

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

THE INDUSTRIAL AND EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS OF OUR PEOPLE PARAMOUNT TO ALL OTHER CONSIDERATIONS OF STATE POLICY.

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PAPERS.

Progressive Farmer, State Alliance, Raleigh, N. C.
The People's Paper, Charlotte, N. C.
The Vestibule, Concord, N. C.
The Plow-Boy, Salisbury, N. C.
The Watchman, Durham, N. C.
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The Vestibule, Concord, N. C.
The Plow-Boy, Salisbury, N. C.
The Watchman, Durham, N. C.

Each of the above-named papers are requested to keep the list standing on the first page and add others, provided they are duly elected. Any paper failing to advocate the Ocala platform will be dropped from the list promptly. Our people can now see what papers are published in their interest.

AGRICULTURE.

The second crop of Irish potatoes should be planted in the last days of this month or first days of August.

If we wish to raise any style of horses successfully we must breed continually to sires of a given breed, and continue to grade up to the size and kind required by the market. We must adhere to the line we have established without wavering.

Nitrate of soda can be applied to the best advantage immediately upon the growing crops, as it is available almost at once for plant food. This salt is much cheaper than it was in former years, and consequently its use is increasing.

When feeding, hornless cattle eat together like calves and sheep, take less barn room, cannot hook horns nor colts, and cannot hurt each other in shipment, which has benefited our export cattle trade, as we see that most of our fine high grades are hornless.

An increase in the yield of potatoes is markedly influenced by an application of potash. It is found that the ash of potatoes contains over 50 per cent. of potash, and that increase in yield follows very closely the per cent. of potash in the fertilizer applied to the soil.

The principal injury weeds do to the growing crop is to rob it of the available nitrates contained in the soil. Weeds feed with special avidity upon these, and then they are of course no longer available for the crop. The loss which results from growing weeds is not theoretical—it is real.

The bean leaf is easily injured by contact with the soil, and especially that which is wet. The blossom is still more sensitive, and it is almost impossible to cultivate after the bean has blossomed without getting some dirt on the blossom and making the beans rusty. If the work is thoroughly done up to blossoming time, the crop will ripen with few rusted beans. No work should be done in the bean field while the bean leaves are wet with either dew or rain.

FRUIT DRYER AND POTATO HOUSE COMBINED.

[CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.]

After the fruit season is over, the furniture in the above room should be removed and stored (which may be done under the roof, above the second story) and preparations made for the reception of the potato crop. Before removal it may, however, be better, as a matter of experiment, to cure in the trays at least a portion of your crop of potatoes by a plan that will be more fully set forth at the proper place.

The keeping of sweet potatoes appears to be but imperfectly understood, judging from the many failures. Judge Ruffin, in an address at the State Fair at Raleigh, a number of years ago, advised that farmers write out their experiments, the unsuccessful as well as the successful. I propose to follow his advice, a detail of successful experiments frequently being of great advantage.

TIME FOR DIGGING.

It is generally admitted that potatoes should be dug soon after the vines are well bitten by frost. But if the weather immediately thereafter turn warm, I believe it would be better to go over the patch and, with a sharp knife, cut loose the vines from the potatoes at or near the surface of the ground. If the ends of the potatoes stick out of the ground, dirt should be thrown on them with a hoe. When the weather turns sufficiently cool they may be dug. In keeping potatoes, I regard it as much more difficult to provide against heat than cold, the greatest danger being of injury from a warm spell in the fall after they have been dug and housed.

CURING THE POTATOES.

In some cases potatoes have been removed directly from the patch and stored that did well, but it is considered best to at least partially cure them before storing.

CURING WITH HEAT.

Curing potatoes with heat is a new feature, and so far as known, originated with the North Carolina Experiment Station. Mr. J. A. Thomas, in a communication to your paper, published May 14th last, says: "I see in Bulletin No. 112 of the N. C. Experiment Station, that sweet potatoes cured in a tobacco barn would keep much better than (cured) in the sun or air."

Nothing is said in the above as to the degree of heat to be employed, nor the time necessary for curing. I would, however, suggest from 100 to 130 degrees, and two days and nights with constant heat, as the proper time. Those desirous of trying the experiment should carry the potatoes direct from the patch to the trays, where they can treat in accordance with their best judgment.

But as all may not construct the dry-house in time for use this season, I will submit

ANOTHER PLAN FOR CURING.

After the potatoes are dug, spread some wheat straw, or other litter, on the ground in the patch, and place the potatoes thereon. Then cover with straw so as to keep them dry in case of rain. Let them remain thus until they go through a sweat and dry out, when they will be ready for storing.

STORING IN BOXES AND DRY SAND.

The sand may be dried as directed for placing between the walls. But a better plan still is to construct a pile of dry wood and place the sand thereon, then fire the wood. When the sand becomes perfectly cold it will be ready for use.

