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INCREASE POTATO CROP

How to Check Serious Diseases in Ontario.

Leaf Roll and Mosaic Are Firmly Established and Reduce Yields One-third - How to Detect Diseases and Only Way to Control Them.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

THE two most serious seed-borne potato diseases in Ontario are Leaf Roll and Mosaic. Other seed-borne potato diseases common in the Province are Black Leg, Rhizoctonia, Blight, Wilt and Scab. Leaf Roll and Mosaic cause a very marked reduction in the yield, and the fact that these two diseases are so prevalent in Southern Ontario accounts for the poor crop of potatoes that has been obtained in many parts of the Province for the past four years.

Leaf Roll.—The cause of this disease is unknown. Data gathered by the pathologists of the United States and Canada shows that Leaf Roll may reduce the yield to about one-third of the normal crop. Symptoms.—Symptoms of Leaf Roll are very variable. Affected plants are always more or less dwarfed and in some varieties the leaves assume a characteristic upright, almost stinging habit, instead of drooping over in the normal way. Rolling of the lower leaves is always associated with the disease. The rolled leaves on plants affected with this disease begin to die early. The harsh, leathery texture of such leaves is a constant symptom. The tubers of affected plants are small and are borne generally on very short tuber-branches (stolons) or even attached in a cluster to the stem. Tubers from affected plants invariably produce diseased plants. There is also evidence to show that the disease may spread from plant to plant in the field.

Prevention.—The only sure way of avoiding loss from Leaf Roll is to secure fresh seed from districts free from this disease. Fortunately, this is possible, as Northern Ontario and the Province of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are comparatively free from this trouble. In experiments carried on in Old Ontario by the Agricultural Representatives with seed potatoes from South Ontario, New Brunswick and Northern Ontario, it was found that the average amount of Leaf Roll in the plants from the seed from the three different sources was as follows: Old Ontario 45.5% New Brunswick 5.1% Northern Ontario 1.4%

Mosaic.—The cause of this disease is also unknown. It has been observed in many fields in Ontario. When severe there is a very noticeable reduction in the crop. Data gathered by the pathologists of the United States and Canada shows that this disease may reduce the yield by one-half.

Symptoms.—The foliage of plants affected with Mosaic is somewhat wrinkled or corrugated and marked with faint, light green or yellowish spots. The stalks of the diseased plants are often more bare near the ground than those of healthy ones, partly because the affected foliage does not spread out and droop down normally, and partly because the lower leaves sometimes fall off in the last stages of severe attacks. The tubers of affected plants are normal-looking and sound and their keeping or eating qualities are not impaired. Prevention.—If Mosaic is abundant in a field the surest and quickest way of eliminating it is by obtaining fresh seed from a non-infected district. Such seed can be obtained at the present time from Northern Ontario.

General Suggestions For the Prevention of Seed-borne Potato Diseases. In order to avoid loss from Leaf Roll and Mosaic, the source of seed is of the utmost importance. Seed potatoes free from these diseases can be obtained from Northern Ontario. Only certified seed, however, can be relied upon. For information concerning certified northern-grown potato seed write Mr. Justus Miller, Assistant Commissioner of Agriculture, Parliament Buildings, Toronto, Canada.

Even certified northern-grown seed is not a panacea for all diseases. In order to avoid loss from such seed-borne potato diseases as Black Leg, Rhizoctonia, Wilt, Blight and Scab, the following precautions should be taken:

- 1. Select for seed smooth, sound tubers, as free as possible from scab, black, hard lumps on the surface, and abnormal discolorations of the skin or flesh.
2. Disinfect all seed before cutting with formalin or corrosive sublimate. The latter substance is the more reliable for the prevention of Rhizoctonia.
3. When cutting potatoes have at hand two or three knives and a jar containing a 20 per cent. solution of formalin. After cutting into a tuber which shows signs of rot drop the knife into the formalin, discard the diseased potato, and take a fresh

GET ON LAND EARLY

The Dates to Plant for Heaviest Yields.

To Make Most Money From Wool Shearing Must Be Done Properly and Wool Handled Carefully - A Few Hints Which Have Saved Farmers Dollars.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

THERE is a best time to sow each class of farm crops to secure the highest returns. It is difficult, however, to know which are the most favorable dates for the best returns of the different crops in all seasons. The results of experiments conducted over a series of years form a good general guide. Some crops give best results from later seedings. Seasons vary so much that in some years the grains are practically all sown by the dates at which it is only possible to start sowing in other years. It is of the utmost importance, however, to start cultivating the land as early as it is dry enough to work to good advantage. The first cultivations should take place for those crops which should be first sown. In this connection it is interesting to study the results of an experiment which was conducted in each of five years at the Ontario Agricultural College. Spring wheat, barley, oats and peas were sown on each of six dates. One week was allowed between each two dates. The experiment was conducted in duplicate by sowing with the grain drill and broadcast by hand in each instance. The following table gives the average results for the ten tests in the five-year period:

Table with 4 columns: Seedlings, Wheat, Oats, Peas. Rows for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th dates.

It will be seen that the spring wheat gives decidedly the best returns from the first date of seeding. There is not much difference between the first two seedings of barley and oats, but there is a slight advantage from the first date in the case of barley and from the second date in the case of oats. The peas, however, gave the highest returns from the second and third dates, and even the fourth gave a higher average yield than the first date. After the first week was past there was an average decrease per acre for each day's delay as the season advanced of 27 pounds of spring wheat, 47 pounds of barley, 48 pounds of oats, and 20 pounds of peas.

These results are of special interest and are worthy of careful attention at this particular time.

Sheep Shearing.

Shearing and Tying the Fleece.—Shearing should only be carried on under the most favorable conditions; upon bright, warm sunny days when the sheep are dry of fleece and the wool has "risen" somewhat from the body. Cleanliness and care in the removal of all fleeces is very essential and the shearing floor should be swept after each fleece has been removed and tied. This will eliminate a great deal of foreign matter which, although it may add weight, does so at the expense of quality.

Dung Locks or Tags.—It will be noticed with many fleeces that there are certain hard dung locks or tags adhering to the britch ends. These contain a great deal of moisture and if left on and rolled into the fleece produce a damp heavy condition that means a higher shrinkage and hence less value. They should, whenever present, be snipped off with the shears before the sheep is shorn or else pulled off by hand after the fleece is spread out for rolling. They can very easily be packed and shipped separately, bringing more money this way than if left upon the fleece. This

Clear Stomach, Clear Mind.—The stomach is the workshop of the vital functions and when it gets out of order the whole system clogs in sympathy. The spirits flag, the mind droops and work becomes impossible. The first care should be to restore healthful action of the stomach and the best preparation for that purpose is Farmer's Vegetable Pills. General use for years has won them a leading place in medicine. A trial will attest their value.

SPRING CLEANING DANGERS

Every housekeeper knows how often little injuries are met with during "spring cleaning" time and how easily the sore place becomes infected with dust and germs. The danger of this lies in the fact that injuries—slight at first, if not attended to, may become inflamed, fester, cause great suffering and inconvenience, and frequently lead to blood-poisoning.

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