

In the cultivation of this wild plant, these conditions must be borne in mind and carried out as closely as possible. Where these conditions prevail naturally on the margin of lake or stream, the seed may be sown, but if new to the locality, the plants will be as much a novelty to all wild animals as they are to the sower and must be guarded. The bed is firmly established. A bed in a stream or pond on cultivated land near dwellings is not so liable to be attacked and may be readily supervised. But where the bed is desired as an attraction for wild fowl, seed must be sown in larger quantities to allow for their depredations.

Having secured a suitable bed, the next step is to obtain germinable seed. It is useless to sow seed which has lost its vitality. The sowing of seed which has been kept dry for several months is the chief cause of so many failures in the cultivation of wild rice. Seed which is freshly gathered and sown shortly after in the late summer or early autumn usually gives the best results. Fresh and well ripened seed, that is seed which has accumulated a sufficient supply of food for the seedling to live upon during the early stages of growth, will sink at once by its own weight. Its sharply-pointed end reaches the mud first at right angles and soon becomes buried out of sight of marauding water-fowl. This is a good test for fresh and properly ripened seed. Unripe seed, dry seed, and seed whose glumes are only partially filled with stored material will float on the surface for some time before sinking and often lie exposed on the surface of the mud where they serve as a decoy for the good seed beneath. Thus failure will again be the result. Seed which has been kept dry for the purpose of transportation should be soaked in a large vessel of water before sowing. It should be left there till all the good seed has sunk. The poor seed and refuse may then be removed and a more evenly planted bed will thus be secured.

The seeds should be scattered on water which is from one to three feet deep. Notice should be taken of the place where the first sink and the next handful sown accordingly. Should they drift too far, the young seedlings are likely to be smothered by the depth of water. Reeds and rushes on the margin, provided they are in sufficient water, are a support to the young plants and protect them against the wind, but they are a great disadvantage if the rice is sown for grain or seed. In that case the rice should be sown beyond the other tall aquatic plants and thickly enough for self-support against winds. A sparsely-sown bed, and also a bed in very shallow water, produces plants which branch from the base and thus the time of maturity is continued on into unpropitious weather. Wild rice needs the hot sun of July and August for good seed development. A well sown bed should produce an even, good stand of ripened heads about the end of August or first week in September. Seed which has been stored during the winter, should be sown as early as possible in the spring, that is as soon as the ice is out and the spring freshets are over. Seed sown in swollen waters is likely to be stranded with the return of normal conditions. Under favourable conditions, the bed needs little attention after sowing and will resow itself if allowed to do so.

Swamp land bordering on stream or lake may be put into trenches for growing seed. The trenches should be dug in the autumn after the weeds have been mown off. They may be made two feet wide, two feet deep, two feet apart, and as long as desired. There is usually sufficient seepage to prevent stagnation but if necessary, an outlet and an inlet trench may be dug from the first and last trench having the trenches connected at alternate ends. The soil should be overturned between the trenches to make a solid path for gathering the seed. If the land is very wet it may be