

Agricultural Department

Winter Wheat in Nebraska

The Independent again urges upon all of its farmer readers in Nebraska the importance of taking immediate steps to prepare for next year's winter wheat crop. Contrary to the generally prevailing notion, the portion of Nebraska lying between the Platte river and the South Dakota line is quite as good for winter wheat if not better than the South Platte country which is already famous as a wheat growing section.

The writer well remembers when the farmers in many counties of the state that are now reaping rich rewards from their large harvests of winter wheat, were prejudiced on the subject, and it was difficult to get them to make the trial of winter wheat. Little by little experiments were tried that were so generally successful that the old time prejudice was finally overcome until now those very counties are showing the largest per acre yield of winter wheat to be found anywhere in the Middle West. Winter wheat in all parts of Nebraska is the surest crop that a farmer can raise aside from alfalfa. It is a surer crop than corn if the seeding is done at the proper time in properly prepared ground.

In order to get the very best results in winter wheat raising the ground should be plowed as soon as the preceding crop of oats or wheat is harvested. If there should happen to be heavy rains immediately after the ground is plowed and before it is time to sow the wheat the ground should be disked over as soon as the surface is sufficiently dry so that the soil will drop loose and fine from the disks, in order to prevent a loss of moisture through the ground drying and caking and cracking on the surface and allowing the moisture to pass off through evaporation. Turn the ground under as soon as possible after harvesting the former crop and then preserve the moisture in the ground by keeping a dust soil mulch through disking or harrowing until the time arrives for the seeding. Winter wheat should always be put in with a press drill as seed put into the ground in this way will make a crop when it is liable to fail if sown broadcast, and in all cases the yield from the wheat put in with a press drill will run from eight to twelve bushels per acre greater.

The seed should be run through a fanning mill and all the light grain blown out and only the best grain put in the ground if a full yield is to be had. The turkey red variety has given excellent results in Nebraska and is believed to be the proper variety for this state.

The fact that wheat can be grown through a succession of years on the same land without a diminution in the yield demonstrates the fact that wheat is not so hard upon the soil as oats, as the latter crop can not be grown through a succession of years on the same land without a very marked decrease each year, after which the soil is in bad shape for any other crop. Farms that are foul with cockleburrs or other noxious weeds can be thoroughly cleaned by putting the land in wheat for three or four years in succession, besides a wheat crop pays on an average twice as much as an oat crop and is the best and most profitable rotation crop for Nebraska.

A sure crop and a large yield can not be expected from late seeding. About September 1 is the proper time or rather from the 25th of August until September 15. Late seeding

often produces good results, but can not be depended upon.

ALFALFA

Alfalfa will easily produce three crops of hay per year in this section and still leave a good coat over the land for winter protection. Where this can be done and where the land is well manured four and one-half tons per year is not above the average and the man who can grow that amount of alfalfa is ahead of the man who who grows clover, as he can hardly exceed three tons per acre. In addition to it being a better yielder than clover, alfalfa contains a higher percentage of protein than the latter.

Recent analyses made at the Wisconsin station show that alfalfa contains 18.7 per cent, clover hay 13.3 per cent, timothy hay 4.5 per cent and brome grass 6.1 per cent of protein. From this it will be seen that as a protein carrying feed, alfalfa is three times as valuable as brome grass, four times as valuable as timothy and 1.4 times as valuable as clover. Taking into consideration its higher yielding power, however, its value becomes much greater and frequently twice as much feeding value will be raised on one acre of alfalfa as on one of clover.

For the benefit of those who are unwilling to purchase caps for covering the cocks, we wish to say that alfalfa, properly cocked, will shed water just as well as clover—in fact, many farmers claim that it will shed water even better, and that it is no more difficult to cure than clover in any season. While this may be true, we urge the use of caps for the reason that alfalfa is so much more valuable than clover and a little extra expense in this line is money well invested.

THE WHEAT CROP

The crop reporting board of the bureau of statistics of the department of agriculture, from the reports of the correspondents and agents of the bureau, finds the area under winter wheat remaining in cultivation on May 1 to have been about 29,623,000 acres. This is 6 per cent, or about 1,178,000 acres, less than the area reported as sown last fall.

The average condition of the growing winter-wheat crop on May 1 was 91, as compared with 89 on April 1, 1906, 92 on May 1, 1906, 76 on May 1, 1904, and 85, the mean of the May averages for the last ten years.

DUST BLANKET

It should be the object to retain as much moisture as possible in the subsoil to offset the effects of dry weather during the dry months of July and August, just when the crop is in need of the greatest amount of moisture. Many farmers now cultivate between the rows of corn, during the growing season, after it is too large to allow the ordinary two-horse implement to pass over the rows. They use a light one-horse tool of some kind which restores the dust blanket.

USE SULPHUR FOR LICE

Early in the spring is the time to destroy lice. Any work done then is better than later on as the pests are sluggish and not active. The best method is to drive the hens out and burn five pounds of sulphur in a house 10x10 feet. That is a large amount of sulphur, but it is necessary if the work is done well. Those who use sulphur do not use enough of it and as it is cheap it is safer to use too much than too little.

It is also important that every crack be closed and the house made tight. Have an old pot or piece of

sheet iron made red hot and place it on a brick to avoid setting fire to the house. Put the sulphur on and close the door, leaving the house closed for two hours.

