached sufficient age to forage for itself? An irreparable injury would be the result. The same principle applies to plants. The first stages of their existence are the most important ones, and if they ever need any extra food, that is the time.

There are thousands of tons used in Western New York. It is destined to come into general use in this section and add greatly to the wealth of farmers. It is important that it be rightly applied, and should not be condemned when not applied properly. For the small grains it gives the best results when drilled with the seed by means of a fertilizer attachment to the drill. Where corn is drilled with one of these drills, the fertilizer may be drilled at the same time, but all the tubes should be allowed to discharge; or at least one on each side of the row of corn, which should be at least forty inches apart. Where corn is planted in hills it may be applied where the hills are to be, and around them, or may be applied upon the surface of the hills soon after planting, but in either case another portion should be sown broadcast upon the surface, as the roots of corn soon extend beyond that applied to the hills. For grapes the soil should be ploughed and turned from the roots early in the spring, then sow the fertilizer broadcast at the rate of 400 or 600 lbs. per acre. J. M. Penn Yan, N.Y.

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