

# The Growing of Tame Grasses in Western Canada

AS TOLD BY ACTUAL GROWERS

The growing of tame grasses in Western Canada is assuming such importance as to lead us to investigate the proposition with the result that the following growers have kindly consented to give us their experiences.—Ed.

## A Remarkable Growth.

My experience in growing grass is not very extensive, being practically a beginner at it. Three years ago now, seeing that the native grasses were getting scarcer, owing to the settling up of the land, I decided to try a small patch of Western rye grass.

I procured seed enough to sow ten acres (after spring plowing the piece) but having to sow it by hand and not being used to the job of making my seed pan out, when I had six acres sown my seed was done. Not having a packer or roller, I harrowed it well in. Of course the crop was patchy, but the following year it grew, yielding about a ton to the acre and has done the same ever since.

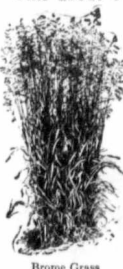
Last spring I bought 40 pounds of "Turkestan" alfalfa and sowed two acres with it, using a "Cyclone" seeder, which by the way is much better than the arm-swinging business. I used nitro-culture for one-half of the seed. The other half was used without, but distributed over the ground 100 pounds of soil from an old alfalfa field, which soil I got from the Government on payment of the freight charges.

The one acre with nitro-culture was summer-fallow. The acre with inoculated soil was potato land the year previous.

The growth in both these plots was something remarkable. The one with treated seed was a little the better I think. Anyhow, by August the alfalfa was 28 inches high and beginning to flower. I cut the patch and got four big rack loads off it, which I thought very good for the first year when one is not supposed to get anything. I fed it to both horses and cattle and they seemed to relish it. I am expecting at least a couple of crops off it next year. If it turns out all right I shall sow more of it in the future. I sowed a patch of ten acres with a mixture of red clover and timothy with a nurse crop of oats. The oats I bound green for hay, and when the field was stooked the clover and timothy certainly showed up green and healthy.

This about comprises my limited experience in growing grasses, etc. I think most of the farmers around here will have to do it pretty soon, a lot having to buy hay now.

Yours truly,  
J. A. Milne.  
Moose Jaw.

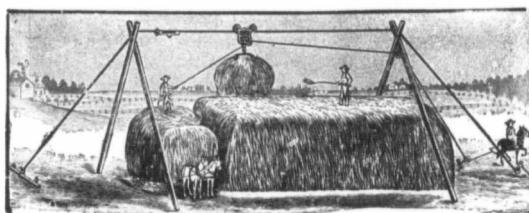


Broom Grass

## Rye Grass a Success.

I have grown about five acres of Western Rye Grass and one-quarter acre plots of Common Red, Alsike and Alfalfa. The soil in all cases was medium clay loam with clay subsoil.

The plot sown to Rye Grass was broken in the spring of 1905 and sown to oats the same year, fall plowed and sown to oats in 1906, spring plowed 1907 and sown to rye grass about June 1st at the rate of 14 pounds per acre.



Cable outfit in field No. 3.

This made a fair growth and headed out in the fall but too late for any seed to mature. I may say that I ran the mower over this in the early part of August to check the weeds. In 1908 I cut at about 1 1/4 tons to the acre in the middle of July. This year the crop promised good in the spring, but I was unable to get my cattle to herd till about June 1st and they ate this patch off too close and I only cut one ton to the acre and plowed up the patch in the first week in August and intend to sow to wheat in the spring.

I have about 10 acres seeded on summer fallow this year with

oat sheaves with quite a bit of rye grass in the butts off this piece and the catch of grass looks good for next year.

With the clovers I did not have such good success. They were sown in 1908 about the end of June on summer fallow. All came up good and looked fine in the fall, but as the plots were not fenced the cattle made for them and ate the clover right to the ground. Just here I might say it is useless to try to grow clover

Trusting this may be of some use to you I am,

Yours truly,  
William A. Pain,  
Howell, Sask.

## Common Red Clover Not a Success.

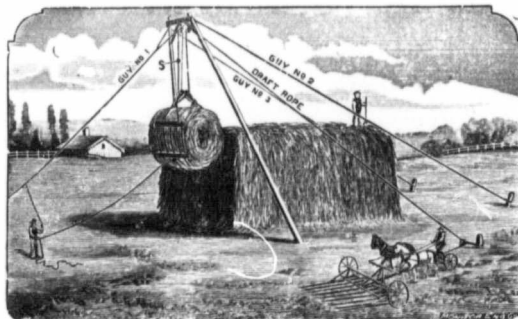
In reply to your letter of recent date respecting the growing of clover and tame grasses, I would like to say that so far as my own personal experience goes I should only be able to deal with alfalfa, but it has occurred to me that it would probably be of more interest if I took the gist of several reports which have recently come into my possession and which reports are the result of very careful experiment by several members of our Agricultural Society.

Three varieties of clovers were tried, in what appears to be the most successful experiment—Common Red, Alsike and Alfalfa. The land, which is a sandy loam with a clay subsoil, was broken about 3 inches deep and afterwards backset, another inch of soil thus being brought up to help to make the seed-bed. Oats were then seeded, and after this crop was taken off the land was plowed and the following season barley seeded. After this crop the land was again plowed, deeper than hitherto and particularly well worked down by harrowing, until the seed-bed was all that could be desired.

Then on the 1st of June, 1908, the clovers were sown, one-third of an acre of each. They were sown without a nurse crop and, in the case of the Alfalfa, the plot was sprinkled with soil inoculated with the bacteria culture. The weather was quite favorable, and the clovers soon developed a good strong growth, the Alfalfa and Common Red having a very even stand while the Alsike was a bit patchy.

Up to this point all the various experiments in this district seem to have had almost the same experience, but on August 13th there was a slight frost and the crops were out by it—the Alsike apparently coming through this ordeal better than the others. One of the plots, however, seemed to withstand the frost, due to the fact probably that it was on higher and lighter land and had more forward and vigorous growth at the time the frost came. On this plot in the fall of 1908 the Red Clover had attained a height of 24 inches, the Alsike 12 inches and the Alfalfa 18 inches.

A light mulch was spread over the plot early in the winter and reasonable depth of snow covered it. The spring of 1909 was, however, just as unfavorable for



Cable outfit in field No. 2.

oats, one bushel oats and one bushel of rye grass to the acre. This was mixed together and sown with a single disc drill opened to its full capacity (as the mixture does not feed good) and the tubes taken out of the boots and in this way it makes a fairly good broadcast seeder, the discs covering seed good and a stroke of the packer afterwards makes a good job. I cut 12 loads of fine

ing clover and alfalfa here. Keep the plot fenced and leave a good growth in the fall to catch snow and I see no reason why we should not grow clover as well as rye grass.

To my idea a mixture of the two would make the finest hay as the rye grass is rather harsh and wiry by itself and the clover would remedy this.