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# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

Has the largest circulation of any family agricultural or political paper published between Richmond and Atlanta

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

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No. 10

## Agriculture

ALL AROUND THE FARM.

Prof. B. J. Irvy, late Professor of Agriculture, Agricultural and Mechanical College, Raleigh, N. C., has become a regular contributor to this paper. All questions relating to the farm, garden or orchard will be answered by Prof. Irvy.

### PROF. IRVY'S WEEKLY LETTER.

DOES IT PAY TO GROW GERMAN MILLET? If this crop is planted in a very rich spot, then it pays to sow, but as it is a heavy feeder, it will not pay to grow except under favorable circumstances.

It draws heavily from the soil for two reasons. First, the very rapid growth would indicate this; second, a very heavy growth. Four tons per acre is not a large crop. Of course the thing to do is to sow on a very rich spot, and then follow with peas, clover or some renovating crop.

The land can easily be brought back with one renovating crop.

Sow any time in April or May. Prepare the soil deep, harrow it thoroughly, and sow the seed after the ground is smooth and level, and very fine.

Sow the seed broadcast and run over them with a smoothing harrow, so as to put them in lightly. If the soil is sandy, then use a roller, or a drag.

As the seeds are very fine, it is easy to cover too deep. The dirt should be pressed around the little seeds. Cut when the crop has come in full head and cure as you would any hay.

Use a feed cutter when perfectly dry to cut it up in lengths of one or two inches.

By this means you will get the cheapest dry food that can be grown on the farm.

### QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

LEXINGTON, N. C., March 31, '98

AGRICULTURAL EDITOR:—I am very much pleased with the answers and instructions you give us on farming. They add very much to the usefulness of THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

I want to know how I can get the benefit out of a pile of well rotted chip dirt that has accumulated for three years at our wood pile. We want to use it for corn, and have thought to mix chicken manure and ashes with it in this plan right, and how much can be put to the hill?

Yours truly,  
A. M. HUNTER

The chip dirt, ashes and chicken manure would make a fertilizer for anything. Would advise that it be put in deep, as it would have a tendency to freeze any crop if the season was dry, unless it was put in deep. When light, readily soluble stuff is put in shallow, it feeds the crop excessively to start with and the roots spread out near the surface. Hence, when the drouth comes on the surface soil dries up and there is no hing for the crop to feed on and the moisture is all gone. The crop that sends its roots deep in the soil is the one that will stand the drouth.

So put any manure, especially, deep in the furrow. Then the roots will be attracted deep instead of spreading over the surface. That is the reason cotton seed under corn gives such fine results.

Open a deep furrow and put in the mixture of chip dirt manure and ashes, about one shovel full to each hill. I would prefer to scatter this in the drill putting in one place. Mix just before applying, and cover at once with about six inches of soil.

Plant the seed just above this and the crop will show the effects as soon as the roots strike the manure.

The chip dirt is valuable principally for the organic matter, the ashes for the potash, and the manure is a complete fertilizer.

### QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

JUSTICE, N. C., March 30, 1898

I have an idea of sowing crimson clover with peas after wheat, and want to know will tobacco be successful after it, and what kind of fertilizer will be suitable to use. Many kind wishes to THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

Respectfully,  
CHARLEY PERRY.

In reply the above Prof. Frank E. Emery, Agriculturist N. C. Experiment Station, writes as follows:

Crimson clover is often sown among plowings and do better thus sown where

the vines are not so thick as to shade out the clover.

One of our most successful seedings of crimson clover was when the clover was sown broadcast and harrowed in with a wheat drill which sowed cow peas from every other tube. The peas afforded shade for the clover when the September sun would, otherwise have killed out much of it.