A mixture of kerosene and sulphur will also burn well; but use plenty of it or the work will be useless.

PIGS ON PASTURE

The nicest way to handle sows with pigs is to have a small pasture lot or each sow and her litter and keep them there until the pigs are old enough to wean. This is a method followed by a number of breeders. They use individual hog houses and give each sow and her litter half an acre to an acre of grass. When handled in this way there is no trouble with the pigs robbing one another and every litter is constantly under the eye of the attendant. This method is, of course, not practical on many farms where pigs are raised simply for market, but the nearer it can be followed the better the result will be. If our correspondent has only one large pasture he will do better to keep the sows and pigs in separate pens until the pigs are two or three weeks old. There is less danger of the litters robbing one another after they get old enough to protect themselves. There will be some robbing, of course, but we think the benefit derived from the pasture will overbalance the harm which comes from the robbing. It is up-hill work trying to raise good pigs in a dry lot.

WHENCE THE FLIES?

Where do these pestering flies come from? They hatch their eggs in manure. Those wriggling worms you see in the gutter of the unclean cow barn or horse stable will soon be flies—millions of them to pester stock and walk over your dining room table, carrying disease germs on their feet.

Keep the stables clean. Sprinkle air-slacked lime or some prepared disinfectant over the gutters and floors and scatter some over the manure you last threw out on the pile. Of course those who take the manure daily to the field with a spreader do not have many flies hatching around the barn—nor in the field either, for the scattering dries it so the grubs can't live. Throw slacked lime or dry dust into the privy vault every day to keep that place clean. Use screen doors and windows for the house and fly repellants for the stock and you will have healthier homes and be freer from these pests than those who pay no attention to these matters.

Close Skimming

The centrifugal separator is the closest skimmer made. The fact that thousands are being sold every year is sufficient testimony to their practical worth. You can't fool all the people all the time and if the hand separator was not the best of economical skimmers the farmers would soon find it out, for they have tried all ways. Considering the frequency with which a hand separator is used they constitute one of the most profitable investments a farmer can make and the ownership of a centrifugal machine represents an asset that always pays big dividends.

RURAL MAIL ROUTES

An order governing mail boxes has been issued as follows:

1. On and after July 1, 1906, patrons of the rural delivery service will be required to display signals on their boxes when they leave mail in them for carriers to collect, as, after that date carriers, when serving their routes, will not be required to open and examine any mail boxes except to those to which they have mail to deliver and those on which signals are displayed indicate there is mail for carriers to collect.

2. Those patrons whose boxes are not provided with signals must attach thereto some device which, when dis-

played, will plainly show passing carriers there is mail to be collected. It is not necessary that such device shall be either complicated or costly; a very simple arrangement will answer the purpose.

3. Carriers must lower signals on boxes after making collections, provided no mail is left therein; and must display the signals when they deposit mail for patrons, unless the patrons have made requests to the contrary.

NOTICE—Send 25 cents to the Independent, Lincoln, Neb., and the paper will be mailed to you each week until after November election. For \$1.00 the paper will be mailed to seven different addresses until after the election. Send in your subscriptions.

FOREIGN CROP OUTLOOK

London, June 12.—Foreign crop conditions, as published today in Broomhall's Liverpool "Corn Trade News."

United Kingdom of France—The crops are rather backward but improving. The condition of the crops are fair, and supplies small.

Germany—The weather has improved and the condition of the crops is satisfactory.

Hungary—The weather has turned finer after being unfavorable. A good harvest is expected.

Roumania, Bulgaria and Turkey—Bad weather has caused 10 to 15 per cent deterioration, but conditions are now improving.

Russia—In the southwest the weather is becoming more settled and prospects are excellent, being even brilliant in some parts. Rye cutting begins this week. Rains are confined in the center and east. Odessa arrivals very small, but supplies generally fair.

Italy—A fair crop is being harvested.

Spain—The outlook for the crop is slightly less favorable, owing to unseasonable weather.

The farm separator is too good a step-mother for the calf to get along without.

The regular use of a milking tube will remedy the defect of a hard milking cow, but do not have such a cow and you won't need the tube.

VALUE OF DAIRY PRODUCTS

There were 12,147,304,550 pounds of milk and 588,186,471 pounds of cream used in 1904 in the manufacture of 551,278,141 pounds of butter, 313,655,290 pounds of cheese, and 308,485,182 pounds of condensed milk. These figures are part of the census of manufactures for 1905. The total cost of the materials used in the industry was \$142,920,277, while the value of the products was \$168,182,789, an increase of the former of 31.3 per cent and of the latter 28.6 per cent. The number of establishments dropped from 9,242, to 8,926, while the capital increased 30 per cent, to \$47,255,556. There were 3,507 salaried officials and clerks and 15,557 engaged in the manufacture of these articles. These received salaries and wages amounting to \$9,789,036.

DAIRY NOTES

The more the study, the greater the success in dairying.

No amount of washing will rid over-churned butter of milk.

Keep the cows clean and you will have little trouble with stringy milk.

More cow-hog combinations would make greatly for the betterment of farms.

Turn the cows to pasture after milking in the summer, they enjoy the evening lurch.

A little oil of pennyroyal or oil of cloves will drive flies away from the stable.

The kicking cow will drive away the hired man and make the boys tired of farming. Send her to the butcher.

Warm skim milk for feeding purposes soon pays the cost of a farm separator.