

## Mangel-wurzels

R. M. Smith, Fayette, Miss.

### EDITOR GAZETTE:

Feeling sure that it will be of interest, as well as of benefit, to many of your subscribers who raise stock and plant feed crops, I want to give my experience with mangel-wurzels, or stock beets, a crop sadly neglected, and one, in my opinion, of the greatest feed crops ever discovered in our country, barring none. Think of a crop that will make from 9 to 11 tons per acre, and fatten stock quicker than corn or peas pound for pound, and still so very few growing them! You can plant them any month in the year from February to September 15 and get a safe, sure crop. They will also keep like potatoes if pumped in fall, and as a silo product they stand without an equal. Owing to their great sweetness, every kind of stock love them and will fatten as though fed on sugar.

About February 15 I broke up about three-fourths of an acre, clay subsoil, near my lawn and let it remain till March 6, when I hauled from my barn three 2-horse wagon loads of manure fresh, which was spread broadcast over the land. On the 7th I broke it up into three and a half foot rows, opened them shallow with small plow, soaked seed in warm water 24 hours, planted them on the 7th, covered with harrow. When they were 5 inches high, I ran close to the plants with cultivator, let them stand 10 days, and broke out middles with 1-horse plow running shallow. In 10 or 12 days I sharp molded with plow, making good furrow; sowed sorghum in middle, and ran a Planet, Jr., cultivator twice up each middle, covering sorghum and also spreading out middles to the beets.

That is all the work I gave the beets, for I even failed to thin them out which should have been done, say, 4 to 5 inches apart; but I was greedy, had seen them grow thick in California, and I wanted all I could get off the three-fourths acre. So far the past three weeks (it is now June 9) I have been feeding once a day 15 brood sows, 40 pigs, 5 calves, 10 goats, 4 rams, 5 boars, and 4 wage hands

mules; and still half the patch of beets left and a young crop of sorghum waist high.

They will improve your milk in quantity and quality and fatten your stock faster than any other crop on earth. My sows and pigs never looked as well as they do this season. Be sure to prepare the land well and soak the seed 24 hours in warm water, then roll them in ashes before planting. However, the soaking is only to be sure to get the beets up well. I always soak every seed I plant, it matters not what it is. When the plants are up a few inches, thin them out to 4 or 5 inches apart in the drill; and you can rest assured you will be amply paid for your trouble and time. Always cut the roots up somewhat, as only horses, mules and hogs can eat the large roots without their being chopped up. They weigh from 6 to 8 pounds each. Tops and all are enjoyed by stock of every kind.

Any favors I can render your readers on disease and treatment of hogs, sheep, dogs, and horses, I will gladly do, if they will enclose stamp for reply.

Comment by editor: It is generally supposed that June is the best month to plant mangel-wurzels for a fall crop in the South, but it should be noted that Mr. Smith thinks they can be planted any time from February to September 15. Possibly he does not expect them to mature before being fed when planted so late. Fresh manure is likely to give beets scab. Thoroughly rotted compost broadcasted and well worked into the soil deep is preferable. If commercial fertilizers are used, they should be put in the drill at the bottom of a 6-inch deep furrow, to promote the growth of a solid root downward and to prevent the growth of lateral roots. If it is desired to keep beets for winter use lift them when severe killing frosts occur and store them in barrels with sand between them or bank them in the field. The top should be cut below the bud, so growth will not take place and injure the quality of the roots. In thinning them (and it will make a much larger yield) the small beets pulled out can be used at home, or often they can be sold

to advantage if cleaned and bunched. This experience of Mr. Smith ought to be of much service to many. Who else can report good experience with some crop? Such letters help the general cause of good farming very much.

## Rutabagas

### EDITOR GAZETTE:

I would like to know how and when to plant rutabagas, as I am just beginning in the truck business and have not had any experience in this line. Have always made cotton till this year. I live on a small place, just moved here last winter and have got in 10 acres. It is level and I want to try truck for the fall. Tell me some varieties that will sell in a small town around which not much farming is going on.

J. A. BUCKINS, Lucedale, Miss.

Answer by editor: No trucker, whether he has or has not experience, should continue to raise truck in the South without owning the Gardener's Manual that is advertised in this issue of the Gazette. It will save labor many times and will give almost every time just the information a trucker wants, and a lot that he ought to have that he does not think of now. In the garden notes by Mrs. Everts in this issue much of the information asked for will be found, but when one plants truck for a particular market he ought to find out from merchants or others what that market prefers in the kinds of truck to be grown. It pays to cater to local tastes or prejudices, since money is more easily got by supplying people with what they already like than by trying to educate them to eat something else. With such a vegetable as turnips, however, the lines are not likely to be so clearly drawn as to varieties preferred. None the less, it is well to talk the matter over with local merchants or any body else who can speak with authority for that market.

No time should be lost in working the land for rutabagas, even if the seed are not put in at once. They should be planted in freshly stirred soil, of course. Make the rows two feet apart and place the seed 12 inches

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