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AGRICULTURE

Sowing Alfalfa, Crimson Clover and Hairy Vetch.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

These are all winter-growing forage plants, affording excellent hay about the first of the next May. They also furnish some pasturage in February, March and April. All of them improve the soil. The seed are kept in stock by all prominent seedsmen, seed of crimson clover costing this year about 6 cents, and hairy vetch and alfalfa about 10 to 12 cents per pound. The best grade only should be bought.

For small seed, like alfalfa and crimson clover the soil should be well settled and free from trash. Cover with harrow and roller.

Alfalfa should be sown broadcast only on good, well drained land nearly free from weeds and grass. If weedy land must be used, sow 10 pounds per acre in narrow drills, and cultivate it. Sow about 20 pounds of seed per acre broadcast, inoculating the seed exactly as described below, except that the earth for inoculating alfalfa should be taken from a spot where alfalfa or burr clover has grown for some years. Before sowing the seed apply broadcast on soil except lime soil one-half to one ton of slacked lime per acre, and harrow in; or the same amount of wood ashes may be substituted. Well rotted stable manure, especially that made from feeding cotton seed meal and hulls to cattle, is the best fertilizer, and manure is almost indispensable if thorough natural or artificial inoculation does not occur. If commercial fertilizers must be used, a mixture of cotton seed meal and phosphate will be helpful.

On suitable soil, not too weedy, alfalfa endures without reseeding for a number of years. It can be cut at least three times per year, making a large yield of hay, except during the first year.

Alfalfa is best sown from September 15 to October 15, but on good, clean land, it can also be sown in March.

Crimson clover is sown at the rate of 20 pounds per acre, September 15 to October 15. It may be sown between the standing cotton stalks, covering slightly with one-horse harrow or cultivator. If the land is clear of trash, not hard, and has been cultivated up to midsummer, no preparation is needed. Other lands, which require breaking, should be

thoroughly compacted with harrow and drag or roller before seed are sown.

Failures with crimson clover are frequent, due most frequently to (1) want of inoculation; (2) soil too loose; (3) late sowing; (4) very poor land; and (5) acid soil.

At Auburn on sandy land lightly limed, crimson clover has generally succeeded admirably when inoculated, yielding 1½ to 2 tons of excellent hay per acre, and it has invariably failed when not inoculated.

To inoculate crimson clover sow with the seed 1 to 3 tons per acre of soil from a field where crimson, red, low white, or other true clover (not Japan clover or lespedeza) has been grown. One of the low white clovers (having roundish leaflets and in May white roundish heads of the size of the end of the finger) can usually be found in old pastures, lawn, roadsides in small towns, etc. The inoculating earth should be finely pulverized, evenly sown, and promptly and thoroughly harrowed in with the seed. In addition the seed should be dipped in water in which has been stirred some of the soil from around the clover roots. This dipping alone may result in the inoculation of a part of the seed.

Thorough inoculation (shown by an abundance of characteristic double-pear-shaped enlargements or tubercles on the crimson clover roots not later than January, and by dark green color of leaves) makes nitrogenous fertilizers unnecessary, because plants with tubercles can get their nitrogen from the air. Phosphate (100 to 200 pounds per acre) is needed on sandy land whether the plants are inoculated or not.

Hairy vetch should be sown either broadcast or in narrow drills, from September 1 to October 15. If for hay sow 20 pounds of vetch mixed with the usual amount of beardless wheat or fall oats. For pasturing during February, March and April, sow vetch with rye, wheat or oats. To insure success the vetch seed should be inoculated with soil from an old patch of vetch or from a part of an old garden where English peas have recently grown.

Crimson clover and hairy vetch do not grow again from the roots. Crimson clover does not effectively reseed the land. Vetch can be made to reseed itself either (1) by cutting it very late, after some of the seed have scattered, or (2) by cutting the hay very early, when, in wet seasons the stubble and a slight second growth will afford seed, or (3) by removing the stock pasturing on it after April 20. Cowpeas, sorghum, or other broadcast summer crop can be grown without interfering with the seed shattered on the ground in May.

