


Farm Crop Queries



Conducted by Professor Henry G. Bell.

The object of this department is to place at the service of our farm readers the advice of an acknowledged authority on all subjects pertaining to soils and crops.

Address all questions to Professor Henry G. Bell, in care of The Wilson Publishing Company, Limited, Toronto, and answers will appear in this column in the order in which they are received. As space is limited it is advisable where immediate reply is necessary that a stamped and addressed envelope be enclosed with the question, when the answer will be mailed direct.

Question—E. L. S.:—I have a piece of sandy land which is practically unproductive. Would it be wise to sow it to sweet clover this spring with a cover crop of rye? I want to build it up, but do not know the most practical and quick method.

Answer:—Sweet clover would be a good crop to put on this thin soil. Under normal conditions it can be sown with rye, however, I question if the rye has not grown too rank for this spring's sowing, unless you are seeding it with spring rye. If so, you should prepare the seed-bed well as in preparing it for wheat, and before harrowing the ground spread on to two tons of ground limestone or a ton of air-slaked burnt lime over the ground. Work this in thoroughly in order to sweeten the ground. This should be done, if possible, a week before the seeds are sown. At the time of seeding, sow about three-quarters of a bushel of unhusked seed to the acre, or if husked seed is obtained, about twenty pounds to the acre. In order to make sure of a catch, I would advise the application of 200 to 250 pounds per acre of fertilizer, in order to give the young crop quickly available plant food, which will cause it to make an early vigorous start. If you are sowing this seed on top of fall sown rye, follow the seeding by harrowing the rye, being sure that the harrows run with the rows and not across them. This harrowing will bury the sweet clover seed and should give it a good start. If you are fertilizing the rye at the time of seeding sweet clover, I would advise drilling or broadcasting the fertilizer before you harrow the crop. The second year's growth of sweet clover should be plowed under as soon as it has made maximum growth in early spring. Sweet clover will add considerable organic matter and some nitrogen, since it has on its roots, nodules where the sweet clover bacteria live. These bacteria have the power of taking nitrogen out of the soil air and of incorporating it in the roots of the sweet clover plants so that the soil is richer in nitrogen after growing sweet clover than it was before.

Question—S. J.:—I would like to know how to get a sure catch of clover and how to test seed. I work 20 acres, keep two horses and two cows. I sowed four acres of rye on wheat stubble last fall and pastured it. Good stand of rye, and now I want to seed this rye with clover and a little alsike. How would you do it to get best results? Would you harrow it a little and seed and then go over it with a weeder? I also want to know how to seed in barley. Which is the best barley to sow, and where can I get it?

Answer:—The answer to question No. 1 covers the answer to the first part of question No. 2, granted that your rye crop has not made too great a growth. If it has made too great a growth already to allow harrowing, do not attempt clover seeding until next season. Clover seed should be sown on top the winter wheat or rye as soon as the frost is out of the ground in the spring. It should be immediately harrowed in.

Barley is sown in the same way as wheat or oats; that is, if you have a grain drill suited to the sowing of wheat or oats, it is also adjustable to the seeding of barley. If not, prepare the seed-bed well and then scatter evenly broadcast a bushel and a half.

It is all right to divide the calves with the boys, but don't forget to divide the proceeds of the sales, too. Health and wealth in stables with pure air everywhere.

The cheapest winter feed that can be produced for the dairy cow is a combination of alfalfa and ensilage.

The one safe guide in ascertaining any cow's annual production of milk and fat is the constant use of the scales and test.

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CANADIAN GRAINS.

Varieties Recommended For Use In Ontario.

It is not the policy of the Experimental Farms to advise the cultivation of new varieties of grain which have not yet been sufficiently tested in Canada, or which when tried have shown no superiority over older and better known sorts.

The varieties here recommended have been thoroughly tested and have shown excellent qualities. While they may not be adapted to every condition of soil and climate, they have demonstrated their suitability for large areas in the provinces for which they are recommended.

