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Down on the Farm

SOME SEED-CORN FACTS.

Wrong Ideas Are Prevalent as to What Field Selection Will do and What Makes Good Seed Corn.

The selection of seed corn is a very important matter—a matter which too many farmers neglect altogether, and also a matter about which many farmers have very wrong or much exaggerated ideas.

Permit us to call attention to just a few facts which every farmer who raises corn should keep in mind.

1. Seed corn should be selected from the field and not from the crib. This is at length coming to be accepted by all thoughtful farmers. Everyone who reads knows that the farmer who goes to his crib in the spring and picks out the biggest ears for planting is merely gambling on the chance of good seed or poor.

2. In selecting seed in the field, the whole plant, and not the ear alone should be taken into consideration. This, too, is becoming generally understood. Most farmers who select seed corn this way look for a vigorous, sturdy, broad-leaved stalk or medium height; for ears that droop without for two good ears of as nearly uniform shape and size as they can find, if the variety is a prolific one; for ears borne at a medium height from the ground and well covered at the tips.

3. Even by careful field selection, if the corn is taken from the general field, there is little reason to expect that the strain of corn will be much improved. This fact is not yet generally understood; but it must be. The farmer who selects his seed corn from the best stalks in his field does not know that the pollen—the male element which fertilized the grains he expects to plant—did not come from the poorest stalks in the field. Such field selection as this is far superior to crib selection; but the improvement which will be made in a strain of corn by such selection must necessarily be slight. We say this without forgetting the great results sometimes claimed by farmers as the result of one or two year's field selection of seed corn.

4. For real improvement in corn—the securing and fixing of desirable qualities or variety characteristics—farmers must look to the real corn breeder; that is, to the man who has a special seed corn patch, planted

with seed of known ancestry, and rogued and selected with a definite ideal in view. There is a great difference between seed selection and seed breeding.

5. Seed from such a breeding patch will seldom be available for the planting of the general crop unless the farmer has his own seed plot. The breeder could not afford to sell seed corn from his breeding plot at a price farmers would be willing to pay. If he offers corn for sale as first-class seed corn, however, such corn should not be more than one generation removed from the seed plot. In other words, good commercial seed corn, is carefully selected corn from a field planted with seed from a real breeding plot grown by the ear-to-the-row method.

6. A fair price for such corn depends upon the variety, the standing and skill of the breeder, the real excellence of the strain of corn, the demand for it, etc. In general, really good seed corn should be bought for \$2 to \$5 a bushel.

7. It will pay the farmer who does not grow his own seed in a special seed patch or select it from a field planted from seed so grown, to buy seed from a good breeder rather than to risk planting seed even if field selected—of unknown ancestry.

8. It is seldom good policy to pay fancy prices for seed corn from some prize acre on big-yielding patches, without knowing something of the ancestry back of the corn. Such seed not infrequently results in disappointment.

9. In buying seed corn it is advisable to secure it from as nearly the same latitude as that in which it is to be grown. If grown on similar soil to that on which it is to be planted, so much the better. A variety known to do well in the section where the corn is to be planted should be chosen if practicable.

10. It is quite possible for almost every community to produce its own supply of good seed corn, if only some capable person can be found to take the job of planting and caring for a breeding plot each year, and if the other farmers will pay him a fair price for this well-bred seed corn and plant it. That such an arrangement would be profitable to any corn-growing community can scarcely be doubted.—Progressive Farmer.

CATTLE ON THE FARMS.

Farmers Must Quit Selling Their Female and Immature Stock.

If the Southeast is to become the great cattle section that it should in view of its natural advantages and the present and growing demand for cattle with commensurate prices, farmers must quit selling their female and immature stock, declares Dr. C. M. Morgan, dairy agent of the Southern Railway, who sounds a warning against a continuation of the wholesale deportation of cattle from the South.

"Farmers should keep their heifers and build up the quality of their stock by the use of pure bred bulls of dairy or beef type as desired," says Dr. Morgan. "This is the only way to increase the number of quality of cattle in the Southeast. The scarcity of cattle is world-wide and it will never be possible to secure enough pure-bred cattle to develop the industry in the Southeast.

"Farmers who sell calves are simply giving the dealer a good part of the profit they should have themselves. If calves were fattened on the farm, using cotton seed meal as a concentrate, a higher price per pound would be received and the farmer would not only profit by this and the additional weight but would have in manure 85 per cent of the fertilizer value of the cotton seed meal.

