

FARM WORK FOR JUNE.

Timely Selections from the Department of Practical Suggestion Conducted by Col. J. B. Killebrew, in the Southern Farm Magazine.

The "leafy month of June" is one of the most agreeable in the whole year, but it is a month of strenuous labor on the farm. The great work of cultivating the standard crops must be done, and there must be no relaxing in the warfare waged daily against the incursion of weeds and grass among the growing crops. It may be called the month of cultivation. The corn crop is made in June; the wheat harvest in the best grain-growing districts of the South comes on, and the tobacco and cotton crops require the most assiduous cultivation. A dry June is always the forecast of a good crop year, provided seasonable weather follows in July and August to perfect the crops.

WHEAT HARVESTING.

The farmer should begin to cut the wheat crop just as soon as the grain gets in the dough state. If the beginning is deferred until the grain is fully ripened, the loss from the falling of the straw and the shattering out of the grain will be considerable in the latter part of the harvest. There is but little difference in the quality of the reapers now offered on the market. A bad reaper cannot stand the competition. The frequent field trials of the different reapers demonstrate the points of excellence of each. All, it is true, have some points of superiority, but in the general summation the standard reapers rank very much on a par. All do good work; all are made as durable as is consistent with light draft and perfect work. There is very little wheat now sown on fields upon which reapers may not be used. The old reap hooks and cradles of former days have passed away forever. The self-binding reapers have done as much to cheapen bread as the cotton gin to cheapen clothing. Both are the products of American genius. In these two lines the most important in their results to the human race, American invention has achieved a distinction not surpassed by that of any other country on the globe.

In the putting of the sheaves or bundles of wheat into shocks modern practice does not require so much work done nor such pains taken as formerly.

CAPPING THE SHOCKS.

It is rare now to see a wheat field after harvest covered with "Dutch-oven" shocks, meaning by this those capped by standing two bundles upright, on the sides and over the top of the shock, and tying them on. In practice it has been found that two bundles laid horizontally and at right angles over the tops of the shock and bent downward will give as much protection to the wheat against excessive rains as the "Dutch-oven" caps, nor are they so liable to be blown off by gusts of wind, nor does it require one-fourth of the time to

cap a shock by laying on horizontal bundles as it does to cap one by standing the bundles upright.

These hints about shocking wheat are given because in some of the Atlantic wheat-growing States it is considered still important to use the "Dutch-oven" caps, while in the great grain-growing States of the Northwest such caps are rarely, or never, seen.

If possible, wheat should be threshed just as soon as it is dry enough and before any damage is received from the rains, which, if they do not produce some sprouted grains, will at least stain the grain and so diminish its salable value.

Every farmer should have a granary. To be compelled to sell the crop of wheat direct from the thresher puts the wheatgrower completely in the hands of the wheat-buyer. A good granary that may be well ventilated and made ratproof will often save the farmer its value during a single season.

HAY.

June is the great haying month. Though some clover hay is saved in May, especially in that region of the South below the 36th parallel, yet the great bulk of the crop is cut in May. Timothy and herd's grass reach the stage when it is most profitable to harvest between the 10th and 25th of June. The hay from these grasses is not so difficult to cure as that from clover. Cut in the early morning on a bright day after the dew is off the grass, it may be raked into windrows about noon. Many farmers carry it directly from the windrows to the rick, and never put it in cocks at all. If the weather is dry and the grass not too rank, this may be done without any danger from excessive fermentation, but if the grass is very thick and the heat of the sun is unable to penetrate through the mass, it is far safer to put it into shocks about five feet through at the base and about six feet high. Here the hay should remain until it is thoroughly desiccated, and then it may be put into ricks or stacks. A great saving of hay is made by the building of open sheds in the hay field and storing the cured product in these instead of putting it in stacks in the open meadow, where it will be exposed to the rains of the fall and winter months. It often happens that by means of the upright position of some of the wisps of hay the rain water finds an entrance into the interior of the stack or rick and makes a decayed spot. Though this spot may be ever so small, it rapidly enlarges with each successive rain, and the farmer often finds when he begins to haul up the hay that has been left in the open field that a large percentage of it has been ruined. There is always a perceptible loss in the weathering of the outside of the stack, even though there is no loss by leaks in it. Every hay farmer should therefore construct good sheds to protect his hay from the weather. Where hay is raised for the market it should always be baled, which may be done at

an inconsiderable expense. There are several kinds of balers in the market, and, like the reapers, they all do good work. The most popular size of a bale is one that weighs from 75 to 100 pounds. Such a bale is easily handled by one man, and buyers will pay enough additional for such sizes to meet the expense incurred in baling.

