

Randolph County Farm Notes.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

It is claimed by those in a position to know, that Randolph is the banner county of the State on wheat. Trinity Township is decidedly the banner township of the county. The wheat crop, this year, was the smallest in years, not half the usual crop. The average this fall will be considerably smaller than usual.

It is generally conceded, that there is the largest corn crop in this section that has been known in many years. However, in some sections of Randolph long continued drought greatly affected the crop. There will not be more than half a yield on upland.

An item of interest to your readers might be the adoption of new methods in harvesting the corn crop. Quite a number of new harvesting machines are now in use in the county. A number of new shredding machines will be operated this year, thus saving to those who use them, from 25 to 40 per cent of the feed, which is not utilized by the old method of cutting tops and pulling blades. It is only the question of a few years till the old method of saving the corn crop will be superseded altogether by the new, in this section.

A large farmer on Uwharrie River had a large bottom in corn this year. Fearing that the field would be flooded before the crop could be gotten off by the usual method, he cut the corn with his harvesting machine and hauled the bundles to the edge of the bottom and shocked them. A few days after there came one of the hardest rains in years and the bottom was completely submerged. Had he not taken this precaution, hundreds of bushels of corn would have been destroyed. I mention this instance as a suggestion to farmers growing corn on bottom lands.

The idea of intensive farming is fast gaining ground with our people. More peas are sown every year.

A tobacco raiser near Trinity expects \$3,500 for his crop this year. Tobacco growers are greatly elated over high price of tobacco.

The raising of melons is becoming quite an industry in this section, especially in Newmarket Township. Hundreds of dollars are realized every year from sale of melons.

We have about an average yield of fruit.

W. A. I.

Randolph Co., N. C.

Clear up all trash, leaves, prunings, weeds and waste of every kind in the orchard, vineyard and garden, and burn the same, and thus destroy insects eggs and fungoid spores, which, if left around, will make trouble next year.—Southern Planter.

Tess—If you really love him, why did you refuse him? Jess—Goodness! You don't suppose I'd be so unmaidenly as to accept him the first time? Tess—But he declares he'll never propose to another girl as long as he lives. Jess—Of course. I'm not "another girl."

Seeding Wheat and Oats.

The plowing and fitting of the land for the wheat and winter oat crops should be pushed forward as fast as possible. In our last two issues we wrote fully on this subject, and refer readers to what we then said. Both crops should be sown as soon as the land can be got into good condition, but the importance of a fine, well prepared seed bed is so great in the influence upon the yield, that it is better to seed a little late rather than to seed on a poorly prepared bed. Fine preparation of the soil is of greater influence than a heavy dressing of manure or fertilizer. It should always be borne in mind that all the cultivation that can be given either of these crops, (except it may be a harrowing of the crop in the spring, which, though often omitted, is yet of great use in helping the crop), must be given before the crop is seeded; hence the great importance of leaving nothing undone that can conduce to a finely broken surface soil and a compact subsoil. Plow deep, harrow, and roll frequently. Much good has been found to result in the West from the practice of subsurface packing. This is practically a reversion to a practice that has been in use in England ever since we can recollect. The roller used for the purpose in England is one made with two large wheels, having the rolling surface made V shaped, the point of the V being left about one inch broad. These two wheels are set on an axle so as to run one on each side of the furrow thrown by the plow so as to pack the seam between each furrow. A third wheel is set on the other end of the axle to run on the unplowed land. This roller follows the plow, waiting to start until three furrows have been turned. Its use has been found of great benefit, especially when plowing sod land for wheat. The close packing of the seams of the furrow prevents seed from getting down under the furrow, where it rarely germinates or grows, and thus leads to a thin growth of the crop. These subsurface packing rollers can be had from Western implement dealers, but we have not seen them advertised in the East. We have used the English form of roller, and can speak favorably of it. In its absence, the corrugated iron roller, which is practically the same as the roller known in England as a Cambridge roller, can be usefully substituted. It has a corrugated surface the whole width of the roller, and will pack the soil well; after which, the surface should be finely harrowed. Wheat never grows well with a loose subsoil. Do not seed until after we have had a sharp frost or two to kill the flies. In some sections these have been troublesome again this year, and in these places wheat should not be sown until after the flies have been trapped on a strip of wheat seeded early and then plowed down, thus destroying the eggs and pupa.—October Southern Planter; editorial on "Work for the Month."