Other very good sorts, almost or quite equal to those mentioned, could have been added to the list, but it appears undesirable to recommend an unnecessarily large number of varieties.

Spring Wheat.—Red Fife and White Fife are good standard sorts but rather late in ripening in northern localities.

Huron, Marquis and Early Red Fife are earlier in ripening.

All the varieties mentioned are good for bread-making, but Huron is not equal in this respect to the others. It is, however, particularly vigorous and productive and is highly recommended.

In extreme northern districts, Prelude will be found valuable if the soil is fairly rich and the rainfall sufficient.

In Southern Ontario, the very late variety, Blue Stem, gives good results. It is rather more resistant to drought than most sorts. Goose wheat is useful in extremely dry localities, though the price of this variety is often quite low, as it is not used for bread-making. Kubanka, closely resembling Goose, makes excellent bread, but it is so different from ordinary wheats that millers object to grinding it. Goose is usually more productive than Kubanka.

Oats.—Banner and Ligowo are two of the best sorts. Ligowo is slightly earlier in ripening, but generally produces a smaller crop. Daubeny may be used where extreme earliness is desired. O.A.C. No. 72, (a selection from Siberian), is a very productive, late-maturing variety.

Barley.—Manchurian and Ontario Agricultural College No. 21 are recommended among the six-row sorts.

Duckbill, and the best strains of Chevalier are recommended among the two-row sorts.

No varieties of headless or hullless barley can be recommended. Success (headless) is of very early ripening peas.

Among yellow peas, Arthur is most highly recommended for earliness and productiveness, Golden Vine,

CONCRETE ON THE FARM

Its Low First and Its Durability Make Concrete An Economical Material.

The use of concrete by the farmer has become quite general throughout the country, a condition undoubtedly brought about by reason of the economy which attends the use of concrete. It is usually a simple matter for a farmer to obtain sand and gravel and the only other material needed is the cement, which can now be obtained at a price easily within the reach of all.

Probably the first use to which concrete was put on the farm was for the building of foundations for houses, barns and other buildings.

The concrete root cellar is a farm structure which has found great popularity. Vegetables, and particularly potatoes, must be protected from cold. A concrete root cellar, built into the ground on a side hill, not only makes freezing impossible but in addition affords protection from water and from burrowing animals, such as rats, mice and squirrels, and is easily kept clean. A six-inch layer of gravel or cinders is first placed and well tamped and on top of this is laid a six-inch concrete floor. The following day the walls, which should be 8 inches thick, are erected. The earth bank can be used for the outside wall forms and it is only necessary to erect inside forms, which consist of 1 inch sheeting with 2" x 4" studding spaced 18 inches, centre to centre and braced across between walls. The roof should be 6 inches thick rising to a peak, reinforced with 3-8 inch rods spaced 5 inches apart, running from eave to peak and 3-8 inch rods spaced 18 inches apart running from end to end. A ventilator can be provided by the simple process of embedding a six-inch tile drain in end in the concrete.

Perhaps nothing is a more decided improvement to the farm than the replacing of the old style cow stable by one having a concrete floor with a drop gutter, pipe stanchions and pipe partitions. At a step one goes from the rotting timbers, the germs and the foul smells of a stable which it is impossible to clean, to one which is the last word in cleanliness and hygiene.

This too is an improvement which is very easily accomplished. A five-inch concrete floor is laid on six inches of well-tamped cinders or gravel, the floor consisting, in cross section, of an alley 4' 6" wide, a drop gutter 1' 4" wide, 6 inches below the alley level, a stall 4' 8" deep raised 2 inches above the level of the alleyway, a manger wall 7 inches high and 6 inches thick, a manger 1' 6" wide sloping to a feedway 4 feet wide, 8 inches above the stall floor. If two rows of cows are to be kept in the stable this cross-section may be repeated on the other side of the building, in such a manner that the cattle either face each other or are placed back to back, as may be preferred.

