THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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

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Agricul e.

THE FARMER A BUSINESS MAN.

EDITORS PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—The farmer is, or, to succeed, must be a business man. This is especially the case with the dairy farmer. In the broader sense his business includes the production of the raw material, the manufacture of it into butter or cheese and the sale of same when ready for market. And ahead of the production, manufacture and sale comes the establishment of the plant. His entire plant includes the farm. the cows and the apparatus used for working up the milk. Surely if any profession calls for brains and affords employment for that commodity it is the farmers. And even with brains the price of success is eternal vigilance. A successful farmer will conquer his surroundings, whatever they are, or in some way change them for his good.

Present and prospective conditions are favorable to the farmer as a man of business. The writer in making this statement has in mind the tendency to improve country roads, the telephone and rural free delivery of the mails. Each of these is an important factor and when combined and a farming community is given the benefit of all of them it will result in benefit to such community to an extent that we can now hardly realize and appreciate.

There has been so much written and printed about the benefit of good roads that not a great deal need now be brought forward at this time. However, it will not be amiss to emphasize the fact that good roads is a very important factor in the development of the farmer as a business man—if not the most important one.

The telephone, while perhaps not bringing to the farmer as much real and immediate profit as good roads, is a good investment for any farming community and every individual farmer of such community may adopt it. There are writers on the subject of country telephone lines, and those who have had experience in establishing such lines, that can do better by this subject than can the writer, and he trusts your readers will sooner or later have the benefit of letters from some of them.

The third factor referred to above is rural delivery of mails. This in addition to being an important business factor has, like the telephone, a social side to it—one of great importance.

As before stated, the three factors, good roads, telephone, rural delivery when combined will be powerful in benefitting the farmer in matters of business and they will in a social way be equally so.

There is one factor that has not in this letter been referred to, one which, it now occurs to the writer, should be considered at this time, viz., the bicycle. Farmers living within a reasonable distance of a village or city, will find, as will their children and hired help, the bicycle many times very useful as well as pleasurable, provided there are good roads to use it on.

Once more. In some agricultural paper the writer has seen illustrated a postoffice or wheels and read a description of it in connection therewith. This traveling postoffice was drawn by two horses and accompanied by a postmaster, who as remembered was also the driver. The person takes all letters and parcels that are mailable and post-marks them. He sells postage stamps and postal cards, but whether he sells money orders or not the writer does not know, but the chances are that he does. Every section of the country would not have roads good enough to warrant a postoffice on wheels, but where the roads will admit of it, no doubt it would be a good plan by encouraging, developing and sustaining the business farmer, as well as the other four factors mentioned.

The writer trusts this letter will be the means of drawing out the thoughts and experience of others who are interested in the topics it refers to. Let us hear from all such persons through the columns of The Progressive Farmer.

F. W. MOSELEY.

THE COW PEA—THE PRACTICAL FARMER'S $25 PRIZE ESSAY.

The cow pea is the salvation of the Southern farmer, if used for the double purpose of stock feeding and renovating the land. Time for sowing for best results, about the 15th of June, though they may be sown and do well from 1st of June to 15th of July. They will do fairly well on any land that is not too wet, but high sand or middle land give the best results. I have had good success with any kind of what are commonlycalled the cow pea, but would prefer the "Unknown," as they stand up better and make more forage per acre. I have sown from one peck to two bushels per acre. I prefer to sow one bushel on fairly good land, as the growth will be more vigorous and give better results. With less seed, you have too much native grass, which is not near so good feed and does not do the land half the good the pea does. Broadcast is the best way, as it gives a great deal more forage and gets more roots into the ground to enrich and put it in better physical condition. Peas will grow very well on poor land, but pay handsomely for manure. I have used with good success 300 pounds acid phosphate, 100 pounds kainit well mixed and applied (400 pounds), per acre; thus manured 2,000 pounds per acre would be a fair amount of hay on average land, though I have gotten 4,000 pounds. As to saving the peas I know of no other way than picking, which is somewhat expensive. We pay twenty-five cents per hundred, or some give one-third of the peas. The yield of the seed per acre runs all the way from 5 to 25 bushels. There is a great deal in the proper handling of the hay. Several factors are to be taken into account after it has been grown.

