

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

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

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AGRICULTURE

Harry Farmer's Talks.

LXXXVIII.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Unless there is a change cotton raising in this section has reached its limit. Strawberries in the spring and tobacco later in the summer will utilize all the available labor so that no more can be spared on the cotton crop. A machine to pick it in the fall seems to be the only means to increase it, and so far all efforts in that direction have failed.

RUST IN COTTON.

A great deal of cotton has the black rust this year. Where no kainit was used the crop will only be about one-half. On our farm we always use kainit. It seems to be the only sure remedy. On black lands and snuff-colored sandy soils, where corn thrives, kainit should be used at the rate of 200 to 300 pounds an acre. We were told that kainit used on land early in the spring would prevent the blue louse from injuring the young cotton and corn. This is one pest that we have not been able to overcome. Some years they begin on the young plants of corn and cotton early and suck the sap of the roots, so that the plant will not grow in spite of manure and good cultivation. They leave as soon as warm weather sets in, say about the middle of June in this section.

MAKE YOUR HENS PAY.

Feed the hens good and prepare them for winter. Do not feed too much corn. If you can get them to moult soon there will be but little trouble about eggs. The price of eggs has been good all the year, and it is reasonable to expect good prices until next summer. Watch out for that lazy condition which some hens will get into just as soon as the weather gets a little cool. They will gather under the barn or some other building and stay there all day excepting when you open the barn door or call them to their feed. You can prevent this by giving them no feed at all excepting a little at night. Hens are generally excessively fat that do this. Heavy feeds of corn will bring about this condition, corn being more harmful in this way than any other feed.

HOW TO GET THE LAWS YOU WANT.

How will the people get such laws as they want? Here is our plan: When the candidates are nominated

for both branches of the Legislature, ask them if they favor certain measures. If they are good honest men, they will not be afraid or ashamed to give their views on the stump. We regard them as nothing but servants with sense enough to do what is best. A great many farmers do not want the stock law and some do want it. Do not wait until after the election to know what your law-maker candidates think about it, but learn beforehand so you can vote accordingly. "Whatsoever ye shall ask it will be given you."

HARRY FARMER.

Columbus Co., N. C.

North Carolina Crop Report for September.

What is the present condition of cotton? 79. What is the present condition of corn? 84. What is the present condition of tobacco? 85. What is the present condition of peas? 82. What is the present condition of sweet potatoes? 81. What is the present condition of late Irish potatoes? 75. What is the present condition of peanuts? 85. What is the present condition of sorghum? 83. What is the condition of late cabbage? 72. What is the present condition of apples? 61. What is the present condition of peaches? 60. What is the present condition of grapes? 87.

The foregoing is the North Carolina crop report for September as given out by Commissioner of Agriculture Patterson September 20th, the report being based on the reports from crop correspondents in all parts of the State with an average date of about Sept. 15th. A full average crop would be represented by 100, half crop by 50, etc.

Yesterday Charles F. Cates of Alamance County sold a car load of pickles and kraut, of his own make, to a firm in this city. Cates is a young farmer. He received between \$300 and \$400 for his pickles.—Durham Cor. Post.

See that your cotton is picked clean. It may be cheaper to pay a good picker 50 cents a hundred than to pay 30 cents a hundred to a picker who leaves a tuft hanging in ten per cent of his bolls.

Mr. Allen K. Smith, president of the Bank of Smithfield, says that Johnston County has a magnificent crop of tobacco, and that he has never seen a better one in the county.

Strawberry Culture—Fall Planting.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

A thing that is worth doing is worth doing well, says the old adage. Of all things this applies to the fall setting of strawberry plants. One who plants in the fall almost always does so with a view to getting a crop of berries the next spring. To insure this happy result the conditions must be right. For while the strawberry plant likes cool weather and even cold weather short of the coldest, it cannot grow when the ground is actually frozen. Therefore we must aid it to make all possible growth before heavy freezing sets in, and to extend its root growth (the foliage is apt to be killed down by frosts) in the mild intervals between cold spells of winter.

The three prerequisites to this end are: good plants, good planting and good soil. The well-grown, well-rooted plant has already much of the size necessary to enable it to sustain a good crop of fruit. Besides it has the vitality which will enable it to grow much faster in proportion to its size than a small, weak plant. Properly set, the plant grows faster than if it had not been transplanted at all.

I will begin with the soil. It is, of course, better to have a rich soil to begin with, one in which the fertilizing properties have become thoroughly incorporated with the soil, a part of the soil itself. Plants are easier to live and quicker to grow off on such land than when a great deal of manure of any kind is applied just before planting.

Not all, probably not the majority of growers, are fortunate enough to have such land available for strawberries. Therefore, I will give the best plan to follow where poor or ordinary land has to be used for this purpose. Cotton-seed meal is by long odds the best and safest manure for young plants, especially in fall, when heat and drought sometimes follows planting. Being of vegetable origin it does not fire or burn, even when coming in contact with the roots, like mineral or animal fertilizers. Then it is quick enough and yet not so soluble as to be quickly lost unless at once appropriated.

I break the land well in September, and harrow well with disk harrow, if cloddy or turfy. In October or November I prepare it for planting, by running off rows three feet apart. In these are sown cotton-seed meal at the rate of 500 to 700 pounds

an acre. This is as much as it is usually safe to apply in the drill. Mix the cotton-seed meal with the soil by running a small harrow (or lacking that, a plow) down the drill. Then list on this with a furrow from each side. Knock this list down pretty low with hoes or a drag, and you are ready to plant.

An endless number of implements are used by different people to open the hole to set plants: spades, trowels, hoes, poles, etc. A thoroughly effective implement may be economically made of a piece of inch plank four feet long and four inches broad. Most of the board should be trimmed down to lighten it and form a handle. Six inches or more of one end must be left spade-shape and sharpened at the tip. If the land is stony or rough several inches of this end should be shod with iron, especially if much planting is to be done. A planter made of oak or any hardwood plank or sapling will usually last to set several acres without ironing.

Armed with this implement a man can walk upright and open the hole fast and well. In these broad holes the plants should be set, spreading the roots out as much fan-shape as practicable, and the dirt pressed firmly around the roots, care being taken that the hole is well filled with from the bottom up.

To grow off at once, the plants must not be set too deep, while if set too shallow they will be apt to die. The right depth is that which covers and hides all the roots after the dirt is packed down around them.

If stable manure is to be used a good way is to apply it evenly around and between the plants as a top dressing in November or later. Little if any of its properties are lost by exposure in cold weather. Instead they are washed into the soil within reach of the plant roots, which appropriates them at once. Thus used they also answer a good purpose as a mulch to lessen the heaving and lifting effects of heavy freezes.

Above I have given the directions for field planting on a more or less large scale. In a garden bed when intensive culture can be given to obtain big results, the plants can be set much closer, say fifteen inches apart in the rows, the rows fifteen inches apart, with a two-foot walkway between each three rows. In this mode of planting the cotton-seed meal should be applied broadcast and well chopped in. Manure can be applied as a top dressing as in field culture.

O. W. BLACKNALL.

Vance Co., N. C.