

intended for a seed-crop, alfalfa should be sown thinly. Thick sowing improves the quality of the hay; but the plant has wonderful ability to adapt itself to either thick or thin seeding. One good, stout, healthy crown has been known to produce 360 stems at one cutting. When seeding broadcast, the seed should be covered with a light smoothing harrow or with a brush drag. The majority of farmers seem to prefer broadcasting, presumably because they have less difficulty in getting the plants covered shallow enough than with a drill. The majority of grain-drills are not properly manufactured to admit of the nicety of adjustment necessary in seeding grass seeds.

After the alfalfa has been sown in the spring, it will be necessary to run a mowing-machine over the ground two or three times during the summer to keep down the weeds. The sickle-bar should be set high, so as to injure the small young plants as little as possible. If the vegetable debris is so abundant that it promises to smother the young alfalfa, it should be raked up and removed.

In harvesting, mow down as much of the crop at once as can be handled in one day. Let it wilt in the swaths and then rake it into windrows to cure. If the weather is fine, it can be stacked from the windrow by using a sweep rake and stacker. If the weather is threatening, bunch the windrows and cock the bunches to allow it to finish curing. It should be put into the stack with just as little handling as possible. To avoid molding, I have advised farmers to store alternate layers of dry straw and fresh alfalfa hay together in the barn or stack. The straw need not form more than about one-fourth of the total weight. I think this method especially applicable to the first crop in localities where old straw stacks can be easily acquired.

When possible, alfalfa should be stored under a roof, as it does not turn rain well. A cheap hay shed can be built by setting telegraph poles in the ground, braced by two-by-sixes, and putting a good shingle

roof on the structure. The sides should be left open and the hay stacked under this shed in ricks. A stacker of some sort or other should be used, as it does not pay to hire men to handle the hay with a fork. They waste too much by shaking off the leaves, which are considerably better to feed than wheat bran, pound for pound. Where a roof cannot be had, the hay should be stacked in high, narrow ricks and covered with long slough grass. (1)

Alfalfa should be cured and stacked, if possible, without being rained upon. No other crop is so easily injured by rain. Alfalfa hay rained upon is worth about half what it would be were it unexposed.

Harvesting alfalfa at the right time and in the right manner very largely determines its feeding value. The majority of farmers wait too long before starting the mowing-machine. Alfalfa should be cut for hay when one-fourth to one-half of the blossoms have opened. When let stand longer, many of the leaves fall off and are wasted. Mowing early stimulates the growth of the following crop. Allowing it to go to seed seemingly exhausts the plant for that season. (2)

Alfalfa fed green, either as a pasture or as a soiling crop, has few equals in its nutritive value. In localities where there is no difficulty in getting a stand, the cheapest way to feed it is probably to pasture it. It should never be pastured until the plants are more than a year old. Owing to their liability to hoven or bloat, it is always risky to pasture cattle or sheep upon alfalfa. Before turning animals liable to bloat upon the alfalfa give them all they will eat of some other food. Death from bloat is often very sudden.

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(1) Can't they thatch stacks in the States? Ed.

(2) Lucerne, is emphatically, a green fodder-crop Ed.