Construct a suitable number of boxes, say 4 feet long, 2 feet wide and 18 inches deep. A box of this size will hold about 8 bushels, and 12 boxes will probably be enough for sand purposes.

Before placing the potatoes, a plank floor, properly supported and easily removed, should be constructed above the flue, and the flue and openings for ventilation closed to exclude the cold. First put a layer of sand in a box, then fill with potatoes, handling them carefully so as not to skin nor bruise them. Then put some pieces across the box, put an empty box thereon and fill in the same way. A walkway from the door to the back end, 2 feet wide, should be preserved.

Some cool morning, preferably a frosty morning, pour dry sand (be sure that it is dry or a heat may be generated) into the boxes until every crevice is well filled. In order to facilitate the pouring of the sand, it would probably be better to construct the bottom tier, or row, of boxes little broader than those that are placed on them. After the 12 boxes have been properly

ly stored (one on top of another) a vacancy about 4 feet long will be left at the front end. A partition should be run across here and made perfectly tight by means of mortar filled in the joints, or by any other convenient mode. The construction should be such that the partition can be readily removed the following spring. Said compartment can be used for storing potatoes for present use, without sanding.

POTATOES FOR SUMMER USE.

Place the potatoes in a box so they will not touch, first a layer of sand, then a layer of potatoes. Thus continue until the box is filled. It is believed that if treated thus they will be found in good condition the following August. Try a few boxes and see.

SOME MISCELLANEOUS EXPERIMENTS.

A successful application of sand when the potatoes were green.

I once dug my potatoes and placed them in a pile for hilling the evening of the same day. About dark, the weather being quite cool, I poured dry sand among them; but the quantity of sand was not sufficient, there being, I suppose, at least 5 bushels that had no sand. The potatoes were then well covered with corn shucks to prevent injury from frost, we next morning having a very heavy one. After the frost melted off I removed the shucks and completed the hill by first placing corn stalks and then dirting in the usual way. In order to keep the potatoes warm, I placed some potato vines around the hill; the vines soon created a fog of heat and had to be removed.

When I opened the hill the following spring I found that every potato outside of the sand was completely rotten, a black thorough rot, while those covered with the sand were perfectly sound, appearing to have undergone no material change since they were dug. I broke several and the milk ran out as freely as it would have done the day they were dug.

I now call attention to a few points: 1st. That the potatoes, though green when sanded, kept perfectly sound, there scarcely being a rotten one in the sand.

2nd. That the heat generated by the potato vines did not affect the potatoes in the sand. Hence if the potatoes and sand do not themselves generate heat, they are not likely to be affected by any outside temperature, neither heat nor cold.

An unsuccessful application of sand when the potatoes were green.

The next season I placed a large quantity of potatoes, probably 300 bushels, in bulk and added dry sand immediately after placing, the weather being warm. A heat was soon generated, and I was compelled to feed them as rapidly as possible to prevent rotting. We may call them a total loss.

An experiment where the potatoes were cured before the sand was applied.

The next potato crop I treated differently. I piled in the patch and covered with straw until they went through a sweat. They were then hauled and placed in a long row, like the roof of a house, which was done to avoid putting them in bulk. I consider 25 to 30 bushels ample for a circular, or round hill, but if it be made oblong any desired quantity can be placed.

The hill was then completed by placing corn stalks around it and dirting in the usual way. The hill was left open at the top and so remained until cold weather set in, or say until nearly cold enough to form ice. The sand had been previously dried by piling on top of dead wood and burning. A cold morning was selected and the sand applied until every crevice appeared to be filled to the top of the corn stalks, which was several inches above the potatoes, thus excluding all air.

No potatoes, I presume, ever kept better, and the following spring people came from long distances for plantings. The same sand will answer for many years.

DRY ROAD DUST

mixed with the potatoes answers an excellent purpose. I am credibly informed by a person who has used the same road dust, placed with the potatoes in a large box having thick walls, the box being in an out-house, for some 20 consecutive years, with the best of results.

I wish to state here (not having done so at the proper place) that the object of a double wall, constructed of brick or stone, with sand between, is to equalize the temperature, making the room warmer in winter and cooler in summer than it otherwise would be. As stone will reduce the temperature in summer several degrees lower than

brick, the inner wall is preferably constructed of stone.

COTTON SEED AS A PRESERVER.

Cotton seed have been used with the very best of results. Being very simple and inexpensive, the plan is worthy of a trial. The second story of our house is designed for this mode. Seed should be placed on the floor to the depth of a few inches and the potatoes piled thereon to the depth of 2 or 3 feet, keeping seed between them and the walls. Then cover with seed a little deeper than is necessary to cover all the potatoes. The same seed will answer many years. In fact, old seed are thought to be better than new.