COWPEAS.

Farmers should not forget that June is the best month for the sowing of cowpeas, whether intended for the making of forage, for pasture, or for turning under as a green crop. After the ground has been prepared as well as it should be for the sowing of the wheat crop, the peas may be sown broadcast, one bushel to the acre, and harrowed in, or they may be drilled with a wheat drill by tying up every alternate hoe. Peas need no cultivation if sown upon well-prepared land. They will outstrip any noxious growth, provided they have an equal start, but if great sods of turf are left half-turned in the pea field when the peas are sown, it would be impossible for the crop to grow in luxuriance or to yield in plenteousness.

SOJA BEAN.

This may be considered if not the equal of the cowpea, at least second to it. June is the best time for planting this crop, and it may be treated in all respects like the cowpea. It is a rapid grower, and requires but little, if any, cultivation. If drilled, two to three pecks of seed will be sufficient for an acre; if sown broadcast, from three pecks to a bushel. It may be cut for hay at almost any period in its growth from the time of flowering until the pods begin to ripen. One hundred pounds of the hay contains 88.7 pounds of dry matter. Of the 51 pounds of digestible substances, 10.8 pounds are crude protein. The ripe soy bean contains 34 per cent of protein, 17 per cent of fat and 33.8 per cent of carbohydrates, making it one of the richest of all vegetable foods. In 100 pounds of seed there are 66.8 pounds of digestible food, which consists of 29.6 pounds of protein, 16 pounds of fat, 2.6 pounds of fiber, 17.6 pounds of carbohydrates, 10.8 pounds of water and 1 pound of ash. From six to thirteen tons of green forage may be grown to the acre, and the yield of seed varies from 20 to 100 bushels to the acre, the average being about that of Indian corn. In some parts of the South both the soy beans and the cowpeas are sown between the rows of corn at the final cultivation. When so sown these crops add immensely to the value of the "pickings" after the corn is gathered. Let any farmer who reads this try it, and he will be convinced that the cowpeas or soja beans so planted will do much to winter his cattle and hogs at an expense that will hardly be felt. The running cowpeas are better for this.

LATE ROASTING EARS.

During this month sugar corn should be planted at intervals of ten

days for roasting ears. There is no vegetable that comes to the farmer's table more relished than young corn. It is healthful, nutritious and easily prepared for the table.

MILLET.

Many farmers are in the habit of sowing millet for hay. This is the best month for this work. Millet should be sown one-half bushel of seed to the acre upon land very finely pulverized. It often proves a failure when sown upon cloddy land or upon land where a large quantity of vegetable matter has been plowed under. While millet may serve as a substitute for better hay, it is the least valuable of all the forage or hay crops. It grows rapidly, and may be cut within sixty days after being sown, provided the sowing is followed by one good soaking rain. If cut in bloom, it makes a fairly good "roughness." If cut after the seeds have matured, it acts injuriously upon the kidneys of horses and mules. No good farmer ought to sow millet. It is hard on the soil, it makes the least of all hay, and it often proves a failure.

Sheep Raising in Lower Sampson.

If our Legislature would pass a dog law requiring every man to keep his dogs on his own land except he be with them, this would be the finest and most profitable sheep raising section of the whole South. So it is, even when we lose half or more of our flocks every year by turning them in the woods. There is nothing that pays better than a small flock of sheep. They live without food except what they gather in the fields and woods and they yield on an average not less than four pounds of wool each with no expense except that of penning and shearing them, while they eat up many of the weeds and briars that infest the farmer's life. I have owned a small flock for six years. I have lost about half of them every year when they were turned from the fields into the woods and yet when I could get them sheared they have averaged not less than four pounds of wool to the sheep besides the increase of a lamb every year from each ewe in the flock. For my wool, unwashed, I have received from 15 to 19 cents a pound. Bank stock is not a better investment. If our sheep were cared for as they are in other localities and better varieties introduced to improve the stock I believe a good flock of sheep, well cared for, in this section would yield as fine a profit as the same amount invested in Standard Oil.—Black River in Charlotte Observer.

Winston Republican: Miss Roxie Sheets, of this place, who has been engaged in the fancy poultry business for a few years, has shipped this spring 122 settings of eggs, to be used for hatching purposes. She has netted over \$100 from these sales and the eggs were shipped to different States—from Virginia to Texas. Miss Sheets says she cannot supply the demand, and is contemplating enlarging her plant so as to accommodate her constantly increasing trade.