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Factors Affecting Wheat Yields

Continued from Page 8

and the least from flax. These were obtained in the two most favorable seasons we have ever had, hence the relatively high yields and profits.

Summary on Stubble Tillage

The causes of low yields on stubble fields are usually few in number. The most common ones are:—(1) The low moisture content of the soil; (2) The presence of grass, shrubs and weeds; (3) A poor seed bed; (4) Insufficient "soluble" plant food; (5) The stubble itself.

The best means of controlling these conditions are as follows: (1) Plow "Grassy" fields; (2) Cultivate as early in fall as possible; (3) Don't work tight clay soil when too wet; (4) Harrow plowed land as soon as possible after plowing; (5) Place the furrow slice firmly against the furrow bottom; (6) Burning stubble is often immediately profitable but it is permanently wasteful of soil fertility; (7) Surface cultivation is sometimes preferable to plowing; (8) Harrow the growing crop when there is cause for so doing; (9) sow the seed into the moisture—not just to it; (10) The best time to plow, whether in fall or spring, and the best depth to plow, whether deep or shallow, varies considerably under different conditions. The depth at which the best job can be done, and which leaves the soil in the best tilth is generally the most satisfactory for stubble plowing.

The Tillage of Summerfallow

The chief purpose of the summerfallow is to store and conserve moisture. If the heavy rains of June "run off" the surface of the soil, such portions at least can neither be stored nor conserved. If weeds and volunteer plants pump moisture out of the land before plowing, the amount they so use is lost.

Early plowing of the fallow opens up the soil to receive the heavy June and early July rains, and what is more important, it prevents the wastage of moisture by weeds and volunteer plants in the early summer.

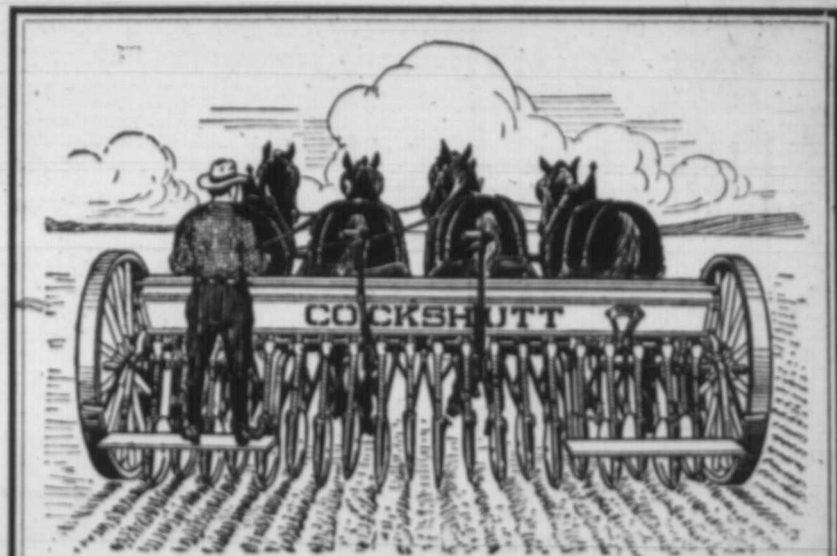
An early fallow may require considerably more surface cultivation in the more humid parts in wet years and if so, the cost of the fallowing is increased. It then becomes the business of the crop grower to find out for himself whether under his conditions it pays to plow quite so early. Drifting soil is also sometimes worse on early and well worked fallows.

But even in the face of these arguments in favor of early fallowing, dirty land should not be plowed until the weed seeds on the surface can be made to germinate, otherwise they will be turned under only to grow and give trouble in a later crop.

Depth of Plowing on Yield

We conducted tests over 1914, 1915 and 1916 to find the effect of the depth of plowing and of subsoiling on the acre yield of wheat. The land was plowed three inches deep, six inches deep, nine inches deep and six inches deep with subsoiling. The average results for three inch plowing was 36 bushels, 21 pounds; for six inch plowing, 36 bushels, 55 pounds; and for nine inch plowing 35 bushels, 62 pounds. It will be seen that six inch plowing of the fallow has given the largest yield tho the difference is very small and a three inch depth has given more than nine inches deep. There was no "hard pan" in this soil, the land was new and in good physical condition and two of the years were very "wet" ones. There is little that is conclusive about these figures for these conditions. We regard six inch to seven inch as the best depth for fallowing. Deeper plowing than this on shallow soils is likely to bring up rather too much subsoil and place the fertile surface soil too deep for best results, altho this objection to deeper plowing would not hold on "deep" soils nor even on normal ones where grass and shrubs are serious pests.

Subsoiling for wheat gave rather different and unsteady results, one year decreasing the yield 7½ bushels and the next increasing it nearly 6 bushels. Un-



All You Do is Drive

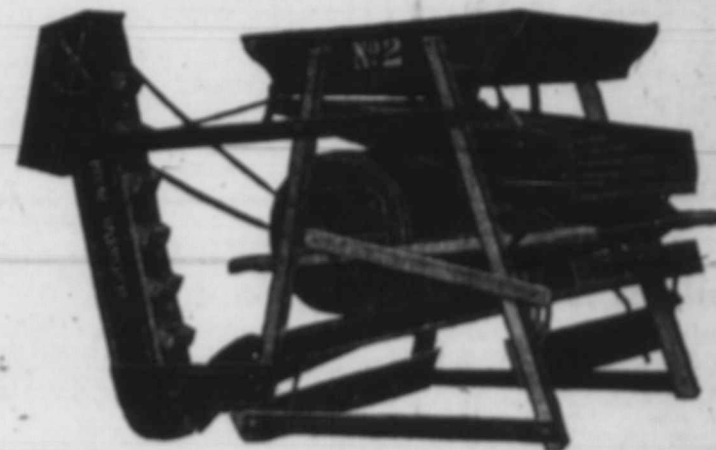
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