

In the flax growing countries is said to be oats, rye, wheat, clover and flax. Clover is regarded as one of the best crops to precede flax as its roots penetrate deeply into the soil and bring up stores of fertility from below which many other plants do not reach. Clover also assimilates and stores up nitrogen from the air, and when ploughed under furnishes much of this important element for the crop that is to follow. Flax can also be grown on the prairie soils of the Northwest on new breaking, but usually produces a heavier crop on backsetting, or on a clean fallow. To make this clear to those who are unacquainted with the methods of prairie farming it may be said that the first breaking of prairie sod is generally made by turning over a wide and shallow furrow about two inches thick, when this is done in the spring the land is ready for backsetting early in the autumn, by which is meant a second ploughing the furrows running across the breaking to a depth of about four inches. This cuts the decayed sod, turns it over and covers it with about two inches of fresh soil from below. In many parts of the Northwest provinces backsetting is the usual preparation for a wheat crop. After turning the sod over where flax is to be sown it should be lightly worked with a disc harrow setting the harrow so as to cut the earth fairly well but not so as to tear up the sod. The seed is then sown and the land rolled so as to press the sod firmly in its place. Many farmers break the land deeper, from three to four inches, then disc harrow, sow and roll. Where flax is sown on new breaking a seed bed comparatively free from weeds is provided, which is a great advantage for a flax crop. The farmer also derives some revenue from this part of his land the first year and the crop effectually rots the sod so as to admit of ploughing to the ordinary depth in the autumn.

A DISEASE IN FLAX.

A disease known as 'flax wilt' has attracted considerable attention in the Northwestern States. This disease is said to be due to a fungoid growth. It manifests its presence by the wilting of the young plants as if caused by drought or intense heat. It occurs in spots in the fields, which at first are limited to three or four feet in diameter, but if the disease is unchecked these gradually increase in size until finally the whole crop may be affected. Flax wilt occurs most commonly where flax has been grown in successive crops on the same land, when the land is said to become flax sick. This shows the importance of paying attention to the rotation of this crop with others. No reports of the occurrence of 'flax wilt' in the Canadian Northwest provinces have yet been reported to us, but it is not likely we shall long escape this malady unless it can be avoided by strict attention to a proper rotation.

IS FLAX A SPECIALLY EXHAUSTING CROP?

This question is usually answered in the affirmative, but this opinion does not appear to be warranted by the chemical analyses which have been made of this crop, showing the principal elements of fertility taken from the soil during the period of its growth. The results which have been obtained by chemical examination have furnished the following figures, which represent approximately the plant food removed from the soil by flax, wheat and oats:—

An acre of flax producing 15 bushels of seed and 2,000 lbs. of straw, takes from the soil—

	Nitrogen.	Phosphoric Acid.	Potash.
	Lbs.	Lbs.	Lbs.
For the seed, 840 lbs.	26	14.86	9.28
" straw, 2,000 lbs.	20	9.00	28.00
Total	46	23.86	37.28