There are many other ways in which concrete can be employed with great advantage on the farm, such as fence posts, dairy houses, ice houses, poultry houses and pigsties, springs, wells, cisterns and watering troughs, drains and culverts, chimneys, fireplaces, dipping vats, engine bases, feed troughs, porches and retaining walls.

Your Problems

Conducted by Mrs. Helen Law

Mother and daughters of all ages are cordially invited to write to this department. Initials only will be published with each question and its answer as a means of identification, but full name and address must be given in each letter. Write on one side of paper only. Answers will be mailed direct if stamped and addressed envelope is enclosed. Address all correspondence for this department to Mrs. Helen Law, 235 Woodbine Ave., Toronto.

H. S. S.:—1. As almost every one from fifteen to fifty is wearing her skirt short, you need have no fear of not being in the mode if your skirts are within an inch or two of your boots. 2. As to the important matter of wearing your hair up, you will be so much more sensible to wear it hanging, clasped at the back with a barrette or ribbon-bow, which is the most suitable style for a girl of sixteen. Of course, you have probably been told this before, but it is true. Remember, in a year or two you will be putting it up, and must wear it so for the remainder of your life.

D. K.:—1. Yes, a pacifier for the baby is most injurious; and should on no account be permitted. Continuous sucking on any nipple is likely to cause adenoids, enlarged tonsils, protruding teeth, and misshapen jaws. 2. Headache is not a disease, it is a symptom. When your head pains you, look for the cause. And by all means do not merely try to stop the headache. This can be done in a good many ways without correcting the cause of the pain. But no real cure is made; you have only destroyed the danger signal which has been trying to tell you that something is the matter with you—that you are not a healthy person. See a doctor.

N. M.:—It is usually advisable to allow children to have candy in moderation. Candy is largely sugar, and sugar has a high food value, as it supplies heat and energy. Most children over two or three years of age may usually be given candy in small amounts with one of their daily meals. It should be pure, hard candy that can be sucked, preferably homemade; not of the chocolate cream order that is usually macerated in the mouth and hastily swallowed.

While geese live to a great age, the ganders are usually unreliable as breeders after about nine years old. Females, however, have been bred at from fifteen to eighteen years of age. An indication of advanced years is an abdominal pouch of considerable size. Geese do not reach maturity until their second or third year, and their eggs do not show strong fertility.

Being naturally a grazing animal, the goose is provided with a bill that has sharp interlocking serrated edges, designed to cut and divide vegetable tissues easily, and the tongue at the tip is covered with hard hair-like projections pointing toward the throat, which serve to convey the bits of grass and leaves into the throat quickly and surely.

For a start, a gander and two geese are sufficient. Their eggs being very fertile, as a rule, quite a number can be hatched each year. It requires a full month to hatch a goose egg, and incubation is performed by either a hen or a goose. A good-sized hen will cover five eggs, and a goose can take care of as many as fifteen. It is seldom that any of the goslings are lost, except through accident or exposure to hard storms while still very young.

There is a theory that the way to keep a hog well is to keep him and his food and surroundings clean. Worth trying.

The sooner the pigs are all out on pasture the better. It is natural for hogs to eat grass.

A good hog pasture cuts the cost of growing pigs and hogs in two.

Many men seem to ignore the need and craving for grass that is as natural to a pig as it is to a cow.

A young farmer grew a lot of pigs last year on clover and alfalfa pasture. He fitted them for the butcher on sugar beets and corn grown on the farm.

That pork was surely healthy, and cost less than it would have done under less intelligent management.

The feeding period of the hog is

Health

First Aid To The Injured.

Lightning.—Dash cold water over person struck.

Sunstroke.—Remove patient into shade, loosen clothing; apply ice-cold water to head and keep head in elevated position.

Fainting.—Place patient flat on back; allow fresh air and sprinkle with water. Have head lower than rest of body.

