

**AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT**

*Edited by C. E. CLARK*

*Green Manuring—No. 10.  
Straw.*

Travelling through the piedmont section it is not unusual to see large stacks two or more years old rotting to the ground. As the farmers do not need it for bedding for their live stock, and find it very poor roughage, they are content to let it lie in the field or around the barn lot as worthless "straw," good for nothing but to be burned or rot where it lies.

A ten acre field of wheat that yields 200 bushels will produce 10 tons of straw and chaff. This straw has about 12 pounds of nitrogen, 4.4 pounds of phosphate, and 12.6 pounds of potash per ton. These amounts were necessarily taken out of the soil and should be returned together with the very large amount of organic matter contained in a ton of straw.

Should the straw from this 10 acre field be put back into the land the soil would receive an application of 120 pounds of nitrogen, 44 pounds of phosphate, and 126 pounds of potash. This is as much nitrogen as can be gotten from three tons of an 8-2-2 fertilizer or 15 tons of fresh cow manure. The potash made available in the amount of straw is equal to that in three tons of an 8-2-2 fertilizer or in 17 tons of fresh cow manure.

Wheat straw, old hay, dead weeds cut when cleaning fence rows, ditch banks, etc., should be spread evenly over the poor places in the field during the fall and allowed to weather and rot during the winter. In the spring this rough material may be easily cut to pieces with a disc harrow and plowed under.

Last year a good farmer in Davidson county spread a lot of

rag weeds, coarse grasses, etc., cut from around his tobacco barns and cow stables, over a very poor land in the fall on which he had sown rye. He did this to get the "stuff" out of the way and no thought of its possible fertilizing value. I saw the rye in the spring just before it was cut, and the result was astonishing. The crop was as thick on the ground as it could stand, well filled, and about 5 ft. high. Just a few steps away where no mulch of any kind was used the rye made but an indifferent growth and was thin on the land. Another farmer in Randolph county last year thoughtlessly spread some old straw, weeds, and coarse, dirty grass over a gall spot in his wheat field, and in the spring and at harvest time was surprised to find his crop looking as though he had spread tons of stable manure over the land. Instances may be multiplied.

In the future, do not let your old hay, old straw, flooded grass, mixed weeds and coarse grass, lie around and rot in the fence corners and gullies, but spread them evenly over the poor spots in the wheat or oat fields just after the crop is sown. When the crop is harvested, run a sharp disc harrow over this mass of half rotten vegetation once or twice and plow it under prior to seeding the field to soy beans or cowpeas to be plowed under if the land is poor or cut and fed to live stock if the land is not in need of fertility. We had intended to discuss corn as a green manuring crop this time but find our space all occupied with the above discussion and we will have to defer this crop for next week.

J. L. BURGESS.  
N. C. Dept. of Agriculture.

**Farmers' Coming to Their Senses.**

It is a most gratifying fact, thought not generally known, that during the past twelve years the co-operative movement among farmers has grown so rapidly that there are now 750,000 economic associations, with a membership considerably over 3,000,000.

There are but 6,100,000 farms in cultivation, and in this number more than one-half are represented in these co-operative associations. Among the great number of co-operative associations are insurance companies against fire, injury and death to live stock. These insurance companies will not have over 2,000,000 stockholders.

For the most part they are well managed and have accumulated a surplus which is larger for safeguarding of the interest of the stockholders and for the payment of losses.

The 3,000,000 farmers in the co-operative associations are bonded in associations large and small for economical manufacturing of butter, cheese making, irrigation, the warehousing of grain and cotton and the building of telephone lines.

Perhaps the greatest benefit comes from co-operation by selling. Supplies are bought wholesale at often manufacturer's prices, and selling is conducted through organizations whose business

methods are yearly adding millions to the profits of the farmers.

The prolific crops of the past ten years are not alone the cause of the prosperous condition of agriculture. To the good sense of farmers in organizing their business along economic lines and subordinating individual benefits for the good of the whole is really the greatest factor in the general prosperity.—Journal of Agriculture.

**Bertie County.**

Bertie County Union met with the Peele Local Union, October 5. The county was well represented. Interesting lectures were made by Rev. Jason Butler, Dr. C. B. Jenkins, L. M. Wood and W. T. Swanson entertained the audience for the remainder of the time 'till 12:20 p. m., when a bountiful dinner was served and the members entered into an executive session in which steps were taken, looking to the management of the peanut market, cotton seed exchange and sale, and cotton holding. Every man voted to hold cotton 'till a fair price was reached.

Kelford Local is building a good warehouse sixty by one hundred feet. This house will be ready for use in a short time. Other Union enterprises are beginning in this section of the State.

W. T. SWANSON.

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