1. The hay must be cut at the right time, not too ripe or too green, but just when the vines are ripe, as the first pods begin to yellow and the leaves begin to yellow and fall some. Then if the weather is fair and likely to remain so (be sure to have a mower of your own), after the dew is off go in and cut. The next day as soon as the dew has dried off, rake into windrows. The next day go in with your fork and put in nice round shocks, about 100 pounds (when it is dried out) to the shock. If the weather is favorable leave it in this condition about two days and then while quite limp pack away in a good barn and leave it there to cure; it will get pretty hot and possibly scare you some, but don't bother it; in the course of a few days it will cool off and you will have a lot of nice green looking hay that I would not exchange pound for pound for any hay that I ever saw. Horses or cows will eat it in preference to any other forage and will do well on it. Mules will do well on it without any other food when not at work. Cattle will fatten and milch cows give lots of nice, rich milk and pure, sweet butter. There is great improvement in the soil when you get a heavy pea fallow. One of our farmers told me in his last year's cotton crop, he had a field half of which had a good pea fallow the year before, and the other half was in cotton. He put the whole field in cotton last year; the difference was very perceptible in favor of the pea fallow. Says he, where the pea fallow gave out the cotton gave out. Another of our best farmers told me "I never made any money raising cotton till I began to rotate and plant on pea fallows. Now I make some money." I have never seen any crop but did better after a heavy crop of peas; especially in this the case with cotton and wheat. If you are troubled with rot in your cabbage just put them after peas and I'll assure you you will have a good crop of nice sound heads. Now, Mr. Editor, I would like to give you my own experience with one acre last year. I took one acre of tolerably good land. It was planted in corn the year before with a pea row between, of the Unknown variety; they made a vigorous growth. In the fall I turned in cattle. They ate and trampled down the vines. The first of November I went in with a two-horse plow and turned the whole mass under as deep as two mules could pull it. I then spread ten loads of lot and stable manure broadcast on top of the plowing with 300 pounds acid phosphate and 100 pounds kainit. I then harrowed this in with a spring-tooth harrow and sowed 1 bushel wheat 15th of December and harrowed in the seed with a smoothing harrow. I cut this off and got 30 bushels of wheat. I then turned under the stubble with a Dixie plow and let stand a few days; then took a spring-tooth harrow and went over it, and on the 20th of June sowed 1 bushel Unknown or Wonderful peas and ran over it with smoothing harrow. About the first days of October, mowed the peas for hay and cured as stated in this article. I got 4,000 pounds of as nice hay as anybody would wish to see. The feeding value of which would be hard to overestimate; such hay will bring on our market 75 cents per hundredweight any time.

I have had some experience in baling the pea hay. Last year I put up 400 bales with hand, home-made baler. It costs about five cents per hundred to bale in this way, and pays well for the trouble. 1st, it takes less barn room. The bales weigh about 125 pounds and occupy about 25 cubic feet of space and is much more easily handled; and, in the second place, being more compact, the air is excluded and the hay retains its sweetness and nutritive value better. It can be baled when quite limp but must be free from dew or rain moisture. Now I wish to give a recipe, which if faithfully and persistently followed, will bring the Southern farmer out of the low grounds of sorrow, dependency and gloom, up on the table lands and into the noonday effulgence of success and good cheer. The cow pea will be the principal ingredient in the list. Let every farmer plant one-third of his land in cotton, one-third in small grain, one-third in corn; cotton follow small grain, small grain follow corn, and corn follow cotton. The land sown in small grain sow in peas when the grain is cut off. The land in corn to be cultivated level and the last plowing (20th of June to 1st of July) sow in peas, 1 bushel per acre; when the fodder is ripe cut the corn stalks at the ground and put in shocks about 150 stalks to a shock. Then when the peas begin to yellow mow with mower. Then don't buy one pound of ammoniated guano, but get acid phosphate and kainit, exchange your cotton seed for cotton seed meal and feed to cattle. Take proper care of the manure thus made. Keep all the cattle you can feed with the forage saved from this rotation. Compost the manure with the acid phosphate and kainit and put back on the land. Thus the land would be enriched by the peas where grown and by the manure returned. The farmer would get plenty of nice milk and butter which would enable him to raise pigs, calves, chickens and children, live at home and be happy.

If all our Southern farmers could and would follow this plan this Southland of ours would blossom as the rose, the fragrance whereof would make glad the nations and the individual farmer would flourish as the "green bay tree planted by the rivers of water, whose leaves would not wither and who would bring forth his fruit in his season." Now, Mr. Editor, this is no fancy picture or fine spun theory, but "rock bottom truth" which deserves a fair trial. Now I know all farmers cannot jump into this system like jumping on the morning express, but by patient, diligent perseverance we can evolute out of the old ruts into this new and better way, which is the highway to success. I have for some fifteen years had my attention turned to the possibility of the cow pea as a stock feed and land improver, but I am indebted to Prof. Massey as to the proper mode of cutting and curing hay. I followed his directions in part year before last and made good hay; but this last season I followed it with full faith nothing doubting, and made some of the best hay I ever saw. I am now ready to recommend his plans for cutting and curing the hay as the best way I ever tried, viz.: Cut the hay when the pods begin to yellow. Cut when free from dew or rain. Pack away when quite limp, and as a further test take a wisp of the hay and twist hard; if you see no moisture, it is ready to put in barn and pack down tight, about four days from the blade to the barn. W. J. CURRIE.

