

Corn Planting.

BY ROBT. McCULLOCH, EDMONTON, ONT.

As the time of the year for corn planting is almost round again, a few hints on this subject will not be out of place. Farmers and dairymen who grow corn for the silo and for soiling purposes, as well as those who grow it for a grain crop, will each have to choose their seed corn for the crop of the coming season. It is very important that great care should be taken in choosing seed corn, as great loss and disappointment often results from planting bad seed. Corn is a grain that is more difficult to save in prime condition for seed than most other grains, and as good prices are generally given for seed corn, there is a temptation for some parties to place inferior stuff on the market. So we would caution all purchasers of corn to beware of flashy advertisements of such at high prices. Buy from reliable parties, and then after careful examination.

It would be a good plan (recommended in last ADVOCATE) to test the seed before planting, by putting some in boxes of earth in a warm place, and thus find out the proportion of seed likely to grow.

The kind of corn to plant will be considered also. Those who grow corn for a grain crop will have no difficulty in choosing a kind for their purpose, but those who grow it for the silo may need some advice in the matter.

Many silos will be built this coming season, and thus many may plant corn for the first time, and will naturally ask as to the best kind for their purpose. Even those of us who have had the silo for a number of years are still undecided as to the best kind or kinds to plant.

The answer generally given to this question is, plant the largest variety that will mature sufficiently in your locality, and perhaps this is as good an answer as we could give; yet, as our season is short, it would be difficult to select a variety that would give same results year after year. Last year, for instance, in our locality, Peel County, Ontario, the seed time was late, on account of the wet spring. A great deal of corn was not planted till on in June, which we think somewhat late for silo, especially if the large Dent varieties are grown, and they were not sufficiently matured for silo until there was danger from frost before harvesting. If corn is planted from about May 15th to 30th, we think the large Dent varieties may be grown, and will mature sufficiently to make good, sweet silage; but if not planted till on in June, I do not think it wise to plant much large corn, as we would be in danger of having either a frozen crop or a sour ensilage, which would do for beef animals or young stock, but would not do for dairymen who want to make good, sweet butter. In any case, we think some, at least, of the early maturing kinds should be planted, as they grow more grain, and the grain is ripe enough to be of some use. I have not yet become converted to the idea that some have that the grain does not count in the silo. I would much prefer to see silage well mixed with grain. A very good plan is to grow some of both kinds, and either grow it mixed or cut it into silo in alternate loads. In this way the Dent variety makes bulk, and small varieties yield more and ripen grain in proportion to amount of stalk, and when they are mixed it seems to strike a very good medium.

Last year a kind was advertised called "High Mixed." Nearly every one in our locality who had a silo thought he must have "High Mixed" corn. The result was, in some cases, an empty silo, and in many cases only a half crop. The reason of this failure was that seed of this variety was sent out which should have been fed to hogs, much of it being broken and moulded, so that it did not grow. We did not think that variety matured any earlier than the ordinary Horse-tooth yellow, which it resembled very closely, save in price. We hope those having this variety for sale this year will be more careful as to the quality sent out.

In large varieties, we have tried Horse-tooth, Leaming and High Mixed, and have seen little difference in the three. The main thing is to get first-class seed of either, and at a right price. Among the small varieties, we have tried Longfellow, and have found it to grow as much stalk as any, and an abundance of good, long ears, with a small cob and plenty of grain.

For soiling purposes, we like Red Cob as well as any. Thoroughbred White Flint grows lots of leaf, it is of a spreading nature, and think it should be good for green feed. It is a good plan to plant at different times, so that we may have nice, juicy corn coming in all through the season. Last year we planted some about 1st of July, it was the largest corn we had, and kept green as long as we wanted it, and would have until the frost came, had we not cut it before. After we had all the mature corn in the silo, we cut in this green, sappy stuff, and we found it made a good cover for silo, as our ensilage was good within a few inches of the top. We hope these few hints from our experience may be useful to those who are interested in the silo.

Freeman's Potato Contest—Suggestions.

BY THOS. J. FAIR.