There will be no, or only a very little nitrogen needed unless your land is very poor, in which case 2 to 3 per cent. in the commercial manure will be desirable. Phosphoric acid and potash are the main elements to be applied, and these are most often used as acid phosphate and kainit, though any other articles which contain the same amounts available to plants will do as well. The amount needed depends on the land. No one can tell who is unfamiliar with any given piece of land how much or little will pay best on it in any given year because the differing amounts available in the land may be supplied in different degrees according to the rainfall and warmth of the season. It is usual to recommend from 300 to 400 pounds of a mixture of equal parts of acid phosphate and kainit. To this for poor land may be added half as much cotton seed meal as of either of the other ingredients. Should expect tobacco to do well after treated to these crops on which 500 pounds per acre of the chemicals and meal have been used.

### FARM NOTES AND HINTS.

Correspondence of the Progressive Farmer.

The whispers of summer septys and the genial glow of the warm spring sunshine teasing and tempting mother earth have brought out bud and bloom in orchard, garden and the "deep tangled wild wood." The plowman has whistled and furrowed until his broad acres, mellowed and fined, have tempted him to put in his corn ten to fifteen days earlier and he will be ready to put in his cotton equally as long before the usual 20th. What is the matter? We have not had a hard rain the whole winter, nor indeed since last June. The wells and water springs have not attained their usual winter supply and abundance. Pastures have hardly afforded a supply for animal wants. The ferries across winter-flashed streams have been a failure. But wheat and oats, rye and clover, grass and meadows are in their prime.

The garden is far advanced and the farmer's heart is rejoiced. The usual crops will be planted here, but a better preparation, more manure, and more "hog and hominy."

If no cold weather comes later, we will expect plenty of fruit. With these cheering hopes, though war may wage and daily papers keep up a stirring sensation, the farmers look for better times.

Free silver may be a good thing, but he who trusts to free silver alone will never better his circumstances. Free silver is one thing, but we must have less "merchandizing" on the farm. We must sell and not buy. And when the farmer shall confine himself to that, even the gold standard will not harm him so much. We need a government economically administered; in fact, economy that will reach every avenue in life, would be a boon. Extravagance has destroyed our power of self-dependence—and government never economizes, but with age, and the history of fallen nations and empires warning, goes on every year into further extravagance—caring less for the hands that toil and more for the sons of wealth and "honor."

Let us hope there is more manhood and honor in a republic than history shows ever in the empires long since perished. Let us hope the people are getting stronger in will power and self-reliance and determined to think and act more for themselves. Let us hope this year is the beginning of the dawning of a better day.

W. T. CUTOBIN,  
Stanly County, N. C.

### HOW SHALL WE SECURE INDEPENDENCE?

Cotton is the most helpless crop that can be raised upon a farm. Corn, wheat, oats, hay and nearly everything else, when the market is over-supplied, can be fed stock and the family. These things make not only the farmer, in a measure, self-supporting, but are powerful elements of independence to the country in which they are raised.—Ruston Leader.

I am convinced that to succeed with sugar beets, the seed should be soaked and planted in soil freshly stirred; they then come before the weeds, and before the ground gets hard.—A. B. King.

### ALL ABOUT WATERMELONS.

Last week we had an interesting letter from Mr. Bryan Tyson on watermelon raising. As the watermelon adds so much to the pleasure of farm life during the hot summer days, we wish to say something more about watermelon raising.

One of the spiciest, best written and most entertaining bulletins we have ever reviewed is No. 38 of the Georgia Station, by Prof. Hugh N. Starnes, on watermelons.

On the all-important subject of marketing Prof. Starnes says that, like the grape, the watermelons must be ripe when started to market, for it will not ripen up after being pulled, as many fruits will, and like the grape it cannot stand a long haul in a wagon. It must be grown near the shipping depot and must be loaded carefully into a wagon padded with hay and having bolster springs.

Cull carefully and have each carload near as possible of the same size. Put the smallest melons in the car first, because they can stand the pressure best, and if injured are smaller loss than the heavy ones.

Look carefully into the conditions of markets every day. Note the weather at various points. Ship where it is hot. A cold northeaster has caused many a carload of fine melons to be dumped into the Chicago river. People will not buy melons at such times. Use the telegraph freely.

But much better than attempting to wrestle singly with the problem of selecting a market judiciously would be a reliance, for this purpose, on some one of the co-operative shippers' unions, of which the American fruit growers' union is decidedly the most prominent. The very early and very late markets yield the best prices.

