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The Progressive Farmer.

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THE CORN CROP: HOW WE MAY HANDLE IT WITH SMALLER COST AND BETTER RETURNS.

The corn crop is one of the most important, in influence and value, in the middle South. Its culture and handling are of such great importance that they deserve the first consideration from the hands of our farmers. Corn can be most profitably raised where clover, cowpeas and farm machinery have been a part of the system of corn production. Crimson clover and common red clover are ideal crops to precede the corn crop.

The corn needs a good depth of soil tilth to get the best home for the comfortable living and growing of the roots. In corn culture, then, the two-horse plow is winning its way so as to deepen the soil to eight or ten or twelve inches, thus releasing the locked-up plant food in the soil, and to take care of the moisture down in the sub-soil as it comes up, and also to take care of that which falls in the atmosphere as rain. A short rotation involving cowpeas and clover, followed by corn, will not require much of the chemical fertilizers.

DOING AWAY WITH HAND WORK.

If the corn is planted on a level surface, a harrow or a weeder should be used so as to preserve the moisture in the soil, and to destroy the little weeds and grass that first germinate. When the corn is up an inch or so the same implement can be used again, thus doing away with hand labor. At the college farm we use a two-horse corn planter that distributes the fertilizer and plants two rows of corn at a time. Then we use a harrow, a light one, to go over a couple of times so as to make a thorough mulch and to destroy the weeds and grass that come up. We plant the rows four feet apart and average one stalk to every twelve or sixteen feet.

The cultivator is used then during the remainder of the season four or five times, and in many fields no hand work is done at all. We never thin the corn or sucker it. All the cultivation is of a level and shallow nature. Corn should not be cultivated more than an inch and a half or two inches deep, and never more than three inches in depth, because if a deeper cultivation is given, some of the roots are bound to be injured, and thus the corn crop will be cut off and lessened in the end.

The early planted corn is always seeded to cowpeas with the last cultivation. The later planted corn, and that especially planted for ensilage, is not seeded to cowpeas, but left for crimson clover immediately after the cutting of the corn. For crimson clover we do not plow a second time, but simply take a disk harrow, or a spring tooth harrow, and provide a good seed bed, and seed to clover which is lightly harrowed in. We use about ten pounds of seed per acre for the clover.

DON'T PULL FODDER.

The age of pulling fodder has past. It has been proved conclusively that it is not only ex-

pensive to do so, but at the same time it is a wasteful practice. There is so much feeding value stored away in the butts and stalks of the corn plant that no farmer can afford to waste this, and especially is it important where hay is purchased. It has been found by experience here and in other States that the corn plant shredded will give a feeding stuff almost equal to timothy hay for horses and cattle. Why should we, therefore, waste half of the corn plant by leaving the stalks and butts in the field to be burned or otherwise wasted when we could utilize all of that material for feeding and then return the same to the land in the form of stable manure?

In preparing the corn plant for shredding we use the following method: A "gallus-hill" or stool is made from the corn itself. A sufficient number of stalks of corn are pulled over from two rows and tied together to the height of one's waist or shoulder. The tie is made by simply bending the stalks over and lapping the tops and leaves around the stalks, thus making it thoroughly secure and staple. The same end is attained as if we were to drive four stakes in the ground in the form of a square four feet apart. The top of the stalks readily bend over and the top and the leaves can be lapped and entwined within the stalks so as to make it thoroughly secure and able to hold the rest of the corn that is to be set upon the stool thus made.

HARVESTING THE CROP.

We make from twenty-two to twenty-five of these stools for each acre. Then the corn is cut, with a knife or some other implement that can be used in cutting, three or four inches above the top of the ground and then carried to the stool and set up. If an arm load is set on each of the four sides of the stool and then tied together with a string or one of the green corn stalks, it will be quite impossible to upset the same by wind or force. A dozen or more of armfuls are then set around each side of the shock, making it round. When this is done the top of the shock should be drawn together by rope and ring, and closely drawn together, after which the whole shock is tied by binder's twine, or some other form of twine, or even by the green stalks. The shock is set up in armfuls, and the bottom is much larger than the top, so there is a constant current of air coming up from all directions and circulating throughout the shock, thus insuring a perfect curing of the same. One can make from sixty to one hundred shocks per day through this system of cutting. It means from three to four acres that one man can set up.

Our plan now is to leave the corn in these shocks until it is convenient for shredding and storing. We go on now about our other fall work, sowing clover, putting in rye and wheat, harvesting our fall crops and doing all kinds of work about the farm necessary to be done during the fall months. We have left the corn in the shock until late in January, and found it kept perfectly. There is also an advantage in leaving the corn in the shocks until after it is frozen, for it insures all the cells, making up the corn plant, to be dead and dried out, so that when the corn

is taken to the barn to be shredded, it can be stored in the hay mow or stacked; and we know it will not spoil or mould in any way. The shredding machine husks the corn and blows the shredded stover up in the mowing until it is ready to be used. In putting it away we never tramp it, but let it pack itself.

If all of us could feel throughout the State that this is a reasonable and satisfactory method of handling the corn crop, it would mean a saving of thousands and thousands of dollars to our people; it would mean a great saving of feeding stuff to us; it would mean good food for our horses and cattle; it would show that less labor is required from its planting to its harvesting; it would be just one more business principle applied to agricultural practice.

C. W. BURKETT.

FARMERS' INSTITUTES.

List of Places and Dates at Which They Will Be Held in August and September.

The Farmers' Institutes, which are held in the summer and early fall, and many of which have already been held with greater success than ever before, have been arranged for August and September as follows:

- Graham, Alamance County, Monday, August 22nd.
- Battle Ground, Guilford County, Tuesday, August 23rd.
- Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, Wednesday, August 24th.
- Center Camp Ground, Davie County, Thursday, August 25th.
- Newton, Catawba County, Friday, August 26th.
- Lincolnton, Lincoln County, Saturday, August 27th.
- Dallas, Gaston County, Monday, August 29th.
- Salisbury, Rowan County, Tuesday, August 30.
- Albemarle, Stanly County, Wednesday, August 31st.
- Wentworth, Rockingham County, Wednesday and Thursday, August 31st.
- Danbury, Stokes County, Friday, September 2d.
- Yanceyville, Caswell County, Monday, September 5th.
- Roxboro, Person County, Wednesday, September 7th.
- Henderson, Vance County, Friday, September 9th.
- Louisburg, Franklin County, September 10th.

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