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Both mangels and beets make excellent substitutes for green food for the flock of hens during the winter months.

There is something a trifle out of proportion in putting \$2,000 into an automobile and scripping the amount subscribed for the support of the neighborhood kirk to \$5.

Inasmuch as the automobile has shortened the distance between the farm and town for all occasions which do not require the hauling of a load, it will serve in so far to increase the value of these farms.

Line fences seldom prove a source of trouble when the men owning the land on either side are willing to be on the square and to treat the fellow on the other side as he would have the fellow on the other side treat him.

With ditchers getting \$4 a day and board in some sections of the corn belt, it is not difficult to see that the farmer who has from 50 to 100 acres of corn to husk in the next few weeks is going to be up against a very real proposition.

There is reason to suspect that many a horse dies of azoturia following hard driving, after an interval of no exercise, when the real cause of the death is a fuddled and senseless brain on the part of the driver due to too much booze.

Two carloads of clover seed were shipped the other day from Albany, Ore., to Wisconsin buyers, the value of the shipment being \$21,000. Some farmers in the vicinity of Albany realized from \$4,000 to \$5,000 for their crops of clover seed.

It is a pretty safe plan when strangers call at the farm home to keep them out of the house, and this is especially so if there are no men about. If they ask for a drink of water let them drink it on the doorstep, and if they begin to inquire whether the men are at home it is time to pick up a club or set the dog on them.

One corn belt farmer who has an extensive oak grove in one of his pastures estimated the acorn crop at 200 bushels and proceeded to utilize it by turning in some 400 hogs which he was planning to fatten for market. In view of the fact that acorns are estimated to have a feeding value several times that of corn, bushel for bushel, a snug sum will be realized from this native nut crop.

In spite of the fact that the corn crop was well matured and that the first killing frost did not come until Sept. 21, there were still some farmers who put off filling their silos so late that they had nothing but frosted corn to shred for their silage. If the first frost held off until Thanksgiving there would probably be a few farmers who would not get round to the job of filling their silos until two days after.

The yearly salmon catch in the Puget sound and British Columbia waters is valued at \$15,000,000. The fishing season lasts a month and is a busy one, most of the work in the canneries being done by Japs. Many of the fish are sealed under certain limitations, while many others are taken in the revolving traps or wheels which work on the principle of a water wheel, the fish being caught in compartments on the rim of the wheel, elevated and dumped into inclosures, from which they are taken as wanted.

A farmer whose case was reported to the writer the other day seems to be making the mistake that is typical of some farmers. Instead of having, say, a couple of gasoline engines on the farm, which in good conscience ought to be a plenty, he has nine and on top of this has lately added an expensive oil tractor and plowing outfit. A fellow can have too many gasoline engines, just as he can have too many dogs or other things, and unless he has a pretty good sized bank account he's quite likely to have some hard sledding with such an outlay as this.

A rather interesting case was decided a couple of weeks ago at Greenwood, Mo., involving the right of a telephone company to set poles in front of a farmer's residence, the doing of which seriously injured some fruit trees which stood on the edge of the highway just outside the farmer's fence. When the judge heard the ground for the farmer's complaint he ruled that the trees belonged, as did the road, to the county and were not the property of the man near whose place they were growing. On this basis any taxpayer had just as much right to gather the fruit as the supposed owner.

One corn belt farm claims to have a herd of some sixty mule footed hogs that are immune to hog cholera. In view of the heavy losses that hog raisers have sustained the past season, this mule foot variety ought to be popular.

Any beets that are not needed for household purposes should be stored in the cellar and given to the cow, as they will furnish a succulent ration that she will much appreciate and which will tend to increase her flow of milk materially.

Growers of asparagus will find circular No. 102 issued by the bureau of entomology at Washington helpful in the task of fighting the inroads of the asparagus beetle. The circular takes up in detail cultural methods and sprays which have been found helpful.

It is a matter of congratulation to all who use country highways that the substantial cement culvert and larger bridge for larger waterways are taking the place of the old wooden structures which were short lived and were often left in a wretched condition for long periods of time by irresponsible township trustees. If properly made the new cement structures will last through more than a lifetime.

If the weight limit of parcels that may be sent by mail is raised to 100 pounds it will be one of the greatest boons the fruit raiser was ever accorded. It will make possible the shipment of fancy fruit—peaches, pears, apples, and the like—in full bushel or half bushel boxes direct from producer to consumer and will help to give both of them a little more of that 65 cents on every dollar's worth of produce consumed that is said to be dissipated somewhere between the two.

More than 18,000,000 pounds of white arsenic were consumed in the United States during 1912. Of this total 6,000,000 pounds were produced at home as a byproduct in mining operations, while 12,000,000 pounds were imported. The more important uses for the various compounds of arsenic are the manufacture of glass, of paris green and arsenate of lead, both of which are used as insecticides; of fireworks, paint pigments, in dyeing, printing fabrics and in tanning hides.