If forced to list the three best melons for shipping purposes it would be safe to rank Lork Bacon at the head, closely followed by Kolb Gem and Augusta Rattlesnake, with Jones' Jumbo a good fourth. None of these are of first quality, but they will all "get there"—if it's anywhere within a thousand miles—and sell, too, after they have arrived.

For early melons, Memphis, Augusta, Sugarloaf, Augusta Rattlesnake.

For late melons, Boss, Scalybark, Sweet heart.

For family use, Seminole, Sibley's Triumph, Jordan's Gray Monarch and Ramsay.

On the subjects of soil, fertilizers, planting and culture Prof. Starnes says:

A warm, light, sandy loam, well drained, is the melon's delight. The watermelon is much more exacting in this particular than the muskmelon.

Under no circumstances should melons follow melons, and at least four seasons should intervene before the land is again devoted to this crop.

Preparation should be thorough, but not necessarily deep, as the roots of the melon are surface feeders. Complete pulverization is necessary. One breaking and two effective harrowings, with a "cutaway" or even a "smoothing" harrow, generally prove sufficient. It is always desirable that a crop of cowpeas should precede melons.

The richer the soil the greater should be the distance apart of the hills; 12 by 12 feet, 12 by 10 or 10 by 10 are the usual distances employed.

Fertilizers should be applied in the drill and bedded on not concentrated in the hill.

Planting should be done by hand and should be shallow. Plenty of seed should be used, and each seed pushed down not deeper than an inch with the forefinger.

After the plants are up they should be thinned down to three or four to the hill, and afterward to one, or at most two vines. Cultivation should be shallow—with cultivator or scrape.

Never, under any circumstances, turn a vine. More will be lost by so doing than will be gained by giving the plant an extra cultivation. This is another ancestral practice; and doubtless arises from the fact that the vines when turned are apt to be carelessly handled. If turned gently and deftly to their original position it is difficult to realize how they would be injured. Any weeding that is found necessary after this time should be effected with a scythe blade, lopping off the tops of the weeds above the vines. They should not even be pulled out by hand on account of the danger of mutilating the vines, which generally hold them in a tight embrace with their tendrils. Indeed, rather than risk disturbing a vine it would be preferable to leave the

weeds and the melons to "have it out" between them, for a few well anchored weeds and there prove rather a benefit than a detriment, since they prevent the winds from rolling up and matting the vines.

But better than weeds is a light sowing of cow peas—a peck to the acre—broadcast just before the last cultivation and plowed in thereby. The best pea for this purpose is some upright, slow-growing variety, as Whip poorwill or New Era. Besides the anchorage which the peas give the vines, they also serve to partially shade the melons from the scorching mid summer sun, and are of great benefit, manurally, to the ensuing crop, whatever it may be.

The watermelon bears its fruit directly on the main vine—never on its laterals, as does the muskmelon. For this reason some growers make a practice of clipping off the laterals as they form, thinking that thereby they "throw the strength of the vine" more into the main stem. This is of very doubtful benefit. It must not be forgotten that the leaves of a plant are its lungs, and it is highly probable that the practice will be found of no more value than the now obsolete custom of "pinching back" sweet potato vines.

The following directions are given for fighting insect enemies of the melon:

1. A pinch of nitrate of soda at each hill when plants come up to give them a good start and put them rapidly beyond reach of damage.

2. Spray with Paris green—four ounces to fifty gallons—at intervals of a week for three weeks, against the melon worm, striped cucumber beetle and flea beetle, or dust with Paris green, one part to twenty of flour or lime.

3. Spray intermediately with kerosene emulsion for the melon louse. Whale soap may also be used—two pounds to the gallon—or carbon bisulphide in obdurate cases.