I have given some successful and unsuccessful plans. Take your choice, and, in the near future, give us your experience on the points above set forth. BRYAN TYSON.

WEEKLY WEATHER CROP BULLETIN

For the Week Ending Monday, July 13, 1895.

CENTRAL OFFICE, Raleigh, N. C.

The reports of correspondents of the Weekly Weather Crop Bulletin, issued by the North Carolina State Weather Service, for the week ending Saturday, July 13, 1895, though generally favorable, indicate that the week was a little too cool and that rain is needed, especially in the central portions of the State. On the last four days the temperature was considerably below the normal, averaging in the central portion a deficiency of five degrees daily. The sky was generally cloudy or hazy. Favorable showers occurred on four days, which yielded the largest amount of rain fall in the east, sufficient in places to make crops very grassy. It is very dry at most places in the Central District, though no serious injury is yet reported. Curing tobacco has begun in the Eastern District. Corn is going to be one of the finest crops ever harvested.

Eastern District.—There was a peculiar irregularity in the distribution of rain fall this week, many counties reporting too much rain and want of sunshine, others in between reporting rain still needed. Excepting the deficiency in temperature during the last four days, which slightly retarded progress which crops might have made, the week was favorable. Cotton continues small, but is looking well, and is making weed almost too rapidly in the south; blossoms are increasing; lice are still doing a little damage. Tobacco is growing up fast, with great improvement in appearance; a few farmers have commenced curing. Peanuts are looking fine, though small in places, and will soon receive last working. Rice is doing well. Melons are nearly ripe, but to some extent are not as good as last year. Fruit is small.

Central District.—There has been less rain in this district than in the east, and rain is needed in most counties of the district, though crops are not suffering to any extent. Considerable cloudy hazy weather prevailed during the week, with a few showers, rather small in amount, except locally, when there was sufficient. Cotton is still improving and blooming freely; the crop is still being injured by lice to a limited extent. Any unfavorable conditions between now and October will result in one of the smallest cotton crops ever grown. Corn is in silk and tassel, and is remarkably fine nearly everywhere, promising a very large yield, equal to if not better than last year. Laying by late corn and cotton will continue into August. Tobacco is doing very well, and a large portion of the crop will be topped this month. Threshing continues. Some spring oats are being cut. Sowing peas about now. Sweet potatoes are vining nicely. Some rotting of grapes is reported.

Western District.—Another week of fine growing weather is the general report. Showers occurred in nearly every part of the district, but a few correspondents say that more rain is needed. There was not enough rain to prevent a good week's work—threshing wheat, cutting oats, laying by corn, preparing land for fall turnips, etc. Wheat will turn out to be about average crop, it seems; while some report the yield fine, others say it is not as good as expected. Oats are generally reported to be a good crop. Some farmers are making hay still. Cotton is beginning to bloom. Corn is undoubtedly a fine crop; the reports are almost unanimous in saying that the crop is very promising. Melons are growing off fairly well now, but they are late. The weather has been favorable for tobacco, and it is doing well.

TO GET FULL AGRICULTURAL RETURNS.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

The best plan for securing absolutely accurate returns of the yield of cereals in this country, is a subject that is attracting a great deal of attention at present, and one on which a variety of opinions have been expressed both by the press and the public.

With a view of getting an authentic statement as to the position of the government authorities on this subject, Secretary Morton was visited by a representative of the Associated Trade and Industrial Press, and in response to a request for his views, stated that the best plan, in his opinion, was to license the threshers and corn shellers of the country, and in return for this license, the threshers should be required to furnish the government with accurate statements of the amount of grain threshed and corn shelled by them.

He admits that this plan would require the concerted action of all the States of the Union. That every thresher and corn sheller who was at all known to such professionally should be required by the properly constituted authorities to show a license from the Bureau of Agriculture for his right to practice this profession or trade; and in return for this license he should be required to furnish the government, under oath, accurate statements of the success or failure of the cereal harvests, as apparent from the amounts of grain threshed or shelled, as the case may be, by him.

Since the general government as Mr. Morton understood it, had no jurisdiction over the States, in this respect, as yet, still he thought it becoming more and more necessary for the country to "get together" and aid the Secretary of Agriculture in this work, and not be satisfied to simply pore over the crop reports, and anxiously watch the weather map, and wait patiently, but with growing anxiety for the cold wave flag in summer, and the indications of spring in winter.

At the suggestion of the Secretary, Mr. Robinson, the Statistician of the Department, was also seen, and expressed the opinion that the plan of the Secretary was eminently practical, in so far as it concerned the States, and if adopted by the States separately, would result in benefit to both the local agricultural bureaus and the threshers. The idea of licensing the threshers and shellers was, he thought, to be regarded in the same light as licensing any other trade or profession. Threshers going from farm to farm, during the harvest season, should be licensed under this plan, the same as peddlers or those who followed any special trade, as a trade.

