



A Modern Potato Digger in Operation on a New Brunswick Farm.

Handling the Potato Crop Machinery Does It on Our Farm

By A. MCKINNON.

EIGHTEEN years ago we started to grow potatoes on a commercial scale. We found the crop profitable and increased our acreage. We have never allowed the crop, however, to assume a place of first importance and dwarf the other lines of our general farming. We have found that potatoes are profitable some years and not so profitable other years, and that the most money in the long run is made by keeping the acreage fairly stable from year to year. During the years that we have been growing potatoes we have learned much and changed our methods on several occasions when increased knowledge and experience showed us where we can improve. No factor in recent years, however, has so influenced our methods as the steady improvement in potato planting and harvesting machinery. In adopting these machines we have been conservative. We have watched them being tried out on the farms of neighbors. We know all about their initial failures and now we have the whole outfit and are perfectly satisfied with everything from the planter to the digger.

We prefer a clover sod to precede potatoes. The sod is plowed as early in the fall as possible and surface worked until winter. In spring we apply barnyard manure if we have it and plow again. When the land is thoroughly worked and mellow and deep, the potatoes are planted, the sets being 14 inches apart in the drill and the drills 30 inches apart. This spring plowing and spring working is even more essential since we purchased the potato planter than it was when we turned out the drills with the plow. With our potato planter two men and two horses can put in four to five acres of spuds a day. Two men could not put in much over one-half an acre if working with a plow and dropping by hand. The same machine that plants the potatoes also distributes the fertilizer at the rate of 500 lbs. to the acre right in the drill along with the seed. We put in the potatoes good and deep and immediately the planting is completed, we harrow thoroughly.

We drag the field several times up to the time that the potato plants are four to six inches high. Then we scuffle, using a two-row machine for most of the work. Then comes the spraying for bugs and blight. Here modern machinery is a wonderful convenience. The power for our sprayer, which covers six rows at a time, is furnished by a cog wheel on the wheel of the sprayer cart. Here is a small point that is important. We direct the spray ahead so that it strikes the foliage on the side covering the whole leaf, rather than straight down on the tops of the potato plants. We spray four or five times during the

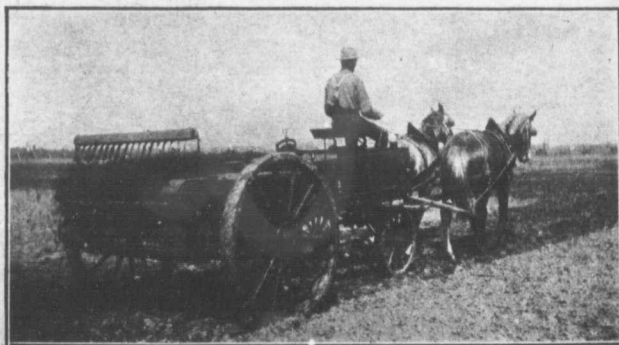
season, and very seldom do we have a rotten potato. Were it not for our modern labor saving spraying device, we would not spray at all.



Potato Planting Time in New Brunswick.

Few forms of farm machinery have been more improved in recent years than the implements which handle the potato crop. Where "spuds" are grown on a commercial scale, planters and diggers are considered a necessity. Photos courtesy Canadian Potato Machinery Company.

The harvesting of the potato crop became so burdensome a few years ago, that we were driven to do what we seldom plan to do—we bought the (Continued on page 15.)



The Manure Spreader Makes the Most of the Manure and of the Operator's Time. Manure is of use to the growing crop only as the plant food it contains becomes available. The more finely the manure is divided the more quickly can plants make use of its fertilizing ingredients. Hence the merit of the manure spreader. This one is at work on the farm of J. Heatherington, Huron Co., Ont.

Milking Machine Experience

Satisfactory With 40 Cows

R. W. IRELAND, Prince Edward Co., Ont.

WE have been milking with a mechanical milker for over three years now, and can say it is a decided success. In February, 1914, we installed a three unit machine, a double unit which milks two cows, and a single which milks one. The double unit cost \$135, and the single \$110, and the pumping outfit cost \$110. We use the engine we have on the sprayer for power. The remaining expense for installing would be for a three-quarter inch galvanized pipe the length of the row of cows.

At first we milked 24 cows with the machine, but have increased them to 40. Two men can milk 40 cows with the three units in an hour and 20 minutes, and rinse out the machine by drawing a pail of clean water through the teat cups before the engine is stopped. This is all the washing it receives, except once or twice a week it is taken apart and thoroughly cleaned, which takes about an hour and a half. If we milk by hand it takes five men to do the work in the same time. We intend to put in another double unit this spring, as two men will then handle the milking in a much shorter time. We strip our cows, as we find it saves time and gasoline.

We find that the cows like the machine, after they get used to it, much better than hand milking, and we get more milk. Last spring, during spraying time, we milked by hand for a week, and when we started our herd went down 25 lbs. in their milk, and when we put on the machine again they came up 25 lbs.

The only parts of our machine that have given out are the teat cup inflations, which have to be renewed every six or eight months. They cost 60c. apiece; this is the part that causes the squeeze. I would not care for a machine that did not have the squeeze, as one can milk much faster with it, and I think cows give more milk the faster they are milked so long as they are comfortable. The other part that has to be replaced is a pulsator spring, once in a while, at 12c each.

The way the labor problem is now, I would have a machine if I had 12 cows, as one man can milk as many as 20 cows with a double unit. We run our machine the year round, as about one-half of our cows freshen in the fall. We could not get along without it, as it is a great hardship to milk by hand now. The machine has never refused to work but once or twice we had to stop for repairs for the engine. I think the milking machine a great boon.