After reading the account of the above contest in the ADVOCATE, I think I can give some hints and suggestions that would make a contest of that kind much more instructive to the farmers generally, and prove also whether the fertilizer manufactured by Mr. Freeman will accomplish what he claims for it, and return a profit on the investment.

A contest like the Freeman potato competition is usually made for some of the following objects:—

1st. To show what may be produced on an acre of land, as a crop competition in the United States, in 1889, when 135 bushels of oats, 738½ bushels of potatoes, 80 bushels of wheat and 255 bushels of shelled corn, each raised within the limits of an acre, were the magnificent yield in the above contest.

2nd. To show the value of special brands of fertilizers compounded for a special crop, as were the Freeman contests of 1892 and 1893.

3rd. To test the merits of some newly originated grain or vegetable as compared with the kinds grown generally by farmers and gardeners.

There is no data given in the account of this contest to show that the yield of potatoes was either increased or diminished by the use of the fertilizer, it being quite possible that the difference in yield might be due to the comparative fertility of the land, as illustrated when 974 bushels 48 pounds of potatoes were grown on an acre in Johnson County in Northern Wyoming, upon land which had never received either farmyard manure or fertilizer before, or with the prize crop of 1890, while the other forty competitors in most cases used artificial fertilizers, and whose crop ranged from 847 bushels 32 pounds, the highest, to 258 bushels 56 pounds, the lowest.

In order to make a contest like Mr. Freeman's of value to himself, the competitors, and teach a lesson to the farmers generally, I would suggest that each competitor be obliged to plant and cultivate at least one quarter acre alongside of the acre used in the contest, omitting the fertilizer, the land to be measured and the crop weighed as accurately as that contesting, and the contestants be requested to sow the whole the next season with a grain crop, seed it to grasses or clover, and note the yield of both grain and hay. This would show the effect of the fertilizer on the potato crop, and also on the grain and hay crops the two succeeding years.

Fertilizers and How I Use Them.

BY C. J. WRIGHT, DIXVILLE, P. Q.

I am a firm believer in fertilizers, and was much pleased with what Mr. Ormsby said in January 15th issue. It is a well-established fact that our farms can never stand the drain year after year of continually cropping, unless we provide fertilizers or plant food. The idea of plowing up land that is run out with hay crop! The first year applying one-half or all of your manure for potatoes, the next year cropping with barley or oats, and seeding down with no manure, will surely run out the best of land. My way is to plow up as poor land as you have, applying fertilizer the first year; then the next year I apply plenty of manure and seeding down, then the land will be in good condition for a number of years. I am using Pacific guano. I apply about 600 pounds to the acre. I raise my potatoes, turnips and corn in this way, and find that I am improving my farm all the time. I will admit that it may not pay the man that can feed 60 or 100 steers through the winter as much as the other man that cannot feed any, as the case is around here.

"Pays Remarkably Well."

Mullock Bros., of Waterdown, write Mr. W. A. Freeman, of Hamilton, as follows:—

"DEAR SIR,—We find it pay remarkably well to use your fertilizers on potatoes. The fertilizer not only produces a large crop, but the potatoes are smoother, handsomer, and of such better quality than where large quantities of good yard manure are used.

We seeded to oats last year the field in which we used your potato manure on potatoes the season of 1892. The oats were large and heavily seeded, some of them grew over four feet high; on land where no fertilizer was used they were very short, and all through the season looked as if they were sick—the difference could be seen as far as a person could see the field.

We cannot farm with profit without 'plant food,' and believe the cheapest form in which to get such food is in commercial fertilizers."

Legal Query.

S. C. Niagara Falls, U. S.:—"I own a bush farm in the County of Grey, Ontario, and I find that a person has entered upon and cut down and removed timber for sawlogs, etc. What remedy have I?"

You or your agent can lay a criminal information against the person who wrongfully took away the timber, and so have him punished, and you can also sue him in a civil action for damages and recover the value of the trees and any damages you have sustained.

GARDEN AND ORCHARD.

Potato Culture.

