

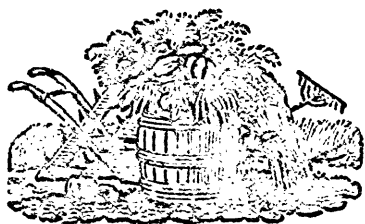
THE COLONIAL FARMER,

DEVOTED TO THE AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS OF NOVA-SCOTIA, NEW-BRUNSWICK,
AND PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND.

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A REPORT UPON THE CULTURE OF WHEAT,

read at a Quarterly Meeting of the King's County Agricultural Society, on the 6th September, 1841—By Chas. K. Harris, Esq.

OF all the farinaceous Grains which are cultivated for bread wheat is the most useful and takes the first rank. It will grow almost every part of the globe, and thrives not only in temperate, but in very hot and very cold regions. In Africa and Siberia, as well as in the United States and Great Britain. Although this Grain is so important, we are ignorant of the country whence it was first derived. It cannot be doubted, however, that the numberless varieties which we now possess have all sprung from one origin and are composed of similar elements—some of them indeed so classed as distinct species, the Egyptian wheat, for instance, which produces several ears from the same stem, but even this, when repeatedly sown upon poor land, gradually loses its supernatural ears and at length all appearance of variety.

SOIL.—A good wheat soil should always possess a certain degree of consistence, and consequently, the larger the proportion of clay and the less sand which it contains the better; for though light soils composed chiefly of sand and gravel will often produce wheat of good quality, yet heavy loams and strong clays yield that which is weightiest in the bushel and most productive in the crop. If mixed with a small quantity of sand it has about 15 per cent. of one, it may be classed among the best wheat soils, provided it also contains a sufficient portion of nutritive mould. A good soil must never be cold or sour and never wet—and wherever this is the case, manuring is indispensable. The necessity of the presence of lime in soil is evident from the fact, that it exists both in the straw and

kernel of wheat, and, if it be not in the soil, it must be supplied or wheat will not grow. The large crops now raised in Great Britain may be attributed to the free use of lime by the Farmers there, while the Americans who hardly ever use it find that their crops are becoming annually smaller. The farmer should be anxious to create such a soil as will give him the handsomest return for his outlay and to supply all necessary ingredients where they are deficient. Thus if his soil has too much clay, he will mix sand—if too much sand he will add clay, and he will take care to provide an ample supply of lime. A few bushels of this material (even so small a number as two or three to the acre) are said to make an observable difference but 30 bushels to produce surprising effects. Animal manure is only proper to be used when it has undergone fermentation—wood ashes are also recommended when used with other things. In England it is the general practice to give a heavy top-dressing of compost when wheat is to be grown. Marsh mud has been applied with excellent effect in this Province.

PLOUGHING.—Deep ploughing on most lands as they naturally are and on all as they should be, is essential to good wheat crops. They are thus enabled to stand the drought of our hot summers and to derive the utmost nourishment from the soil. The roots of wheat penetrate to a great depth and spread wide. They are of two sorts, the first springing immediately from the seed called therefore seminal roots, and serving to fix the plant firmly in the ground; the other called coronal roots, spring from the stalk and collect nourishment from every quarter. These latter roots always form themselves immediately below the surface of the soil and are the bases of new stems which are filled up and thus greatly increase the productiveness of the plant. One grain of wheat has been known to produce a plant with 116 fine ears, one of which counted 75 grains, and this ear was not larger than a great proportion of the whole—an increase of more than 4000 fold.

SEED.—There is a surprising difference in the productiveness of different kinds. An extremely interesting account of an experiment on the relative values of several varieties is published in the first volume of the Journal of the Royal English Agricultural Society, page 39. In November 1837, Mr. Morton sowed 16 different kinds of wheat. The grains were covered 2 inches deep, and were 3 inches from each other, and the rows were exactly 6 inches apart. The following is an extract from his account and is confined to two of the varieties producing the greatest and the smallest yield—

No.	Name of wheat	No. of seeds planted		Loss of seeds, from birds, &c.		Produce of 99 square feet		No. of ears in the square foot.	Average No. of heads per foot.	Weight of grain produced from 99 square feet.	Weight of Wheat $\frac{1}{2}$ acre		No. of bush. $\frac{1}{2}$ acre at 64 lb $\frac{1}{2}$ bushel	Length of straw	Weight of Straw produced from 99 square feet	Weight of Straw $\frac{1}{2}$ acre		Weight of roots with 2 inches of straw.	Weight of Roots $\frac{1}{2}$ acre.	
		Plants or Roots.	Heads of Grain.	T ct. qr. lbs.	lbs.	T ct. qr. lbs.	lbs.				T ct. qr. lbs.	lbs.								
2	A red wheat..	792	252	540	3433	35	62.5	12	T ct. qr. lbs. 2 5 1 12	82½	5	22	T ct. qr. lbs. 4 7 0 2	9	1 15 2 6					
3	Egyptian cone bearded.	792	328	264	711	7	21.3	33.8	0 13 0 24	23	6	8½	1 11 2 2	3	0 11 3 4					