

ROTATION FOR CORN SMUT.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

Regarding increase of smut in corn during recent seasons, I beg to say that while we have observed a little smut in our corn here each year, we have not considered that it has been on the increase. Neither in the experimental department, where corn has been grown for seed, nor on the College farm, where it has been grown for silage only, has it been necessary to take extra measures in the way of prevention. Information from the States is to the effect that rotation of crops is one of the best factors in the way of prevention known. Perhaps where rotation of crops has not been consistently practiced the presence of smut may be more noticeable than it has been here.

The reason why rotation is a useful remedy is found in the fact that the corn smut spores winter over in the ground, and only to a very slight extent on the grains of corn. The spores do not spread widely, and if the corn does not appear on the same ground for a period of three or four years, the probability is that the evil will be much lessened. This same fact will indicate that a treatment of the seed, as in the case of oats or wheat, viz., hot-water treatment or the formalin treatment, will not be effective for corn smut. These remedies are not advised by our College here, nor by stations in the States. The only remedies effective so far as I know are: first, the one mentioned, namely, rotation of crops; and, second, gathering the corn smut ears two or three times during the season and destroying them. This latter might be practicable in the case of small growers, but would hardly be possible on large farms. We think that the former remedy will be sufficient to prevent an increase of the smut.

Ontario Agricultural College. H. S. ARKELL.

CORNER POSTS.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I notice in "The Farmer's Advocate" of April 11th J. M. was wanting to know how to set corner posts, and his question is answered by illustration and description, but I would have objections to that method, especially when I think we have a far better plan. My objections are that that brace rod, if on a corner, obstructs the highway, and someone may get hurt some dark night, and the trouble may lead to a lawsuit; and also those end posts generally serve as gate posts, so that that brace rod would take up gateway. I will describe how we have set our end posts for three years, and have never had one to lift yet. Some stretches of fence are 80 rods long, 7 and 8 strands of No. 9 coiled wire, and stretched with horses and tackle. Dig a hole about 2 x 4 feet, 4 feet deep, or large enough for a man to get down in and throw out dirt; then take good-sized post, and 6 inches from lower end, on opposite sides of post, cut across post with saw 2 inches deep and 4 inches apart, and chisel out; now put a piece of 2 x 4 scantling in grooves and spike. Put post in hole, and after filling to top of scantlings, lay some boards on top and crosswise, making a platform, then fill in rest of earth, and you will have a post that will not lift, because it cannot lift all that dirt out. Caution: Do not rely on just spiking scantlings on post, for they will draw off, whereas by setting them in posts the end would have to draw off end post, which it will never do.

Welland Co., Ont.

W. W. MARSHALL.

[Note.—A plan similar to the above was illustrated in "The Farmer's Advocate" about a year ago, but condemned afterwards by a correspondent, who argued, with some reason, we believe, that a mortise in the lower end of the post affords a place for rot to set in.—Editor.]

TO GUARD AGAINST FODDER SHORTAGE.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I trust your readers will pardon me for offering advice which may or may not be needed—that is, to preserve all coarse fodder that may not be needed this spring until we can better judge of the coming harvest. I see that both the American and Canadian meteorological officers forecast a dry, or much drier year than the preceding one. Our own opinion is that we shall be liable to late frosts. Should this prove so, it will mean short straw and a light hay crop. Taking into consideration the very great increase in the number of live stock, and the small amount of hay in stock, a shortage of fodder would be almost a calamity. We have already passed through two fodder famines in our farming experience, and we have learned since then never to waste feedstuffs until we see what the harvest prospects are likely to be. Our usual practice is to clean out all our manure yards in June, then cover them deeply with any spare straw or chaff we may have left. The cattle soon trample it down, and the yards are kept clean through the summer. This leads us to think of the corn crop as the farmer's stand-by in all seasons. In dry seasons, root crops are more or less of a failure, while corn, when once started, can laugh at dry weather and rejoice in the heat that shrivels other crops. To farmers on all kinds of soils, we repeat your sound advice, "Grow Corn." We have been growing it for upwards of thirty years, and never have had a failure. Some years it does better than others, but is always a paying crop. We hope to live to see the time when (to slightly alter Longfellow's lines):

"All around the happy homesteads
Stand the cornfields, green and shining,
Wave their green plumes in the sunshine,
Wave their soft and silken tresses,
Filling all the land with plenty."