### FIRE FANGING.

"Fire fanging" of manure is destructive, and, although it is a well-known occurrence in manure heaps, some farmers do not try to prevent or suppress it. It is simply overheating of the manure, due to rapid decomposition, a large proportion of the ammonia being liberated and lost. When fire fanging occurs drive a crowbar into the heap in several places and pour in cold water. What is better, wet the manure and turn the heap over, adding dry earth and plaster, placing the coarse portions of the manure in the center. Cold water absorbs ammonia and prevents its escape, and unless it is used, much of the volatile ammonia will escape while the manure is being handled. The heap should not be kept wet, however, but slight damp, which will promote decomposition; but overheating may always be controlled by cold water.—Tri State Farmer.

### SHOULD FARMERS ADVERTISE?

This subject was discussed in a forcible way recently by an Ohio farmer at an institute meeting. The following contains some of the most salient points brought out in the address:

"Have you thoroughbred cattle, sheep, or hogs? Have you extra chickens, ducks, turkeys or geese? Let people know that you have them. Has your boy got pet rabbits or ferrets? Let him do a little advertising on his own account.

Have you extra nice wheat, corn, rye, barley, buckwheat or flax, that is suitable for seed? Does anybody know about it? Did you ever tell your wife even?

Have you nice clean oats that you can guarantee free from smut? Fifty thousand farmers are looking for it. Have you any of the grass seed that you guarantee free from weed seed? Don't be afraid you will break that market. There will always be a demand.

Now, the next important question is the medium. This must be determined by the party interested, and only general directions will apply. You know the class of people who ought to buy have. Place your advertisement in the paper that reaches the largest number of that class. Not two or three lines that you can't find yourself with out spectacles, but a good big chunk out of a corner of a page, where everybody can see it. Don't sponge your advertising. That disgraces the newspaper man and makes your competitors mad.

Don't be ashamed of your business. Let people know that you are a farmer and that you are proud of it. Advertise your business as other men do, and compel others to respect you because of your enterprise.

### THE AMERICAN MAIZE PROPAGANDA.

Correspondence of The Progressive Farmer. To The Corn Growers of America:

The Corn Convention, which met in Chicago February 16th to consider the agricultural situation in general and the interest of corn in particular, organized The American Maize Propaganda. The central object of the organization is an international effort to permanently and legitimately advance the price of America's greatest crop by promoting a larger use of Indian corn at home and abroad. Coming changes in dietary habits of the world make the present an opportune time to advertise abroad the virtues and relative cheapness of corn as food. The officers of the Propaganda have already laid before Congress the necessity for making a comprehensive showing of corn and its products at the Paris Exposition of 1900, in such a shape as to demonstrate practically its virtues as food. In order to secure this recognition for corn we must have the active backing of individual corn growers. It proposes to follow up the beginning then made by a continued effort under private auspices.

The organization also has a field for activity at home. It proposes to educate our own people to a better appreciation of our great crop. In addition it will be alert to represent the interests of agriculturists in general and corn in particular in matters of legislation, and in urging effective efforts on the part of the government to combat unjust restrictions upon American trade in any and all foreign countries. In such matters the pressure which such an organization can bring to bear through its local membership will be very great.

The organization is in no sense a secret order, but a plain business proposition. In order to reach the highest possible efficiency in the work under taken it is desired to have local branches established in every community where King Corn rules. No expense will attach to these local branches, but each one established will give strength to the central organization by enlisting the active sympathy of the corn producers. It is desired to have local farmers' clubs of all kinds affiliate with us by constituting themselves a local branch, and where no organization now exists individual farmers are asked to unite in forming such a local branch.

I desire to urge upon corn growers the necessity of aiding in this business effort for the general good of all, and I will be pleased to furnish necessary blanks and information to any who desire to enter actively in the work by organizing local branches.

Respectfully,  
B. W. SNOW, Secretary.  
Marquette Building, Chicago, Ill.

### PHILOSOPHY OF INTENSIVE FARMING.

(From Southern Progress, Philadelphia.)  
A currycomb is a valuable condiment to hay and corn.

A man will manage a farm better for having tilled a garden.

Mortgages are like the waves of the sea—the vessels they hold up to day they swamp to-morrow.

It is quite as likely that a duck's back will hold water as that a sub soil of sand will hold manure.

No bank of deposit can be found by a farmer that is so safe and that pays so large an interest as a compost bank.