Watch the date on your label.

LIVE STOCK

THE AMERICAN MERINO.

Mr. Archer Tells of the History and Characteristics of this Famous Breed of Sheep—The News of the Statesville Flock.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The first thing I would notice is the progressiveness of The Progressive Farmer in changing from 8 pages to a 16 page form that is neat in make-up and handsome in general appearance. It makes the journal much more convenient to read as well as to preserve for future use. It mostly gives us original thoughts from progressive thinkers and workers, thoughts that are practical all along the line of agricultural industry. These, with its decided moral tone, makes it a safe and very useful journal that should be found and read in every industrial family in North Carolina at least.

THE AMERICAN MERINO

Letters from some who read the "Sheep in the South" articles in last year's Progressive Farmer still come to me. One, a well-known farmer, writes: "If you write any more on sheep please describe the American Merino."

The history of these sheep traces back more than two hundred years, and I may commence here by referring to them in Spain during the eighteenth century when the then superb flocks of them belonged mostly to the crown and to the nobility of that nation during its palmiest days of glory, wealth and power. In the early part of that century some of these Spanish sheeps were taken to and improved in Germany, mainly Saxony and Silisia, and in the last part some went to France and acquired the name of French Merino and Rambouillet Merino. About the same time and in the first of the nineteenth century, some were imported from Spain to the United States, and after becoming greatly changed and improved in this country they have come to be known as the American Merino.

In Spain this breed of sheep had been intelligently handled, carefully cared for and purely bred by the most wealthy, best educated and most highly cultured class of people in that kingdom for a long period of time. This gave the breed certain characteristics that became fixed and well established in the blood, among which was a hardness of constitution and physical development that was well calculated to enable them to travel and graze about on the mountains, hillsides and valleys, and find a good living, and produce at the same time a paying fleece of good and fairly fine wool, covering the body well over, two to three inches long, with grease (yolk) enough in it to gather dust and form a dark crust on the outer surface of the fleece which served as a protection to the inner parts of the fleece from rain and inclement weather—which served them well, for the Spaniards,

so far as history notes, did not house them much in those days.

These fixed characteristics made the breed a most excellent stock to gradually change and improve, which the Germans and French took advantage of; the former gave most attention to fineness, crimp, felting and spinning properties of the fibre; while the latter gave most attention to weight of fleece; including size of body, partially disregarding fineness of wool and mutton qualities or points in carcass. Within the last thirty years both the Germans and French have given more uniform attention to size and quality of carcass, with weight and quality of fleece.

ITS AMERICAN HISTORY.

But the most remarkable changes and progress of these Spanish Merino sheep has been made in the United States. The greatest attention and skill in the science of breeding was shown for years in the attainment of great weight of fleece from a moderately sized sheep, and this has been reached among our American breeders to a degree above any others in the world. These Spanish Merinos so improved in the United States have by common consent as well as by authoritative action come to be known as American Merino sheep.

ITS MUTTON QUALITIES.

Enormously heavy fleece on a small carcass was the "one idea" error of years ago and our best American breeders have seen it, and for the last thirty years have been gradually increasing the size and improving the form or mutton points of their sheep, until now some of them are boasting about the size of their sheep and the points of mutton development. That they are challenging the attention of expert mutton judges; here and there taking prizes at the exhibition and meat markets, warrants the assertion that the American Merino mutton man is coming—yes, that he is already here—and when he gets the mutton excellence of his Merino sheep fully perfected he will have with it the finest, heaviest and all-round most valuable fleece to be found in any country. Already the carcass of the largest mutton breeds have not the readiest sale, nor do they often command the highest prices paid for mutton in our largest markets. In using the name, American Merino, I do not mean only one family of the Merino, but in its larger sense, all the American bred Merino sheep.

In describing the thoroughbred American Merino there must be wide latitude allowed, for they differ widely in characteristics.

THE SIZE AND WOOL CLIP.

The size varies about as much as the fleece, but it is a very small flock of thoroughbreds that will not dress 40 pounds nets, (100 pounds gross) as an average. I may say that the great bulk of thoroughbred American Merinos, if made fat for market, would gross 125 pounds, and net 50 pounds, while a few other thorough-