The finest quality of potatoes can be grown on sandy loam, but the heaviest yield is usually found where there is considerable vegetable or alluvial deposit. Potatoes can be grown profitably on almost any soil, with the exception of heavy, wet clays.

PREPARATION OF SOIL.

The yield will be largely governed by the preparation of the soil. A thorough ploughing in the fall is undoubtedly the best preparation, for a deep soil will hold moisture, and thus be in a better condition to withstand drouth. Potatoes are also a deep-feeding crop, and for this reason require a deep, mellow soil, in which their roots can ramify in all directions.

In order to obtain the best results, plenty of barnyard manure should be applied, as few crops will give such good returns for manure as the potato. If it is applied in the fall, plow under then; if not put out until later, it can be either plowed under lightly or thoroughly mixed with the surface soil by means of a cultivator. Do not plant your land until you get it in just the right condition, for there is nothing that pays so well as thorough tillage. Where sod land is to be planted with potatoes, it is immaterial whether it be plowed in the fall or not. Many of our most successful growers are divided on this point. T. B. Terry, in his book "A B C of Potato Culture," prefers a clover sod plowed in the spring and the surface well cultivated to any other preparation of soil. It would be well to plow an old turf lightly in the fall in order to allow it to rot before spring.

The early varieties should be planted as soon as the land can be thoroughly prepared in the spring. For the later sorts, cultivate the land again, and plant after you are through with the other roots.

SEED.

If good results are to be obtained, perfect seed must be chosen. Select medium-sized, well-formed, smooth potatoes, free from scab. Practical men advise different methods of cutting, while some do not cut at all, which shows that the size of the seed has but little to do with the yield. The usual way is to cut the potato in pieces containing two or three eyes. Some late experiments are in favor of splitting directly through the centre, and, if large, split again lengthwise. Other growers claim that the seed end produces small potatoes, and for this reason should be thrown away. Experiments which have been conducted both at the Guelph and Ottawa Experimental Farms show that a much higher yield may be obtained from whole potatoes, though, in this case, there was a large percentage of small potatoes. No allowance was made in either experiment for the smaller number of eyes by the planting of the pieces nearer together, for they were all dropped at the uniform distance of twelve inches. T. B. Terry, probably one of the best authorities on potato culture, cuts his potatoes to one eye and plants 12 to 13 inches apart in the rows, but he states that in order to be successful with this method it is necessary to have very rich land, well tilled.

PLANTING.

Potatoes may be either planted in rows or drills. Though the yield will be much the same in either case, the latter method is preferable, for the planting, cultivation and harvesting can be much more easily accomplished, since horse labor will, to a large extent, take the place of hand work. Many very successful growers still plant in hills. The drills may be thirty inches apart for small varieties, and thirty-three or thirty-five for the more growthy sorts. Ten or twelve inches is a good distance to plant the sets in the rows. Cover about two or three inches deep with a plow, or, if the furrows were ridged together, a plank scraper or coverer may be used, which would cover two rows at once. A common and very successful way is to plow the land lightly, planting in every third furrow. Many who grow potatoes on a large scale find it profitable to use a regular planting machine.

CULTIVATION.

If dry weather is feared, roll the land immediately after planting. Harrow the ground just as the potatoes are coming through; it will be wise to repeat this once or twice. When the plants are all well above ground, start the horse hoe and keep it going until the plants are in bloom. Shallow, flat cultivation gives the best results as a rule. In heavy or wet soil it may be advisable to ridge up.

REMEDIES FOR DISEASES.

What is known as the Bordeaux mixture is being used with good success in combating the blight and rot. Experiments at the Experimental Farm in British Columbia last year show that this mixture was the means of practically saving the crop, while similar reports come from the United States, England and Ireland. At the first appearance of the disease, and at intervals of about two weeks or oftener if there is much rain, spray with a mixture made as follows:—Dissolve 6 lbs. of copper sulphate in about four gallons of water, slake 4 lbs. lime in about the same amount of water; mix the two and add sufficient water to make forty gallons. In order to destroy the beetles at the same time, Paris green may be added in the usual proportions, viz., 1 lb. to 200 gallons of the mixture.

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