"With the good grazing furnished by Bermuda grass and Burr clover and the abundance of forage crops that yield bountifully in the Southeast, this section should be the great source of the country's beef and dairy products supply. The dairy division of the Southern Railway will send a man to help build a dipping vat or silo and to cooperate with persons in dairy business or desiring to enter it. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has offered to cooperate with any who have eradicated ticks and will send an expert to aid farmers in choosing desirable bulls of either dairy or beef type."—Progressive Farmer.

Farm Women Should Write Secretary Houston.

For a long time the Progressive Farmer has been insisting, in season and out of season, that our State and National Departments of Agriculture should give more attention to the woman on the farm. If she were a voter, her doubtless would give more attention to her and it is a disgrace to our boasted civility that she has been neglected woefully while all kinds of departments, bureaus, extensions workers, institutes, bulletins, demonstrations agents, etc., have been provided to help the farm man. When

Dr. Butler was Director of Farmers' Institutes in North Carolina he inaugurated the system of institutes for farm women, but the idea has not yet had general acceptance in any other State, the latest United States Government figures showing that if we omit Wisconsin (which is doing only one-third as well as North Carolina,) the women's institutes in North Carolina reach more people than in the rest of the United States put together.

But sooner or later any State will be ashamed to provide liberally for institutes for farmers' wives; and sooner or later we shall doubtless have some sort of demonstration agents to help farm women as well as help farm men.

The writer has urged on both Secretary of Agriculture Wilson and his successor, Secretary Houston, the need of giving more attention to the farm woman, and the publication of special bulletins for farmers' wives as well as farmers' bulletins. An interesting dispatch from Washington, D. C.,

quotes a sentence from one of our letters to Secretary Houston and explains that as a result of the letter Dr. Houston is asking the women themselves to make the Department of new and greater service to them.—Progressive Farmer

Go After the Cow.

"Don't sit down in the meadow and wait for the cow to back up to be milked—go after the cow." The basis for the whole dairy industry is the cow and if farmers are going to utilize the the best advantage the great quantities of roughage that annually are wasted on every farm they must go after the cow.

There is no way to convert the corn, the hay, the clover, the straw, the kafir, the milo and the abundance of other green feed into a marketable form so quickly and so economically as by feeding to the dairy cow. She works day and night constantly, both

summer and winter, on week days and Sundays, in flood and drouth, to convert the unmarketable waste of the farm into a finished and valuable product of human food.

The first thing is to get the cows. Profits are then assured, for the dry-farm country is especially adapted, the feed is there, the marketing facilities are at hand in most sections and the products are in growing demand.—G. L. Martin.

Everybody, everywhere, especially lovers of Western North Carolina will attend the W. N. C. Fair, Asheville, Oct. 7-10. Greatest events in the history of Western Carolina. Elaborate display of fine exhibits and four days and nights of enjoyment.—Adv.

Some people who happen to dream of giving away money think they are charitable and let it go at that.

BIG, NEW, ENTERTAINING FEATURES

of fun, entertainment and instruction of wholesome character, satisfying the most exacting critics and interesting everybody, will be found at the

WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA FAIR ASHEVILLE, OCTOBER 7-8-9-10

The third annual Fair will exceed all previous efforts in elaborate exhibits, satisfying attractions and a big representative attendance.

1st—EDUCATIONAL DAY, featured by address of Hon. James J. Britt, and exercises by Western North Carolina school children.

2nd—BROTHERHOOD DAY, featured by addresses of Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan, and the noted Irish Orator, Hon. John S. Rutledge of Cleveland, O.; parade of fraternal organizations of Western North Carolina.

3rd—MILITARY DAY, featured by address of General Bennett H. Young, Commander in Chief of United Confederate Veterans of Louisville, KY.; parade and maneuvers of military companies of Western North Carolina.

4th—WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA DAY, featured by addresses of Gov. Locke Craig, Mr. M. V. Richards, Land and Industrial Agent Southern Railway, Washington, D. C.; sports and exercises representative of Western North Carolina.

The numerous attractions already booked with more being added daily, include the following: Prof. McFall's Dog & Monkey circus, Georgia Minstrels, Happy Howligan and Gloomy Gus with auto trick house, Martin & Gennett's comedy acrobatic acts, McLinn Trio comedy balancing acts, Marvelous Melville's thrilling aerial stunts, Sutton Brothers' sensational tricks on comedy bars, Metcalf's animal and reptile shows, Jewell Brothers' daily balloon ascensions, Motordome, Ferris Wheel, music by Boys Scout Band, Bryson Military Band, First Regiment Band, gorgeous pyrotechnic display every night, McLinn's Musical Comedy and Novelty Company's acrobatic acts, musical comedy singing, funny comedians and pretty girls in high dancing.

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