Peterita, a new forage plant lately introduced into this country from the British Sudan by the department of agriculture and belonging to the sugar cane and Kafir corn family, gives considerable promise as a crop that will yield well under the conditions prevailing in the semiarid southwest. As grown west of the Mississippi river the past season it has shown good drought resistant qualities and in some instances seems to have been proof against chinch bugs when other crops alongside were consumed. However, the new crop is in the probationary period, and it would be well to try it on a small scale first.

Pride and self conceit are traits that may often be carried to a disagreeable extreme, but a well balanced stock of self respect is a trait which should be studiously cultivated by every young man and young woman who entertains serious hopes of getting anywhere or being anybody in the world. If one has little or no regard for the worth and sacredness of his own personality it is more than likely that there will be a failure to develop traits which will command the respect of one's fellows. When a boy or girl gets an adequate conception of the possibilities that lie open to him, if he only applies himself industriously, there is immediately created an atmosphere in his life that will go a long way toward guaranteeing success.

The writer doesn't like to appear in the guise of a pessimist touching the potato situation, but he is persuaded that the shortage of the crop for the country as a whole is a good deal larger than those produce papers, edited for the most part in the interest of commission men and retailers, are just now giving their readers to understand. Not only is the yield of tubers less than half what it was in many sections last year, but coupled with this is a reduction of the acreage planted following the glutting of the markets with last year's crop. These two conditions seldom come together, but they have this year in a rather aggravated fashion. In view of the high prices which are quite likely to prevail it will be a good idea to pick up at digging time any potatoes that will be large enough for seed.

America is said to lead the world in the production of queen bees. One Ohio man alone rears about 3,500 every year. Under natural conditions bees permit only one queen to stay in the hive, but by making large artificial cells like those usually occupied by the queens and putting a larva in each the workers proceed to feed these impostors, as it were, the royal jelly, and as a result they develop all the qualities of the queen. On hatching each queen is given separate quarters in a hive with a bodyguard of about twenty-five workers, which look after her every want. When full grown she is placed in a little wire cage with her attendants and may be shipped wherever the owner desires. A queen will live on the average about four years and during the laying season produces from 1,500 to 3,000 eggs per day. When the queen of the hive becomes old and incapacitated she is supplanted by a younger queen, and, though allowed to remain in the hive until she dies, she has to take orders from her attendants, and in case of insubordination she is stung to death.

HOME COURSE
IN SCIENTIFIC
AGRICULTURE

SIXTEENTH ARTICLE.
FARMERS' CORN TESTS.

By Professor C. P. NORGORD of the College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin.

THE purpose of the farmers' corn tests is to emphasize the importance of proper curing, storage and planting of good seed corn and the value of using high yielding varieties. This was accomplished by germination and growing tests on the demonstration farms of each farmer's corn, showing the great losses sustained by farmers with present practices. Samples of farmers' seed corn as planted by them were secured from twenty-five farmers surrounding each demonstration farm. Each ear of this was tested for germination and a record kept of the same at the station at Madison. One hundred and fifty kernels of each farmer's corn were planted in duplicate rows in different parts of one of the demonstration fields.

The land was carefully selected so as to be uniform in fertility and drainage and as free as possible from animal and insect enemies. The corn was planted after May 15 to avoid cold rains and packed soils. The exact stand was determined from the number of stalks appearing from the 150 kernels planted, and later the yield of each man's corn was secured. Samples of station bred, kin dried corn were planted beside the farmers' corn and were taken as standards for comparison.

Considering the relative yielding power of different varieties, Farmer A. at Oshkosh found that his sample, a mixture of flint and dent, with a stand of 87 per cent, gave a yield of 27.6 bushels per acre, while his neighbor's Golden Glow corn, with a stand of 91



Photo by College of Agriculture, Wisconsin State University.

per cent, gave 77.1 bushels, a difference of 49.5 bushels per acre, due to a low yielding variety. At 50 cents per bushel Farmer A. lost \$24.75 per acre. It has been demonstrated that yield corresponds very closely to stand and that stand depends largely upon the vitality of the seed as shown by the germinating test. One of the factors determining the vitality and yield is storage.

The effect of storage of seed corn was strikingly illustrated by two samples of Silver King corn grown side by side at Oshkosh. Farmer B's Silver King corn, field cured and stored on the outside of a pump house, gave a stand of 60 per cent and a yield of forty-one bushels per acre. A fire dried sample of Silver King from the station grown next to it, with a stand of 90 per cent, gave a yield of 85.7 bushels per acre. Farmer B. lost forty-four bushels, or \$22 per acre—in other words, he secured only half a crop because of poor care of seed.

One bushel of corn will plant six acres. For every bushel of this corn that Farmer B. used he suffered a loss on six acres of \$132. Had Farmer B. cured and stored the five bushels of seed corn used by him in 1909 according to the best method he would have increased his income from this thirty acres by \$660. This sum therefore represents the value to him of curing five bushels of seed corn, or a value of \$132 per bushel.

