

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.

CXV.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Mr. J. W. Eaton, of Davidson County, writes: "Please tell me if you or your neighbors have the old-fashioned yam potato with very deep scalloped leaves? * * * Any information in regard to kind, cultivation, fertilizer and soil, will be gladly received. We have large quantities of potatoes on our market every spring, all claiming to be eastern yams, but they seldom give satisfaction.

"2nd. Is it too late to sow rape for summer and fall use? How much land is required to feed 12 or 15 pigs three to six months old? Can it be cut and fed to them in the pen with profit?"

We wrote to Mr. Eaton in regard to the potatoes but as his letter has some questions in it that would be helpful to others, we give it to the public.

The potato mentioned is one that was grown here during and for several years after the Civil War. We planted some a few years ago, but the yield was so small that we discarded them. The trouble with the potatoes sold on your market is not so much in the kind of potato as the time and manner of growing. We, with others, have advocated the plan of growing potatoes from cuttings in soil that is rich or heavily fertilized, planted late in the summer or during the month of July. Potatoes are so easily raised this way and keep so well that the temptation to grow them entirely has brought about the trouble our friend mentions. If he will get the North Carolina Bulletin on variety test of sweet potatoes he will get some idea of the different kinds. As he lives up on the hills he will find it more difficult to grow good sweet potatoes than on the sandy plains near the coast. Select a level warm sandy soil and if it does not contain much humus haul about 40 or 50 one-horse wagon loads of woods mould on each acre and scatter it over the land and turn it in with a turn plow or cut-away harrow, running not over 4 inches deep. Then run off rows about 3½ feet apart and sow 200 pounds acid phosphate and 100 pounds sulphate potash per acre. Bed the potatoes about the last of April or first of May and as soon as the plants get about 6 or 8 inches

high throw four furrows together over the furrow in which the fertilizer is sown, making a small bed. Then set the plants about 15 or 18 inches apart. It is best to water them a little unless the land is very moist. Work them lightly in about a week and after every rain that forms a crust until the vines get four to six feet long. The yield on poor or thin soil treated this way will not be large, but will be better for table use. No potatoes made on very rich soil planted late in the season will be good.

We have never used any rape for hog feed. It is just like ruta baga turnips but has no root. You might try some on a small scale. Would red clover do well in your hilly country? If we lived up as near the mountains as you do, we would try lucerne or alfalfa clover. This grows after it gets started right through the driest sunny weather. Our farmers grow the common colards here for hog feed.

HARRY FARMER.

Notes from Craven County.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

The full moon in April has passed. The truckers dreaded frost at that time but as it did not appear, danger now seems to be over. The season is two or three weeks earlier than last year, and while vegetables are earlier, most crops are inferior, especially cabbage and early peas. Potatoes generally up, but not a good stand in many places. The fruit crop promises fair thus far. Early planted corn is coming up nicely and cotton planting will soon begin.

Farmers are in good spirits, from last year's general success, and from the present favorable prospects, though the truck prospects are not very flattering in our county.

I agree with Brother Blake Johnson about raising sweet potatoes. I have tried a part of his plan and find it good, but do not follow his "one sack of guano to the acre for cotton." If one sack will make six hundred pounds seed cotton to the acre, I would put two sacks and expect to get 1200 pounds. But I mix my own guano and put about 3 per cent ammonia, about 3 per cent potash, about 8 per cent phosphoric acid.

I used this last year from 400 to 500 pounds per acre, and averaged 2,000 pounds seed cotton to the acre. I like this better than 600 pounds; it takes less work and brings more money. The reason I say it takes

less work is the cotton grows faster and is out of the way of weeds and grass sooner—takes less hoe work, which is the expensive part of cultivating a crop of cotton.

I usually plow my cotton eight or ten times, especially if it is dry weather.

D. L.

Craven Co., N. C.

Silk Growing and Poultry Raising.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

My attention has been called to a paragraph in the last number of The Progressive Farmer in which you express some doubts as to the comparative profitableness of poultry and silk growing. There is no rivalry between these two branches of rural economy. In many of my circulars I have advised farmers to combine poultry with silk as an all-the-year-round business. Fowls may be kept with superior results on the same ground used for growing mulberry trees to feed silk-worms. But I have not advised women or children to attempt systematic poultry growing on a scale which alone can yield any considerable income. Poultry growing is no more suitable for women and children than swine or cattle growing! All require unremitting personal attention, which overburdened mothers or growing school children are not able to afford. Poultry growing is no new industry in North Carolina or other States, but it has nowhere become a very potent source of agricultural wealth.

Silk growing, as I recommend it, is in every way suitable for women and children and for the aged. The entire season lasts only six weeks of early summer. For the rest of the year the worms are dormant in the egg and require no particular attention. In the six weeks of the season an active child of ten or twelve years may earn \$30 to \$40. The silk industry does not require unintermittent care as does poultry, cattle and all animal industries in which the animals are constantly active and in need of care. To advise an overworked housewife to add to her burden the care of a poultry yard is very questionable counsel! A school child cannot possibly give the required care to a flock of fowls which alone will return any profit.

Silk-growing has enriched every nation that has made it an extensive domestic industry. It has made France and Italy what these States are. So also will it add to the wealth of American States by util-

izing labor and moments not otherwise applicable for the production of wealth.

Silk-growing may easily add to the income of the agricultural population of North Carolina at least \$3,000,000 per year without in any way subtracting from the income now derived from poultry or any other standard crop. We simply propose to utilize labor now wasted or applied to non-productive ends. Surely this is an undertaking that must commend itself to all candid and patriotic minds.

GERALD McCARTHY,

Biologist, N. C. Department of Agriculture, Raleigh.

Agriculture in Yadkin.

We are having a very great deal of rain, and farmers are getting the "blues" because of the delay in crop preparation. The cold snap has about killed all the fruit, so I hear a great many say. Wheat is looking better than it usually does the first of May. Nobody can tell what wheat will do till it has to be cut, and sometimes then it fools us when it is threshed. Nearly everybody is going to try to raise tobacco this year. If the price continues to fall in the same proportion it has since last fall tobacco will not bring three cents a pound next fall. It is remarkably strange that our farmers do not give more attention to the raising of stock—hogs, cattle, mules and horses. Meat is in great demand at a good price and mules and horses find a sale at very fair prices. Pigs, if no larger than kittens are selling readily at two to two and a half dollars. I am of the opinion that it will pay better to give more attention to raising grain, grass and stock and less to raising tobacco. Rye is a most excellent food for stock and can be produced on most any sort of land, and besides, it benefits the land. Somebody will dispute this last remark.—Hamptonville Cor. Statesville Landmark.

Mr. A. J. Johnson, of Sampson County, says the huckleberry crop of Sampson, which is usually worth \$50,000 to the county, has been cut off 75 per cent by the cold snap. The strawberry crop is also damaged, probably 25 per cent.

Reports to Superintendent Joyner from 52 counties show that 48 local tax districts have been established, elections are pending in 15 and 72 are considering calling elections. This is an encouraging record.