When asked for his personal opinion, Mr. Robinson stated that he differed from the Secretary in regard to the method to be employed to secure these returns. His predecessors, he said, had experimented to a considerable extent in order to obtain accurate results. He had communicated directly with the farmers in the different counties and townships of the grain producing States, and in various ways made it to their interest to give the government yearly returns of the crop yield. This plan, for a while, worked successfully, but the interest in gathering these reports soon died out, as there was no incentive for these farmers to make such returns, sufficient to warrant the necessary consumption of time and energy.

Now the system at present in vogue is that of employing a salaried man, whose duty it is to inspect the harvest of each county, and make sworn returns to the authorities as to the amount of grain threshed and corn shelled in the county. Even this plan has been found to be incomplete, and now the department is considering the advisability of putting into execution a plan of this kind: that each thresher, as he goes from farm to farm, plying his trade as a thresher or sheller, as the case may be, being already required by the farmer for whom he works, to return to him an accurate account of the amount and quality of cereals threshed, might be, for a small consideration, induced to furnish the government with a duplicate of this report, with a sworn statement as to its validity. Of course this inducement would be in the nature of a bribe, (and here the genial statistician's face was lit by a smile that spoke volumes, whose interpretation we shall leave to the thrasher.)

The National Bureau of Agriculture is now engaged in listing the threshers of this country, with a view of estab-

lishing an industry of the kind, or in other words, raising the work of threshing from the level of a chore to the dignity of a trade. And it will only be when this an accomplished fact, that there could be put into successful execution any plan of licensing threshers, such as is suggested by Secretary Morton.

Mr. Robinson thinks the present system can be improved upon by having the Department open a correspondence with each political candidate in each separate district where grain is produced, pointing out the perhaps personal advantage to them in aiding the Secretary of Agriculture, by discussing with the local grain producers, the absolute value and quality of the crop yield in his district; and gathering from such discussions, such information as would enable him to return to the proper authorities a substantiated report of the amount of grain threshed in the radius of his political canvass. As a reward for this "gratuitous service" on the part of the politician, the government statistician suggests that a neat little "vest pocket edition" of these reports be furnished to the canvasser, which he could exhibit and use to advantage in his canvass. This book is, of course, to be supplied with blank pages for additional reports. In this way the government would be supplied with the desired information without a special outlay of cash or work on the part of the Agricultural Bureau.

It has been suggested that should the income tax law ever be enforced, this work of collecting information in regard to cereal crop yields, would be spared the government, inasmuch as the returns made by the collector of incomes, as required by this law, would contain ample information regarding the status of the resident cerealist, and necessarily in his search for the authenticity of these income reports, the very particulars that the Bureau is so anxious to obtain would be furnished truly gratis, since the same man would unconsciously perform the two duties.

The whole matter, however, as Mr. Robinson remarked, is still in an embryonic state, and until a better plan for obtaining these accurate reports can be devised, they will have to be content with the present system.

Clipping off the runners is necessary in growing some of the fresh varieties of strawberries successfully. If left to themselves they will produce a great number of new plants, but there will be fewer and smaller berries next year for it. But the Crescent is a berry that will stand this usage better than any other we know. If planted in rows three feet apart and left to form a row filling all the intermediate space, they will produce an immense amount of fruit. The Crescent is never a large berry, however carefully its runners may be clipped, and it will bear neglect in this respect better than any other strawberry.

TOO MUCH MANURE.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

In your issue of July 2nd, under the heading of the effects of deep plowing, the types made me say "five hundred two horse loads of barnyard manure and one hundred and fifty pounds of guano were also applied." It should have read fifty instead of "five hundred."

Five hundred two horse loads of muck from an adjacent swamp, fifty two-horse loads of barnyard manure and one hundred and fifty pounds of guano were the fertilizers applied by N. W. Woodfin to the above acre of old field that had previously been thoroughly broken to a depth of sixteen inches. Corn was then planted in drills three feet apart, seven inches in the drill and cultivated in the usual way. In the fall one hundred bushels and two quarts—nearly thirty barrels—were gathered. The ears were not large, averaging about seven inches long.

BRYAN TYSON.

In purchasing Paris green for poisoning potato bugs or other insects, care should be taken to secure that which is pure. The entire unreliability of much of the Paris green in market leads to using it in large doses so as to produce the right effect, and this is frequently injurious to the tender leaves. With Paris green of full standard purity the amount required to kill insects is so small that no injury will result from its use. When the Paris green is used to destroy fungous growths heavier doses are required, and lime must be used with it to prevent injury. But for both uses the Paris green should be pure, so that those using it may understand what results to expect.