Stings of Insects.—Apply solution of weak ammonia, oil, salt water or iodine.

Burns and Scalds.—Apply either vaseline, linseed, olive or castor oil or melasses.

Sprained Ankle or Wrist.—Apply cracked ice in handkerchief, or cold water. When swelling has decreased, rub with alcohol or salt water.

Bruises.—Apply arnica and wormwood or hamamelis; keep well covered and warm.

Nosebleed.—This may usually be arrested by putting a plug of lint into each nostril and cold applications to the head and nape of the neck.

Scalds.—Wounds.—Bleeding may be easily stopped by tightly bandaging the injured part or pressing a clean handkerchief on it.

Bleeding from Wound.—If from an artery, stop the current of blood to the wound by binding a compress of cloth pad over the artery, which can generally be located by the throbbing sensation. Fasten it firmly by a handkerchief or bandage which may be tightened by twisting in a stick as a binder. If from a vein, apply pressure directly over the wound or make application of cold water. Keep the part elevated. In either case apply a clean pad of cloth to the wound and press on it.

Poison Antidotes.

Important.—Give an emetic as soon as possible; tablespoonful of powdered mustard in a tumbler of warm water. After vomiting, give freely of warm drinks. Send for a doctor immediately.—Any delay may mean loss of life.

Arsenic, corrosive sublimate, verdigris, blue vitriol, and from vegetables kept in copper vessels.—Give emetic and white of egg, sweet oil and milk.

Sugar of Lead.—Give emetic and epsom salts.

Hemlock, Aconite, Belladonna and Foxglove.—Give emetic, then tannin and stimulants. (Tannin may be obtained by boiling tea leaves for fifteen minutes.)

Opium, laudanum and Morphine.—Give emetic and follow with strong coffee or white of egg. Keep patient walking two or three hours, and keep extremities warm.

Strychnine.—Give emetic, then large doses of Bromide of Sodium (60 grains in solution). Repeat every hour, until three or four doses have been taken; artificial respiration.

Poison Mushrooms.—Give emetic, then castor oil and stimulants; heat. It is dangerous to warm up dish containing mushrooms.

Poison Ivy or Oak.—A solution of baking soda or saleratus, or strong soapuds; later apply solution of sugar of lead, 40 grains to pint of water. Dust affected parts with dry starch.

Alkalies are antidotes for acids, and acids antidotes for alkalies.

TOO YOUNG FOR HIS OFFICE.

Duties of Earl Marshal of England Are Onerosus.

The little Duke of Norfolk, new hereditary Earl Marshal of England, does not come of age till 1929 so he would obviously be unable to carry out the duties of his office in the event of a great State function, such as, say, the marriage of the Prince of Wales. Those duties are anything but nominal. At the last coronation, for example, the late Duke dealt with about two million letters, in addition to stage-managing the entire ceremonial. If, as expected, Lord Edmund Talbot is appointed Deputy Earl Marshal until the coming of age of the young Duke, general satisfaction will be given. Lord Edmund is unlike the late Duke in appearance, but the younger brother has much of the late Duke's personal charm of manner, and is richly gifted with tact and wisdom.

Tell-tale Hands.

In prisons and workhouses the language of the hands is well understood. The soft, characterless hand of the professional slacker would not deceive a village idiot.

The poor-house superintendent sees it by dozens every day. But occasionally he comes across the lony, knotted hand of the scientist, the philosopher, and knows him for a man who has seen better days.

In the courts the hands of suspected thieves are systematically examined. The pickpocket has a most sensitive hand.

The mark of the good-for-nothing is the dangling, close-fingered, half-open hand. A good, straight, energetic man never carries his hands in that way. When fingers are loth to part company it is a bad sign. It is the fat, stubby, vegetable hand that hangs limp.

Keep the hoe at work in the garden when the plants are up, not only to keep down weeds but to loosen and aerate the soil and prevent evaporation of moisture.