Robeson Co., N. C.

THE TOBACCO CROP.

The indications are that in consequence of the high price of cotton the crop of bright tobacco will be largely curtailed, says the Southern Planter.

This should have the effect of raising the price of this product, as the demand is large and not likely to be reduced during a period of such general prosperity as this country and England are now enjoying. This being so, it would seem to be the opportunity for those who still intend to make this staple to plant out a large crop, and to make it good. We would, however, urge that not more be planted than can be well fertilized and attended to. The production of bright tobacco is perhaps more dependent on the peculiar fitness of the soil on which it is grown than upon any particular system of fertilization. Unless the soil be adapted to the crop, no system of fertilization will make a desirable crop. Land full of vegetable matter, especially if that matter be in only a partially decomposed condition, and be lacking in sweetness, can never be made to produce a high type of bright tobacco. Phosphoric acid at the rate of 100 pounds to the acre, supplied by high-grade acid phosphate, and potash supplied by cotton seed hull ashes or double sulphate of potash applied at the rate of 600 or 700 pounds to the acre with cotton seed meal to supply the nitrogen at the rate of 1,200 or 1,500 pounds to the acre would seem, from a consideration of the experiments made in various places, to be the most desirable form of fertilizers to use.

Dark heavy shipping tobacco has continued to sell well, and seems likely to continue to do so. There is, therefore, every inducement to make the crop. It is, however, essential that it should be made good, and be cured to meet the requirements of the market. A soil rich in vegetable matter, such as a decayed clover or pea sod, is one most suitable for this type of tobacco. It calls for a heavy supply of nitrogen and potash, but only a for a medium quantity of phosphoric acid. The nitrogen should, as far as possible, be from an organic source, and the potash be in the form of a sulphate. Major Ragland, one of the best authorities on the crop, got the best results in six different experiments from the use of dried blood as the source of nitrogen, sulphate of potash for the potash, and acid phosphate to supply the phosphoric acid. He applied 160 pounds of dried blood, 120 pounds of sulphate of potash, and 114 pounds of acid phosphate to the acre, and such a dressing as this applied on a clover or pea fallow would probably be found sufficient. If not planted on a clover or pea fallow, we advise the use of 100 pounds of nitrate of soda in addition.

ITEMS FROM CLEVELAND.

EDITORS PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—Much rain has fallen in the past few days, and farmers are wishing to see it fair again.

Wheat and oats are looking fairly well at this writing. Some cotton seed have been planted, but those whe have not planted are about as well off, as the ground washed very badly where it was loose.

About as much, or perhaps more, fertilizers hape been bought this spring than were used last year. The Farmers' Alliance does a great deal of buying here, regardless of merchants. There are several Alliance lodges in our county yet of which El Bethel is as strong as any.

E. L. WARE.

Cleveland Co,, N. C.

STRAWBERRIES.

This is the subject of bulletin 73 of Kentucky Station. From tests at that station and data furnished by 130 of the largest berry growers in the State, this bulletin is compiled.

Interest in the strawberry, both as an adjunct to the farmer's garden and as a market crop, is undoubtedly on the increase. The large and growing cities upon our northern border afford a good market for early berries, which the fruit growers of Kentucky are in just the position to profit by. Nor should the smaller towns be overlooked when the strawberry grower is seeking a market. Experience has shown over and over again that in shipping to large cities the farmer and gardener often neglect a near but smaller market, which, with some attention could be made to return much larger profits, at least for limited quantities, than do the large city markets, which receive such enormous quantities of perishable products that they must sometimes be sold at a loss.

The importance of cultivating the smaller cities and towns as fruit markets is further very emphatically shown by the replies of correspondents. Those who have sold their crops in smaller markets have as a rule received 2 or 3 cents per quart more than those who have shipped to the large markets of Cincinnati, Louisville and Chicago.

The last season was an unusually favorable one. From reports of 130 leading growers it is found that the avcrage yield was 3,400 quarts, or about 100 bushels per acre, and the average price received 6½ cents per quart, average net profit 4½ cents per quart, or about $150 per acre. Many growers exceeded those figures, some reporting nearly or quite twice as large a yield as the above average. And it is a significant fact that those producing the largest yield usually secured the best price per quart. They were up in every detail of the business.

The pickers employed are men, women and children, both white and black, and prices for picking range from 1 to 2 cents per quart. Near the larger cities, where pickers are abundant, they can be had cheap. Less is also paid for picking large berries than small ones, because it requires less time to pick a quart.

