

On very poor soils lime may cause both an increased yield and better quality due to the liberation of needed plant food.

With soils on which the root rot is troublesome the use of lime would probably be distinctly injurious. Investigators report that an acid soil is best as a hindrance to the spread of that disease; and by liming that acidity would be corrected and conditions made more favourable for its spread.

As a rule, it would be best to apply the lime to some other crop in the rotation coming after the tobacco, and two or three years before the field is to be put into tobacco again.

About 500 pounds of air-slaked lime or 1,000 pounds of high-grade limestone per acre should be sufficient. This should not be applied more frequently than every four or five years.

TRANSPLANTING.

Transplanting should be begun as soon as all danger of frost is over, during the latter part of May, if at all favourable. As a rule the earlier the transplanting the earlier the crop will ripen and the better the conditions will be for curing.

Selecting the plants.—A careful selection should be made when drawing the plants; only the thriftiest, most robust plants, which show no signs of being diseased, should be used. It is also very desirable to have the plants straight and of a uniform size, and to have a good lot of roots remain on the plant; however, too much of the plant bed soil should not be allowed to remain on the roots. The presence of this soil in large quantities tends to retard the sending out of the new rootlets by the plant; consequently it does not start off to growing as quickly in the field and becomes more susceptible to the root rot.

Transplanting.—In transplanting, the plants should be set so deeply in the ground that only the bud and leaves remain above the surface. When much of the stalk is left exposed it generally becomes hard and woody very quickly, especially in dry seasons, the development of the plant is seriously checked and it seldom attains its full growth under those conditions.

Spacing the plants.—On fertile soil, the tendency to produce tobacco which is too heavy in body can be rectified somewhat by setting the plants close together in the row. On such soil the rows should be about three feet apart and the plants should be set about 20 inches apart in the row. On a lighter soil, where the tendency is to produce tobacco which is lacking in body, it would probably be more satisfactory to have the rows 3½ feet apart and the plants about 28 inches apart in the row.

A good uniform stand is also of importance in procuring a fine, smooth, nicely ripened crop. Where some of the plants are missing, the surrounding plants will be overfed and rendered coarse and overgrown; and on that account will neither ripen, yellow, nor cure satisfactorily.

About four or five days after transplanting the field should be gone over and reset with the best plants available.

CULTIVATION.

The first cultivation should be given as soon as the tobacco has taken root, usually from eight to ten days after transplanting, care being taken not to disturb the newly established roots. This cultivation should be fairly deep and each succeeding one more and more shallow until towards the last only the crust is being broken.

A good hoeing by hand, especially at the time of the first cultivation, is very helpful in starting the plants to grow. The soil can be loosened more thoroughly close to the plants without danger of disturbing them too much with the hoe than with the horse-drawn cultivator.