If you do not like the corn crop, grow it and you will learn to like it. When once you learn to properly cultivate it, you will find it no more trouble than any other crop. The cultivation is mostly done between spring seeding and haying, the harvesting after your fall-wheat seeding and before root harvest and fall plowing. It can be grown in hills or drills, can be harvested by machinery or hand, stored in silo, or cured in shock and stored in barn green or dried, or made into silage, it is good, wholesome stock food, and the cheapest that can be raised. Grown for the grain alone, it is a very valuable crop. By growing the flint varieties, an average of 50 bushels may be obtained, which makes excellent feed for any kind of stock.

Simcoe Co., Ont.

FRED FOYSTON.

PRACTICAL HELP.

I was much pleased with index of articles for reference you sent out. The discussions on different topics have been very interesting and valuable to me, especially the cultivating of corn and sowing of clover seed. You have done well on King Corn and Queen Alfalfa. What Prof. Dean had to say about milking machines was very interesting. I wish we had more men (and I might say, agricultural papers) like Prof. Dean and "The Farmer's Advocate." I am very thankful to you for the information you have given your subscribers on barns and barn-building.

B. A. WILSON.

Missisquoi, P. Q.

DO SUGAR BEETS PAY?

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

I will give you my experience in growing sugar beets. I had two acres last year. I manured the ground, plowed and harrowed twice the previous fall, plowed and worked again in the spring; sowed beets early, had a good stand; plowed them four times, and scuffled every week in the hoeing season. Was to load the beets whenever we were ready. I got mine up early, but could not get shipping instructions. Finally I had to pit them, and never got shipping instructions until about Christmas. We loaded with four teams, and weighed every load (on scales which are inspected by Government inspector), and cleaned our sleighs out every time, and there was in the neighborhood of 2,500 lbs. difference in our weight and the weight at the factory. Mine tested 13.2, while one of my neighbors, who had a crop apparently no better than mine, who got them away early, tested 17. The amount taken off for dirt was about 7½ tons. If you had them covered with dirt you could not possibly get that much on them. I got \$49.00 for the two acres; charged for seed, \$5.40. We were to get paid for pulp on February 1st, but have not heard from the factory yet. If there is money in that, I think I will try some other way of making money.

Regarding the experience of others in the neighborhood: It was all right in the case of those who got their beets away in time, but those who could not get cars was something similar to mine.

Simcoe Co., Ont.

H. C. BLACK.

MORE USES FOR THE WEEDER.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In a recent number of your valuable paper I read J. E. M.'s article on the uses he makes of a weeder. I think were the uses to which it may be put a little more generally known, few farmers would be content to get along without one.

The weeder is about the first implement for which I find use in the spring. A Farmers' Institute lecturer, speaking of clover, remarked that farmers were more careless regarding the covering of clover seed than with grain. Does it not seem strange that a man should go to so much trouble to prepare seed-bed for wheat, barley or oats, the seed of which costs little over a cent a pound, and then throw away good clover seed, at eleven dollars per bushel, on a field, and let it take its chance, as so many do, when so little trouble almost ensures a catch. Some farmers, it is true, put harrows over the fall wheat after seeding with clover, but I think it the proper method to have a boy take one horse and the weeder; he can cover ten to fifteen acres in one day, shaking the seed down slightly, and not covering the wheat as harrows do, but working the ground finer. The cultivation is really beneficial to the wheat. Of course we make it a rule to sow the clover seed just so soon as the ground gets dry enough that the weeder will work properly. One of my neighbors seeded down his wheat last spring, put the weeder over half, then got too busy, letting the other half go. He has a nice catch of clover where the weeder covered the ground, while the other half is a total failure.

Then again, we find the weeder a great help on our potatoes while the plants are small. Although breaking a few of the plants, it lessens the after labor so much that I think it a great advantage.

Although raising twenty to forty acres of corn annually, we are not fortunate enough to own a horse planter, and, consequently, either drill our corn or plant with the old-fashioned hand planter, and we find the weeder to be a much nicer implement to level the field, after planting, than are the harrows. Anyone who has used a weeder on corn land knows its advantages; how it kills all small weeds and stirs and mulches the soil right in the hill better than a man could do it with a hoe.

Then when we are expecting haying to start shortly, when we think we cannot go through the corn with the cultivator again, we sow rape, turnips, or the mixture over the field; then, if the corn be not so tall that the top of the weeder will break the stocks, we put it through again to cover the seed, and cultivate the corn, right among the hills, for the last time. By this method we never need use a hoe at all, except to cut deep-rooted weeds, such as Canadian thistle, dock, etc., and have our fields not only free from weeds, but a short time after the corn is harvested, a green mat of the most succulent feed for stock, and at very small expense when our pasture



Artist, C. A. T.

Twin Pairs of Twin Yearling Lincoln Ewes.

Photographed by C. A. T. at the farm of A. D. McGowan, Glenora Stock Farm, Rodney, Ont.