The practice of branding each crate of fruit with the grower's name and the variety of fruit in some neat design, is an excellent idea that has been adopted by a few growers. This is an inexpensive form of advertising that helps to create a demand for a grower's product if his fruit is uniformly good.

The varieties first in popular favor remain about the same as they were two years ago, Bubach still easily holding first place among growers for market, followed by Haverland, Gandy, Crescent, Michel and Warfield.

The Michel, while not very much esteemed in the eastern part of the State, is generally of considerable value in western Kentucky for shipment, because the entire crop can be ripened and gotten to market before the glut of later berries arrives, so that, although not a very productive variety, it fills a very important place in their crop.

Of the varieties recommended as pollinators of such standard varieties as Bubach and Haverland, the varieties most frequently mentioned and in their order are: Gandy, Michel, Lovett, Enhance and Woolverton.

One grower suggests removing the mulch from Bubach and Haverlaud at a later period than from the Gandy, thus bringing their blooming period into closer conformity.

The bulletin divides varieties into three classes—good, bad and doubtful. Following are the three lists from a Kentucky standpoint:

Good: Aroma, Bubach, Crescent, Enormous, Gandy, Gardner, Greenville, Haverland, Ivanhoe, Lovett, Margaret, Michel, Rio, Warfield.

Bad: Annie Laurie, Banquet, Beecher, Chairs, Cyclone, Eleanor, Epping, Equinox, Far West, Fountain, Jay Gould, May King, Meek's Early, Mexican, Middlefield, Miner, Mrs. Cleveland, Noble, Parker Earle, Premium, Princeton Chief, Sharpless, Snowball, Sparta, Splendid, Staples, Timbrell, Tubbs.

Doubtful: Auburn, Barton, Beder Wood, Beverly, Bisel, Boynton, Brandywine, Bounette, Childs, Downing, Edgar, Queen, Enhance, Iowa Beauty, Leader, Marshall, Mount Vernon, Muskingum, No Name, Princess, Rheil's No. 5, Swindle, Tennessee Prolific, William Belt.

The soil for strawberries should be rich and moist, but well drained. Somewhat elevated lands preferable to avoid late frosts.

The soil should be thoroughly and deeply pulverized before setting plants. Barnyard manure the most generally used source of plant food. Bonedust and wood ashes found particularly valuable by many growers. The matted row system of growing crop almost universally used in Kentucky. Continuous and frequent cultivation should be given the crop, whether weedy or not, from the time of setting until late fall. Most Kentucky growers find it profitable to fruit their beds for two or three years. The use of tickets suitable for purchasing is the most generally satisfactory method of keeping tally with the pickers.

FARMERS AND EDUCATION.

At a farmers' meeting in the State of New York, F. A. Converse, on the professional farmer, said: "In these times a technical education is needed to fit a man for business. Then he must know how to use his education that he may make the best use of his opportunities. He must be in an attitude to receive what science is teaching him. The farmer needs an agricultural education, and we look to the young men for progress. The commonest things in life are often those that we know the least about. The young farmer should have the help of the schools that teach agricultural science, that he may know more about the different plants, insects, etc. The best way to teach these sciences is by object lessons. Every common school in the country should give two or three hours a day to teaching agricultural science. The school teacher that does not know how plants grow is not fitted for the profession. It was a grand law that elevated the stars and stripes over the school houses, but it would be a grander law that would place the school house in the midst of the garden, were the pupils could study the laws of plant growth. Every farmer should take one or more agricultural papers and a daily paper. The weather reports are worth all a daily paper costs him. We would not employ a specialist in the medical or other professions unless he read to obtain the latest information concerning his specialty—so the farmer should read the papers teaching his special branch of agriculture. He should belong to some farmers' organization, and get out of it all the help he can along social and literary lines."

RAILROAD TIES.

The draft upon our forests for railroad ties is immense, and will continue until some suitable metal substitute has been introduced, remarks an exchange.

A number of varieties of trees have been exhausted practically to satisfy this steady and large demand in the interest of railroad construction and maintenance. Eighty million ties are used every year for renewals. and as only straight trees are used for this purpose, the time must come when our forests will contain no trees that are fit for this purpose. Formerly chestnut was preferred for ties, but it became so scarce that oak and pine have been largely substituted. About 45,000,000 ties are cut annually from oak trees and 12,500,000 from pine. The balance of the 80,000,000 come from chestnut. cedar, hemlock and tamarack, redwoods and the southern cypress.

The Progressive Farmer is the best all round paper in the South.—V. J. McArthur, Sampson Co., N. C.