

TIMELY TOPICS

By H. L. Blanchard, Assistant Superintendent Western Washington Experiment Station, Puyallup, Wash.

A FEW LABOR SAVING METHODS.

This has been an exceptional year for the growing of forage crops for our livestock, and those farmers who succeeded in saving the young plants from being stunted or killed by the weeds will be harvesting good crops. The rains have been plentiful and the plants have been making a continuous growth without being checked by dry weather, and will be ready for harvesting on time—during the month of October. For some twenty-four years, to the writer's knowledge, there have been only two seasons that it was unsafe to go unharvested as late as the middle of November. The strong temptation to subject these crops to the fall rains, after having suffered somewhat from the summer dry spells, has gotten many of the farmers in the way of deferring this work until about the middle of November. But this year there will be no excuse for such delay. The crops are sufficiently grown and matured for harvesting, and as a general rule as soon as a crop becomes matured it ought to be harvested and properly secured for the winter.

Of the various methods employed by farmers in harvesting some of these crops the writer finds the following to be the most economical and satisfactory:

MANGLE WURZELS.

With this crop the principal tools are a sharp hoe and a four tined fork, the hoe being used to cut off the tops

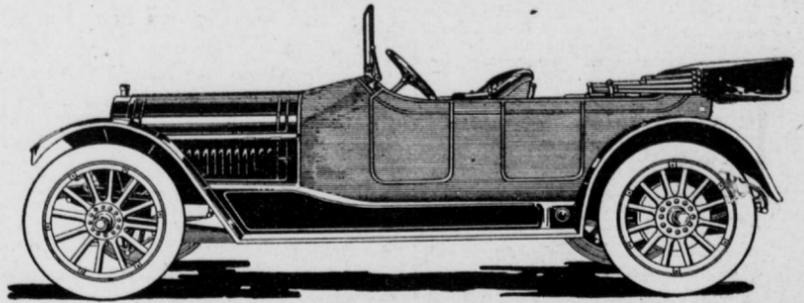
and the fork to gather them up. The operator with hoe in hand takes his position between two rows of mangles, cutting off the tops of both rows in such a way that they may drop between the two rows, thus making a single row of tops from two rows of roots. The fork is then used to gather the tops into piles or the wagon, when they are ready to be fed. When the roots are of the variety that grow largely above ground they can be easily pulled by hand at once thrown into piles or the wagon direct, and thus save one handling. The load can then be hauled directly to the pit or storage place and stored at once. The writer uses his manure spreader for hauling and piling the roots for pitting, as it is a good plan to make the pits near the stables where the roots are to be fed out, and convenient to get when needed. The reel of the spreader is removed and a wide board substituted in such a way that it may easily be removed when discharging the load. The floor of the spreader being operated by an endless chain that is worked by a crank the unloading becomes a very quick and easy matter. We first excavate about six inches deep and six feet in width for the pile of roots, preferring long piles to round or conical ones. The piles are four or five feet deep in the center. We first cover with straw, using plenty on top. After the roots have passed through the sweat (about ten days) we cover with earth about three or four inches in depth. Mangles are not sufficiently ripe for feeding until January. Mangles that do not grow above ground, after topping can be turned out with a small plow to advantage. Carrots that do not grow above ground can be advantageously topped with the mowing machine and turned out with a small plow. Carrots do not keep as well as mangles, and can be fed from the time of their being harvested.

A NEW APPLE.

Mr. M. F. Jones, of Ravenna Heights, has a new apple which was shown at the King County Fair, and deserves special mention. He has called this Jones' Seedling. It is a table apple, similar to the Gravenstein and has splendid keeping qualities. Excellent specimens were shown. Mr. Jones, who is considerable of an apple crank, has produced several varieties and thinks this is the best of all. He says this sprout came up about eight years ago and he has taken good care of it, and now has a splendid little tree. It never fails to bear a beautiful yellow apple. Mr. Jones took the first premium, on this apple and is quite pleased with it. He has started 150 small trees from this and expects in time that it will be one of the best selling apples grown in Western Washington. Two of the large nurseries east of the mountains have now started the work of propagating the apple. They think the greatest value of the new apple is its keeping qualities, as it keeps until late in the fall, and is ripe the middle of August. This will make it a splendid shipper. He has given away this year more than four boxes from this little tree, and therefore pleased a great many people. In propagating this his only desire is to give the people a new and better fruit than they have been accustomed to.

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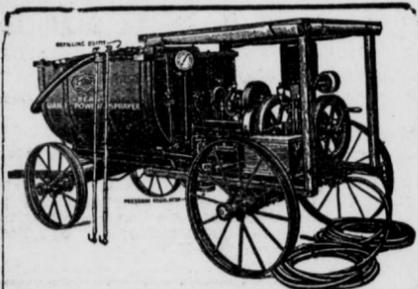
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