

If weeds grow up in the rows it is advisable to clip back the alfalfa. If all conditions are favorable and the crop makes a good growth the first season, sometimes a crop of forage may be taken. It should be kept in mind, however, that a growth of from 8 to 12 inches should be left on the field in the fall in order to gather snow and thus protect the plants against the low temperatures of the first winter. If it is thought that after the removal of the crop there is not likely to be much growth it is better to leave it uncut.

Each spring after the year the crop is sown it is necessary to double disc or "renovate" the field. This operation should be done as soon as the soil is in condition to work in the spring and before the plants make much growth. Intertillage as needed to conserve moisture and to control weed growth should be given throughout the summer.

HARVESTING

The harvesting may be done with the ordinary binder. As soon as two-thirds or more of the seed pods have turned brown or black, the crop is fit to cut. In the warmer parts of the province this will occur generally in the latter part of August, but in the more humid parts of the province some of the seed is often more or less immature until the first fall frosts come. Seeds that are mature suffer no injury from frost, so that by leaving an undeveloped crop until the first frosts occur, no damage is likely to result and more of the immature seeds may ripen.

If the crop is well matured and dry, it may be tied in tight bundles, otherwise it should be tied in loose ones. The crop may be stocked after much the same fashion as wheat and it is generally desirable to stack it after the sheaves have dried out thoroughly. Stacking, however, is not essential if the seed is mature and the sheaves dry out well in the stook.

THRESHING

The threshing is done best by the use of a clover-alfalfa huller. At the present time these machines are not available. The ordinary grain separator may, however, be adjusted so that it will do quite satisfactory work. By the use of this machine the pods are separated from the straw and leave the machine by way of the grain spout; the threshed seeds pass out through the opening that in grain threshing ordinarily carries off the weed seeds. The pods should be put through the machine a second time in order to separate all seed from them. If the straw is damp or tough, it is sometimes necessary to put it through the machine again, but when it is entirely dry and well matured, this is seldom necessary. The use of the grain separator in threshing alfalfa is not economical of seed, but in the absence of a huller may be used.

In threshing alfalfa with the grain separator the front of the cylinder should all be closed with the exception of a small space at one side, and all of the back should similarly be closed with the exception of a small space at the opposite side. This compels the alfalfa to pass round the cylinder several times before it escapes into the body of the machine. All of the concaves should be used and all closed up well. It is advisable to use a wide chaffer and a sieve that will let the unthreshed pods through. The wind should be adjusted so that unthreshed pods will not be carried past the tailings auger. The delivery spout will carry a large proportion of unthreshed pods, and as pointed out before, these should be returned to the cylinder until all of the pods are broken. With a high bagger this, of course, is easily accomplished. The screen in the bottom of the mill should be large enough to permit the threshed seed being collected at the screenings spout.

The seed when threshed in this way will be found to contain quite a proportion of chaff and broken stems, but these impurities are easily removable by the fanning mill. Threshing with the grain separator is rather a slow process, but until a large acreage is assured its use in preference to the purchase of an alfalfa huller seems advisable.