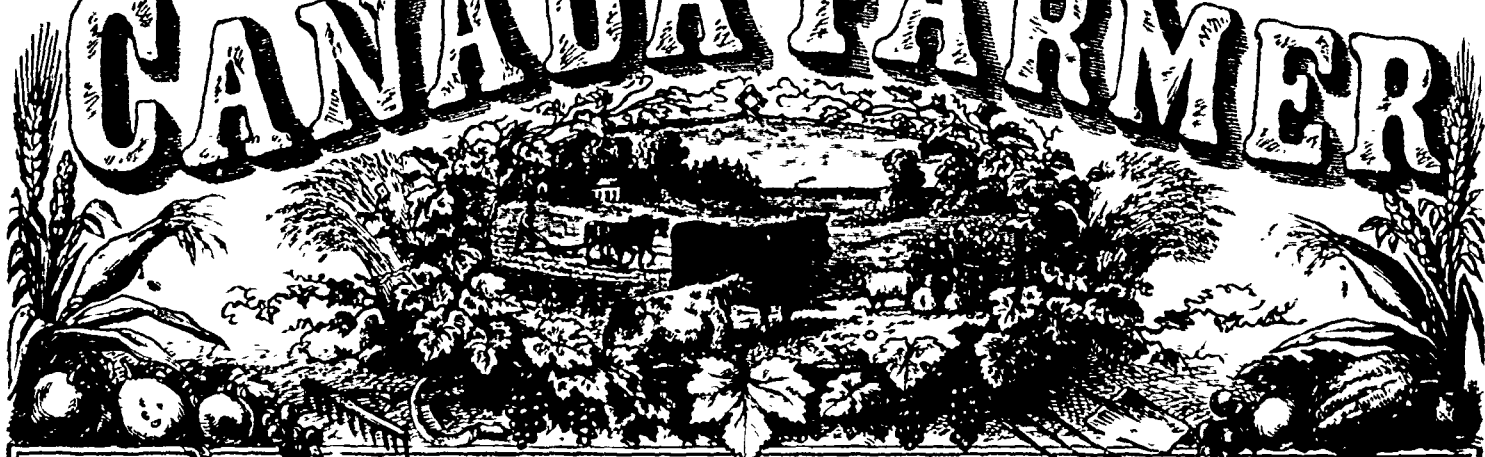


THE

CANADA FARMER



Vol. III. No. 6.

TORONTO, CANADA, JUNE 15, 1877.

NEW SERIES.

The Field.

Turnips, and their Cultivation.

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II.

SOWING.

Though turnips can be sown by hand, in rows made on the top of the drill, or on the flat, this method, except for small quantities, is very slow and unsatisfactory; where they are grown in any quantity, a drill of some kind should be used. Some drills sow one, and some two, rows at once. Seed drills of both kinds are to be got in most parts of the Province now.

The one in use on my own farm sows only one drill at a time. This is attached to a light roller drawn by one horse, the roller going over the drill that is being sown, and also the one last sown, thus making a smooth seed bed, and covering the seed at the same time. The drill has to be moved from one end of the roller to the other when turning at each end of the land. The time for sowing turnips varies in different parts of the Province; but generally the second or third week in June is the best time; and the quantity of seed required is from two to three pounds to the acre. This is a much larger quantity than is wanted for plants. Stephens, in his "Farmers' Guide," states that 1 oz. 6 drachms Troy, would give sufficient plants for an acre, supposing all grew, and the drills were twenty-seven inches wide, and the turnips ten inches apart on the drill; so that when sown at the rate above given, the waste of seed is twenty-seven to one. It must not be supposed, however, that 1 oz. 6 drachms of turnip seed will sow an acre, for many of the seeds want vitality, and many others are no doubt buried too deep to vegetate with the rest. Besides, plenty of seed not only secures a full braird, but tends to make the turnips grow faster at first, thus pushing them sooner past danger from the fly.

AFTER CULTIVATION.

If the land is moderately clear, turnips will need nothing doing to them from the time they are sown until they are fit to hoe and thin out. The time it takes for turnips to be ready to hoe cannot be stated, as it depends on the state of the weather. The young plants require to be from two to three inches high before thinning. If thinned too soon, they are apt to stunt; and if left too long, they are apt to grow long-necked and not bulb so well. Before thinning, the turnips should be gone through with a horse-hoe or drill cultivator, cutting up all the weeds between the rows, paring the soil from the young plants as near as possible without touching or covering them up, leaving a narrow strip of a few inches on the top of the drill, with the plants in the middle, so that but little ground remains to go over with the hand hoe. In hoeing, the young plants may be left from nine inches to a foot, or even more, apart; the richer and better the land the wider apart should they be left—leaving them laid over on one side. As soon as the plants begin to set up again, they should be gone through with the drill cultivator, killing the weeds between the rows. Sometimes, if the weather is showery, when thinning, the plants pushed out will grow between the drills, and they want killing as well as the weeds. After the first thinning, turnips want a hoeing a second time, cutting out all the weeds between the plants, and any turnips that may have been left double at the first hosing. It will conduce very much to their growth if they are frequently cultivated between the drills, keeping the ground fine and mellow to attract the dew, and get the full benefit from any showers that may fall. The ground cannot be kept too mellow. There is hardly any part of a farm that looks better than a well cleaned and thinned crop of turnips, and none that looks worse than one all grown over with weeds, which is not creditable, and cannot be profitable to the farmer, as it not only seriously damages the growing crops, but also fills the ground full of the seeds of

weeds. If the land is foul with fast growing annual weeds, such as fox-tail grass, charlock, &c., and the turnips do not come quickly, we have sometimes had to run the cultivator up one drill and down another, and then take a sharp hoe and pare the weeds off close to the rows of young turnips as soon as they could be fairly seen, thus preventing the fast growing weeds from smothering the young plants; but as the plant grows rapidly, this treatment will rarely be required.

HARVESTING.

As the turnip is a late growing plant—indeed they bulb best after the weather becomes cool, and a moderate frost does not injure them—they may be left in the ground as long as there is no danger of their being frozen in. They may with safety be left in the ground till about the first of November, often later; but in 1869 the ground froze up very early in that month, so that more turnips were frozen in the ground and lost than I ever knew before.

There are various methods of taking up turnips. The old plan (one I have generally pursued) is to take some heavy knife, made out of an old scythe or hook, pulling up the turnip, cutting off the root first and then the top, each man taking two rows, and throwing the turnips of four rows into one, so that they can be conveniently thrown into a cart or waggon; the waggon going in the middle, and taking eight drills with it, four on each side. The tops by this way can either be left on the land, to be eaten off by cattle or ploughed in, or they may be drawn off and fed to stock on some other field.

Many, especially on light land, cut off the tops of the turnips with a hoe, then collect the tops, and harrow up the turnips with a pair of blunt harrows, and then gather and draw them off. By this method the roots are all left on, but it is a speedy method. The tops are sometimes cut off, and then the bulb ploughed out with a sharp plough. Several other ways of taking them up are practised; and this last fall I saw advertised