Ditching means making daily deposits in a reliable savings bank that has never yet been known to default a dividend time.

A farm may be owned by a y man who has industry enough to work, honor enough to command confidence and courage to pinch at spots.

The intensive farmer's motto is: "No ploughing where there is no manure to turn under." He expends no unnecessary force. He values labor too highly to waste it. Investments are not made where there is not a great deal of certainty in the matter of a promise to pay back.

Crops are in the manure, not in the land. It is waste, both of time and muscle, to scatter the requirements of a ten acre lot over one of 20 acres. The farmer will win a wager who ventures to get more profit out of one acre than another would get out of five, the land being of like quality and the quantity of fertilizing material being the same for both fields.

Piggens and barnyards are the manure

factories of a farm, and they are manufacturing that always pay. There is no possibility of a failure or of a going behind. The secret of success in farming lies in correspondence of the acres with the manufactories. If the correspondence be with ten acres, then ten acres are enough; if with 20, 40, 80, then 20, 40, 80 are to be worked with profit.

The farm is a home—not a place to be lived at to-day and moved from to-morrow, but a home to be improved and beautified—a home where orchards are to be planted, where vines are to be grown, where substantial things are to be constructed, where children are to be born and fathers are to die.

### KEEP ACCOUNTS.

A writer in Winston Republican from Forsyth county says:

The writer knows just what it cost him to grow and market one acre of tobacco last year. These are the figures: 1 cord wood.....\$ 75

Burning, sowing and covering plant bed..... 75

Cloth, lumber and nails for covering bed..... 50

Breaking ground twice..... 1.50

Harrowing twice..... 50

Making hills..... 1.50

400 pounds fertilizer..... 4.50

Setting plants..... 1.50

Cultivating five times..... 7.50

Worming and suckering 15 times 7.50

Cutting and housing..... 5.00

Curing..... 5.00

1 1/2 cords wood..... 1.12 1/2

Stripping, grading, etc..... 4.75

Marketing..... 1.50

Plant food required to grow 600 pounds tobacco, in excess of that which was supplied in fertilizer..... 6.15

Total.....\$50.02 1/2

To this might be added interest on money invested in land, insurance against fire and the elements, which would be considerable.

So kind reader if you doubt my figures just open account with your tobacco crop for 1898 and be as careful of all items as you are with any other debtor and see if "Mr. Tobacco" will ever be able to cancel the account. Men in all other lines of business keep accounts, do their own thinking and act upon their own judgment. When the farmers as a class adopt this method, then, and not until then, will many perplexing questions be satisfactorily settled.

### BULLETIN ON GINSENG.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture will issue, in a few days, a revised edition of Bulletin No. 16, Division of Botany, entitled "American Ginseng, Its Commercial History, Protection, and Cultivation." The bulletin was originally published in 1895, under the direction of the Botanist, the information in it having been collected by Mr. Geo. V. Nash. In the revised edition of the bulletin the subject-matter is brought up to date by Mr. Maurice G. Kaine, who is now engaged in investigating, for the Division of Botany, various plant products that are new or little known in the United States. It appears from the bulletin that during the past few years the price of ginseng has continued to increase, the best wild root bringing, in the wholesale market for the season of 1897, \$4 to \$4.75 per pound. It is stated that the demand for ginseng in China is steady, and that the exports of ginseng may be largely increased without overstocking the market. The subjects discussed in the bulletin are the following: History, description, range, medicinal properties, commercial value, exportation, protection, cultivation, improvement of the root, selection and preparation of the root, profits, adulteration and fraud.

The bulletin contains 32 pages and is illustrated by five text figures, one of which is a map showing the natural range of the ginseng plant in the United States. Copies may be obtained by miscellaneous applicants from the Superintendent of Documents, Union Building, Washington, D. C., at the price affixed by him, namely, 5 cents.

The above we clip from a circular sent us by the Department of Agriculture. Ginseng at one time was very extensively cultivated—in Western North Carolina. Can any of our subscribers give us any information regarding the industry in that section? We shall be pleased to hear from anyone regarding the plant and its culture.