

Undesirable cross breedings may be avoided by covering the flower heads of the selected plants with gauze, or light paper bags, shortly before the opening of the first flowers.

Keep only the main flowering stem; and remove all branching stems, which generally yield seed too light and of poor quality.

It is a bad practice to remove all the leaves from the plants kept for seed. The leaves are absolutely necessary to the life of the plant, and their complete removal is a practice that should never be followed.

The leaves of the seed plants are generally of inferior quality, and are very often damaged by the fall of the fragments of flowers. Their loss must be regarded as a matter of course, the only aim being to obtain seed as heavy as possible.

A part of the leaves may be removed only when the ripening of the pods is proceeding too slowly and it is desired to hasten it. But this should not be done before the brown colouring of the pods is sufficiently developed. The lower leaves are removed at first, and the rest, if necessary, are taken off slowly and gradually as the season advances and renders the operation more urgent.

Progress may be considered as satisfactory if the seed is ripe before more than half of the leaves of the plant have been removed.

When the leaves are removed too soon, the seed is light and of inferior quality, showing lack of nourishment.

When some pods are too long in ripening, it is better to cut them off with scissors and destroy them.

The stem may be cut with the pods on, the latter being left on the stem until they are dry; or the cluster of pods may be removed and hung up in a dry and well ventilated place. The latter method seems to be better.

A systematic study of the culture of seed-plants has led us to adopt the following practice: A little before the tobacco harvest, say about August 10, the top and bottom leaves of the seed plants are taken off leaving only about 7 or 8 middle leaves on each plant. About August 20 this number is reduced by about a third, the leaves being taken from the top and bottom. At least four leaves are left on until the seed is gathered. When the seed harvest is very late, one may remove all the leaves in exceptional cases, but this should only be done at a late date, when the pods are well formed and the seeds filled, with some of the pods beginning to turn brown.

The seeds are left for the winter in the pods, the latter being shelled out only shortly before sowing time. The seeds should be carefully sifted. They may be kept for years in bottles not tightly corked, so as to permit of the access of air, in bags, or in wooden boxes.

## HARVESTING.

### MATURITY.

Tobacco plants should be harvested as soon as they are ripe.

A leaf of tobacco may be considered as ripe when it becomes spotted with small yellow markings, which first make their appearance at the edge and tip of the leaf, and extend toward the mid-vein. The tip curves and hardens. On bending, the leaf breaks straight across with a sharp, characteristic sound. Sometimes, when the