Considering the average results of the five best and five poorest samples, we find that the five best samples averaged 78.3 bushels, or \$39.15 per acre, while the five poorest samples averaged 39.7 bushels, or \$19.85. The average loss sustained by each of the farmers using the five poorest samples was therefore \$19.30 per acre.

The lowest germination, 1 1/2 per cent, was that of corn standing in shock during the winter. This did not dry out well in the fall. The cells of this corn were therefore subject to frequent freezing and thawing while distended with water. As a result of this many of the cells burst, thus killing the germ and lowering the germination. It is noticeable that fire dried corn did not suffer so much, nor corn cured in well ventilated garrets or rooms in houses, the germination of the former being 90 per cent. This corn had the high percentage of moisture removed immediately

after coming from the field and could therefore withstand freezing and thawing without injury. The average germination of seed corn throughout the state for 1909-10 as shown by these samples is 65.9 per cent. The average stand secured from this corn was 59.5 per cent.

Seed corn dried with artificial heat in well ventilated rooms during the first two or three weeks after picking gives the highest germination, an average of 91.5 per cent for the two years. Next to this is corn cured in furnace rooms with open windows where the heat was applied immediately after bringing the corn from the field. Well ventilated rooms and garrets with more than one window gave germinations of 86.5 per cent and 84.5 per cent respectively. Corn cured under porches protected from rains gave 70 per cent; corn in barns, tool houses, etc., 69 per cent.

The granary has proved a snare and delusion to many a farmer who thinks this is a good place for drying seed corn. The moisture from the grain in granaries, like the moisture from animals in barns, enters the cells of the corn, and the freezing weather which follows destroys its vitality. Windmills and the outside of buildings and corners proved the poorest places to cure seed corn.

In this study of seed curing much corn was found which was destroyed by lying in piles or standing in sacks for a short time after husking. The only safe way of curing seed corn is therefore to place the corn immediately after picking in a well ventilated room and apply artificial heat for from one to three weeks.

The grading of the seed, the calibration of the planter and the weather and soil at planting time are, of course, other factors which have their influence. The greatest variation, a difference of 13 per cent, is found in the case of corn stored in granaries. The average germination of all kinds of corn for 1909-10 is 65.9 per cent, and the average stand is 59.5 per cent, a very close parallel.

The methods for securing good seed corn and obtaining a good stand are, briefly, using a high yielding variety sufficiently early to mature in the locality where grown; selecting only well ripened, perfect ears from vigorous stalks before the entire field is ripe; storing each ear separately; drying with artificial heat in a well ventilated room immediately after picking; testing each ear for germination; grading the seed and calibrating the planter to suit each grade of corn; growing seed corn from well selected seed in seed plots where barren stalks may be removed.

The spacing of rows and hills of corn and the number of kernels per hill vary with latitude and soil fertility and the variety. The richer the soil the closer can the corn be planted.

Special emphasis has been placed upon harrowing corn several times soon after planting and in cultivating corn with single horse cultivators, when the corn is tasseling and setting ears. Care has been exercised at this cultivation to run the cultivators shallow to avoid cutting the roots which at this time come very close to the surface. Shallow, level cultivation practiced at a number of places particularly after showers during the drought of midsummer formed dust mulches and conserved the soil moisture for the use of the corn.

Inquiries at farmers' meetings showed that only 20 per cent of the farmers in the state owned fanning mills. The losses from weed seeds annually introduced on a farm through uncleaned grain would amount to more than the cost of a fanning mill.

A sufficient supply of grains for seed purposes should be carefully cleaned soon after thrashing and stored in small bins, where danger of heating is removed. Too often the seed is prepared immediately before seeding time, taken from the bottom of large bins, where heating and bin burning have lowered the vitality, and sown without cleaning.

"Pin oats," the small kernels of oats, multiply much more rapidly than the larger kernels. Where the small kernels are not removed from the seed by sieves and wind the size of kernel thus rapidly diminishes. Grains thus "run out" by a lack of care and cleaning of the seed rather than from the causes to which this condition is commonly attributed.

At all of the farms the method of treating seed grains with formaldehyde for the eradication of smut was demonstrated by actual application to grain at the meeting and to seed grain used during the season. The solution used consisted of one pint of 40 per cent formaldehyde mixed with thirty-six gallons of water. The solution was placed in a barrel or tank, and the grains placed in gunny sacks were submerged in this for ten minutes. After being removed and allowed to drain for ten minutes the grain was placed in a heap on a barn floor and covered with wet blankets. The formaldehyde gas being held in the pile by the wet blankets makes the treatment more effective. After two hours the grain was spread on the floor and shoveled over at intervals until dry.

Growing tests at various places with seed furnished by the station containing 20 per cent of smut demonstrated clearly that this can all be removed by the treatment. At Oshkosh the field sown with treated seed was entirely free from smut and yielded ten bushels more per acre than an adjoining field sown with untreated seed.

A study and demonstration of crop rotation have been taken up to show that a good system of crop rotation increases yields, kills weeds, produces a desirable proportion of the different cereals and hay crops and provides good seed beds.

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