

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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AGRICULTURE

HARRY FARMER'S TALKS.

OXIII.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Does it pay to let hogs run in the woods? Is it not better to have a small pasture? We heard a farmer say that he had two sows and pigs. He shut one up in a small lot and put the others in the woods. He fed each one the same amount of feed. When he commenced fattening them, the ones which he had kept up were 33-1-3 per cent larger than the others, and the same difference was found at killing time. It is a question that we have not fully decided, but we have come to the conclusion that it is a losing business to let hogs run at large unless they have swamps to run in. Ticks, redbugs and other insects do a vast amount of damage to hogs in the summer, especially if the weather is dry.

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Here are some mistakes we have made that are hard to remedy. We give them to the public so that others may not do likewise. It is not pleasant to tell our mistakes, but some times it will do more good than to tell of our successes.

When we began farming we tried to spread our labor over too much land, "biting off more than we could chew." We can look back now and see this more plainly.

One mistake was cutting ditches with bends or crooks in them to suit or fit some small plot of land. This gives us short rows on one side of the field. We did the same thing in putting up wire fences.

Mentioning wire fences calls to mind a mistake we made in putting some black wire in a fence with galvanized wire. In a few years the black wire will rust out and give trouble. But our money was scarce and we were trying to save the black wire, but it was "penny wise and pound foolish."

Another mistake was in not using more cow peas in our rotation, which would have saved us a large amount paid out for nitrogen. While we rotated corn and peas one year and cotton the next and saw our land improving slowly, if we had followed the corn and peas with oats and peas and then cotton we could have saved or made hundreds of dollars with less labor.

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We want the ladies who raise chickens on the farms (not farms de-

voted entirely to poultry) to give their plans. It will be very helpful to beginners and learn older people how to succeed. Tell what kind of fowls you like best; time you set the hens; number of eggs you want them to have; how old you let the biddies get before you feed them; the kind of feed given first and later after the biddies get some size; tell whether you let the hens carry them as long as they wish, or whether you wean them. And when they get sick and die so fast that it looks like you are going to lose all, what remedy have you had the most success with? How long do you keep your hens, two, three or four years?

HARRY FARMER.

10,630,945 500-POUND BALES.

First Annual Statement of the Cotton Crop Made Up from Ginners' Reports—North Carolina's Yield, 568,884.

Washington, April 1.—The Census Bureau to-day made public the first annual statement of cotton production under the permanent organization of that bureau. The statement is made by Wm. M. Steuartchief, statistician of manufactures. It places the cotton production at 10,630,945 bales of 500 pounds each. The total crop, including linters, was 11,285,105 commercial bales. The difference in the figures in commercial bales and 500-pound bales is due to the fact that some of the commercial bales are round bales, which contain only 255 pounds or little more than half the weight of the square bales.

The explanation is made that the figures are the result of personal visits on the part of Census Office agents to 32,753 ginneries. The canvas extended until March 28, but at that time there was not much ginning of cotton. The production by States in commercial bales is given as follows: Alabama, 1,011,325; Arkansas, 999,629; Florida, 67,287; Georgia, 1,599,199; Indian Territory, 409,591; Kansas, 45; Kentucky, 1,308; Louisiana, 911,953; Mississippi, 1,451,626; Missouri, 49,552; North Carolina, 568,884; Oklahoma, 218,390; South Carolina, 948,200; Tennessee, 328,019; Texas, 2,587,299; Virginia, 16,575.

The wheat crop in Chatham is unusually forward and promising, and the green wheat fields are lovely to behold. If nothing now unforeseen happens, the farmers of Chatham will be blessed with an abundant wheat crop and a bountiful harvest.—Chatham Record.

Sweet Potatoes, Watermelons and Clay Peas.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Now I want to talk sweet potatoes to you. Two years ago a very energetic man bought land joining mine, and he wanted to know if the soil was good for potatoes. I told him I had made forty bushels on one-eighth of an acre. He went to figuring and said that was three hundred and twenty bushels to the acre and he would plant two acres and make six hundred and forty bushels and sell them for three hundred and twenty dollars. Now, you want to know how he came out. Well, he made about forty bushels of very faulty potatoes, and he was mad and swore that sweet potatoes and Blake Johnson would not do to depend on.

The reason he failed was because he half-plowed, half-fertilized, and poorly worked his potatoes. I broadcast manure at the rate of sixteen loads to the acre and break and ridge and ridge again, and then scatter guano with a high per cent of potash at the rate of three hundred pounds to the acre in the middles, and run a long plow through to mix with the dirt, then make the ridges on that and then knock the top off. I see that my slips are set late in the evening with a little water under them and dry dirt on top of ground, see that they are straight as a line, so that I can run a harrow close to them, and never allow a crust to form on the ground. Try a small patch this way, and see what you can do.

Another thing I would like for you to do is to select a good piece of ground that does not get hard, and have you a fine watermelon patch. Don't put too much manure in the hills, and thoroughly mix the dirt with it, and keep the bugs off them by putting a little well-slacked lime or tobacco dust on the young plants, and you must be quick for the bugs may have them ruined before you know it. Work them well when the vines are dry, and you will have nice, big, red-hearted melons for your family, and a few dollars worth to sell just when you need a little money so bad.

Now, buy you a few bushels of clay peas while they are cheap, and have them ready. I will tell you later how you can make and save some of the best hay you ever had. If you have failed with peavine hay, it was your fault; I can set you right.

BLAKE JOHNSON.
Gaston Co., N. C.

Report of North Carolina Experiments With Cotton and Corn.

The February Bulletin of the State Department of Agriculture, which is now being sent out, contains, in addition to registration of fertilizers and fertilizer analyses, a report of the results of tests of a large number of varieties of cotton and corn on the Edgecombe and Red Springs Test Farms of the Department of Agriculture. Quite a number of the varieties of these crops have now been under experimentation for three years, which gives added interest and value to the results for three years. This shows the varieties which have given the highest yields in the three years' test. Experiments are also included with different width rows and distances in the rows of planting cotton and corn.

Farmers who do not get the Bulletin regularly should send their names to the Department of Agriculture, Raleigh, for it, as it is published for their benefit. When writing, ask for this February number, as the information given should be of value to all growers of the two great crops mentioned.

Tobacco.

The last week in April or the first week in May has heretofore been about as early as most farmers could get their tobacco plants ready to set; and in fact it seemed early enough to insure a healthy and vigorous growth of the plant. This year the plants are from two to three weeks earlier than usual, and we fear that some of our tobacco growers will get in too much of a hurry and "set out" too soon, and we now caution them not to do so. Don't shove your plants too much, and you had better let them get a little old on the bed than run the risk of a failure with your crop by setting too soon. You can keep your plants back by rolling the cover off when the weather will allow. Sometimes during early April we have a very cold snap and a little crust of a freeze, and if your plants should be set and such weather come on them, they might be ruined; but this is not the worst danger; some tobacco planters of long experience told us the other day that if set too soon it might take what is known to tobacco growers as the "hard stalk," and then "button out" too low and be almost worthless. Be careful.—Clinton Democrat.