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AGRICULTURAL NEWS, STATE COLLEGE BROOKINGS.

GRASS FOR PERMANENT PASTURE.

H. J. H., of Turner County, makes the following inquiry of the agriculture department of the State College: "Kindly advise me as to what grasses would be best to sow for permanent pasture. Land is level. I also wish to sow ten acres alfalfa. This will be upon ground that was in pasture several years, plowed in the fall of 1911, top-dressed with manure and planted to corn in 1912. Would it do to use an ordinary grain drill closed up tightly for seeding it? How much seed should be used per acre and what depth if drill can be used?"

Reply: "For permanent pasture use a mixture of brome grass, timothy and Kentucky blue grass; five pounds timothy, five pounds Kentucky blue grass and a pound of alfalfa seed per acre. Put these in on well prepared land with three packs of early oats per acre. If rainfall is plentiful, cut the oats for grain, and if the weather is dry, cut the oats for hay to give the grass a better chance.

"You can sow alfalfa seed with a grain drill, providing your particular drill will close up enough. The seed can be sown with an ordinary wheat drill as follows:

Mix about six pounds of corn meal to ten pounds of alfalfa seed, and mix thoroughly. The ordinary drill when closed to its finest calibration will sow about sixteen pounds of the mixture will mean ten pounds of alfalfa seed. You should not use more than eight or ten pounds per acre, and usually with a drill it is not possible to sow as small an amount as this without a seeder attachment to the drill. Alfalfa may be put in with a broadcast seeder after one of the common little range seeders, or it may be put in by hand sowing.

"I believe you can raise alfalfa. Ten acres is, however, a good sized trial unless you are fully acquainted with it. I frequently advise people to start with three to five acres in a strip along the side of the field, putting in as much the next year and perhaps more the following, until the entire field is put in." By Professor A. N. Hume, Agronomist, State College, Brookings.

MARQUIS WHEAT.

A great many inquiries are coming to the agronomy department of the State College regarding Marquis wheat and apparently a great deal of seed is being purchased at inflated prices. This variety is a good milling wheat. The berry is short and plump, with a deep furrow, giving it somewhat the appearance of bluestem, though the berries average shorter and thicker. It has a good record in Canada where it was originated by selection and has done well as far West as Saskatchewan. The probabilities are that it is adapted to a rather cool short season. Whether it will do well under average South Dakota conditions is a little doubtful. There is no particular reason to believe that it will do any better than such varieties as Bearded Red Elite (Velvet Chaff), or the pedigreed strains of Scotch Elite or Bluestem such as Minnesota No. 163 and Minnesota 169 respectively. It is rather a serious matter to introduce a new variety of wheat on a large scale.

For those who like to experiment and want to try it, a small field of Marquis wheat is alright but for large fields it is safer to use varieties of known value under South Dakota conditions. The State College and Experiment Station will furnish the local papers with reliable information about tested varieties during the spring months. By Manley Champlin, Asst. Agronomist, State College.

Occasionally the Experiment Station at Brookings gets some peculiar requests. A few days ago a citizen of this State wrote a letter to the College stating that he had sent away for samples of whiskey on trail, and that the said "wet goods" made him very sick. Would the chemist of the Experiment Station please inform him what was the trouble with the "sticker"? It is not generally known that a chemical test of this kind would cost a great deal of money. However, in this instance Professor Shepard happened to be posted on the chemical make-up of the article in question, and was able to give off-hand the desired information.

More National Forest Timber For Sale.

Washington, April 7.—The Forest Service has just begun to advertise the twelfth large lot of National timber offered for sale within the past nine months. Altogether it has advertised since July 1, 1910, the beginning of the present fiscal year, about 2,500,000,000 feet, and has closed contracts for the sale of 1,700,000,000 feet. The latest advertised sale is of approximately 52,000,000 feet of saw timber in the Rainier National Forest, about 35 miles from Tacoma.

In offering National Forest timber for sale the Government first makes an estimate of the quantity of timber on an area which would naturally form a single logging unit, and which offers attractive opportunities for the lumberman. The probable cost of logging and manufacturing by a capable lumberman is then estimated. On the basis of these estimates combined with the figures for market values and freight charges the timber is appraised and then advertised for sale, with the appraised value as a minimum price.

The minimum prices set for the Rainier timber vary from 50c to \$1.50 per thousand feet, according to the kind of timber. These are stumpage prices that is, the purchaser buys the trees on the stump and does all the logging, but pays according to the board foot measure of the logs. The Government aims to allow the manufacturer a liberal profit on the basis that lumbering involves a good deal of business risk, and the minimum stumpage prices are fixed accordingly. Often, however, competitive bids raise the price above the advertised minimum.

One of the provisions of the contract which the successful bidder for the Rainier timber will enter into will be that if market prices advance materially the Government's Chief Forester may, after the sale has run three years, require a reasonable readjustment of the stumpage prices up to an added 50 cents per thousand. The object of this stipulation is to prevent loss to the Government that is, to the public and an undue profit to the purchaser through long-term contracts entered into on a rising market. Provision against such speculative profits is regarded as especially necessary in view of the long-term sales now sometimes made to get purchasers for large bodies of inaccessible timber.

For the Rainier sale the cutting period allowed is only five years, since the quantity of timber involved approximately 52,000,000 board feet does not call for an extended operation. One National Forest sale made this year was for 800,000,000 board feet and the purchasers were allowed a cutting period of twenty-two years because a preliminary two years in which to build a railroad. Usually purchasers must begin operating the year of purchase and cut a stipulated amount each year.

The latter provision is simply an example of a fundamental principle that is applied in all National Forest timber sales. The primary object is described as being not profit for the Government but benefit to the public. Nowhere is the policy a strictly commercial one. The conditions of cutting are carefully prescribed from the standpoint of present as well as future needs. The highest bid for the contract may be rejected, and is rejected if it appears that to give the bidder the contract would tend to facilitate timber monopoly and so subject the consumer to a hardship. In other words, the Government foresters consider that they should not only make the forests grow as fast as possible but also make them as useful as possible to the public.

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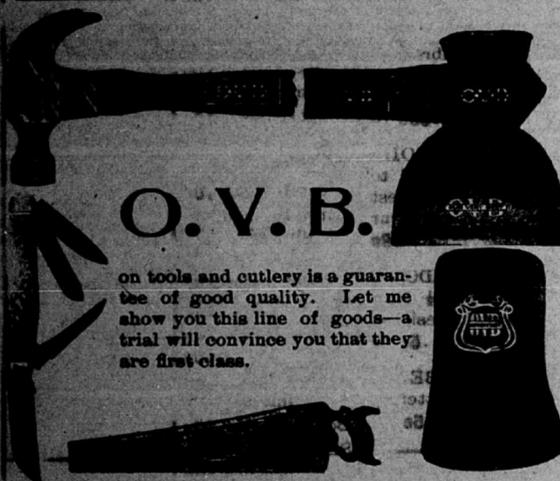
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