

## TWO NEW VARIETIES OF FLAX



Above, Dr. Charles Ray conducting yield test of new hybrid selection on experimental farm at Pisgah Forest. Notes on plant behavior are taken daily.

Dr. Charles Ray has produced two new varieties of seed flax which will greatly enhance the growing of this crop in California and Arizona and possibly in other regions of the United States. These new varieties, DE ANZA and SIGNAL are disease resistant and are adapted to the region in and around the Imperial Valley of California.

For many years the farmers of the valley have planted only the Punjab variety of seed flax, since it is the best suited for the climate and the soil of California; but this variety has not been entirely satisfactory, since it is susceptible to wilt and other flax diseases.

Soon after Mr. Harry H. Straus had found ways and means of making cigarette paper from the fibers of the seed-flax plant, he began to work on a flax breeding program. Experimental planting began in some parts of the country, and in 1942 experiments were started on our test farm (The Island) and in our greenhouse. Since that time Dr. Ray has planted and experimented with almost one thousand different introductions of flax seed to select parents for new varieties.

The De Anza variety derives its name from an early Spanish explorer in California, and Signal is named for Signal Mountain which is used as a landmark by travelers in the Imperial Valley. Sufficient seed was available in 1949 to plant forty-five acres of each in the Imperial Valley, and by 1950 enough seed should be available to

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