J. F. DUGGAR,
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A FREE FARM LIBRARY.

Our Washington Correspondent Speaks of Several Popular Bulletins Which Every Progressive Farmer Reader Ought to Have.

Editor of The Progressive Farmer:

Over 6,500,000 farmers' bulletins were distributed by the Department of Agriculture last year. The demand for some of these bulletins was so great as to necessitate a number of reprints of the same.

"What were the most popular of the farmers' bulletins issued by the Department?" I asked Mr. Joseph Arnold, assistant chief of the publication division.

"Probably the most sought after bulletin," he answered, "was Good Roads For Farmers (No. 95) also bulletin No. 36, entitled Earth Roads. There seems to be a general awakening all over the country on the good roads subject. Another bulletin in much demand is No. 51, Standard Varieties of Chickens. This pamphlet could, I believe, be read with profit by every farmer not already a chicken fancier. The efficiency of the average barn yard fowl is far below what it should be, and yet it is such an extremely easy thing for any farmer to breed up his barn yard flock into probably fifty per cent greater productiveness. Over 125,000 of these bulletins were distributed. Another closely allied pamphlet (No. 141), is Poultry Raising on the Farm, of which 130,000 were called for. This publication goes more into the care of chickens, discusses incubators, brooders, etc. and the diseases which young chicks fall heir to, along with their remedies. Bulletin 106, Breeds of Dairy Cattle, has also proved a very popular one, 125,000 copies having been distributed during the year. This is another subject which interests almost every farmer throughout the country. Bulletin 55, Dairy Herds, also was requested to the extent of 10,000 copies. This bulletin, written by Major Alvord of the dairy division, has some extremely valuable suggestions for farmers who are in the milk and dairy business or contemplate embarking therein. The Fruit and Garden, (No. 154), is a valuable little bulletin of which we distributed 60,000 notwithstanding it was published well along in the year. The Vegetable Garden is an old publication of the Department which has been reprinted many times, but the demand for it continues and

65,000 copies were sent out last year. The Apple and How to Grow It (No. 113), was in demand to the extent of 95,000 copies. Practical Suggestions For Farm Buildings (No. 126), appeals to the farmer of all sections, and we printed and distributed and even 100,000 of this. It is a 48 page pamphlet containing a large number of drawings and cuts, which enable the farmer who is not a carpenter or mechanic to himself make a good many needed improvements, utilizing his own or his hands' spare time, and at the cost of only the raw material of lumber and nails and possibly paint. Bulletin No. 170, Principles of Horse Feeding, although but recently issued has been in great demand, as every farmer is presumed to have at least one horse which needs feeding.

"I would like to say a word right here, however," said Mr. Arnold, "about the distribution of these bulletins. The Department's supply is very limited whereas every member of Congress and Senate has his quota of the same and we would appreciate it if farmers would apply to their own Congressmen. The appropriation for publishing them comes from Congress and it is but right that Congressmen should know of the demand, as well as have the opportunity of supplying it. Of course, in case the supply becomes exhausted, a direct application to the Secretary of Agriculture will always find us very glad to furnish the farmer with the desired publication if we have it, or if not, as soon as a supply is printed. The division of publication has a printed list containing the titles of about 175 Farmers' Bulletins, covering almost every feature of farm work and growth and we will be glad to furnish this list upon application. The bulletins are usually short,—covering from 12 to 40 pages—condensed articles which even the extremely busy man can usually find time to glance over and pick from useful points."

GUY E. MITCHELL.

Washington, D. C.

Sampson Democrat: Mr. A. E. Underwood, of Earnest, was a caller in the Democrat office Monday. Speaking of tobacco conditions, he said he knew of men who have left a good portion of their tobacco crop in their field, and one man who had a fine crop, had offered it to any one who would gather it. This goes to show how utterly disgusted and discouraged our people are over the prices.