

A NEW WAY TO CURE PEA HAY.

Messrs. Editors: Many farmers plant peas between the corn rows with a pea planter, previous to laying-by the corn, so as to admit of cultivation. If planted in the middle of the row the cultivation is easily done with a Planet Jr., harrow by taking out the disk and the center rear sweep and running on both sides of the peas. With liberal quantity of seed when planted, the peas will grow more bushy in corn rows or when cultivated in rows after oats, maturing the seed in clusters after corn is shocked or after being gathered in the usual way.

My experience in saving peavine hay has enabled me to come to a definite conclusion (satisfactory to at least myself), as to the best methods, bearing in mind the valued opinions and methods of others adhering to cutting green vines.

A few years ago I had a heavy crop of peas ready to cut, but the indifferent labor and unfavorable weather and wet ground, delayed the cutting until the corn was gathered. The frost had killed the leaves of the peas. Every vine and stem and seed pod was dry and mature, and white for the harvest. The mower cut one row at a time, between the corn stubble and stalks, including crabgrass (which in part compensated for loss of pea leaves) cutting forenoon and hauling afternoon, and storing direct in the barn—preferably raking in small bunches, suitable for handling and feeding from the barn. As the peas and vines ripen and dry in spite of bad weather yielding the whole mature crop to the mower (less the leaf) which is left with the roots on the field), I am satisfied therewith, confidently believing I get the full feeding value of the crop, as the dry vines are not rejected by cattle or horses, when interlaced with the mature seed pods. The hay looks good, and has proven to be, as feed for my stock, a very valuable ration.

In cutting peas between the rows, the corn stubbles or the corn stalks when standing are in the way, the ordinary mower being too wide to cut between the rows; hence I secured a much worn mower and cut two feet off the cutter-bar, shortening it to two and one-half feet, so it would cut between the corn rows.

It cuts low and does good work. I use it to cut peas in rows, after oats and for broadcast peas. I esteem it of great value, as I never expect to cut any more green peas for hay, when I can get them ripe and dry, and haul direct to the barn and store closely in bunches, handy to feed, without fear of rain or moldy hay.

M. F. BERRY.

Editorial Comment.—We have no doubt that Mr. Berry can cure cowpea hay by letting the vines get dry before cutting, and that stock will eat this hay; but we are sure he loses more than he gains. We know of no experiments to prove it, but it seems almost inevitable to us that the vines allowed to get dry before cutting, are less digestible than when cut at the usual time, and the leaves are the best part of any hay. It seems to us, too, that there must be a considerable loss of the peas by the breaking open of the pods while handling.

One time, the writer remembers, on his old home place, a man had a field of cowpeas. He boasted that he knew how to cure cowpea hay, and did it by leaving the vines in the swath until they were so dry that all the leaves shattered off and only a lot of stems reached the mow. Horses and cattle seemed to eat these dry stems with uncommon relish; but this plan of curing did not appeal to us. We preferred more of the crop in the barn and less on the ground.

BEE KEEPING FOR FARMERS.

XXII.—Late Swarming.

Indeed, this has been a remarkable bee year in more ways than one. Our little workers not only had a poor chance to make honey, but also little opportunity to swarm and make increase during the spring season when this work naturally comes. And now here at the last of the summer unnatural swarms are coming out.

On August 25 my helper found a swarm on a little apple tree near the bee yard. It was very small, and though I could not hope for much from it, we decided to put it in a new home all right. So a good moveable-frame hive, with plenty of old comb, was brought out and the

little people were set up to house-keeping in almost no time.

This happened about 8 o'clock in the morning, and I suspect the little swarm had been hanging out there all night. However, we moved it to its new place in the bee yard and I intend to put an Alexander feeder under the rear of the new home at nightfall and give the new occupants a good supper of melted sugar.

But judge of my surprise along in the afternoon when my assistant came in and said that the little swarm had come out again and was hanging on another apple tree. Again we went and gently placed them in the new home. This was very easily done, for in each case they clustered very near the ground. The last time I didn't put on either veil or gloves.

When these bees came out the third time, I gave up hopes of doing anything with them, and in a day or two they had disappeared. Whether they had a crazy queen or what was the matter, I can not certainly tell. I learn that a neighboring bee keeper has lately had a similar experience.

Swarming depends largely upon the honey flow. If the spring honey flow fails we may expect few or no swarms. Last spring the cold, wet weather at time of fruit bloom and

later, cut off nearly all our nectar and I had but two swarms from 14 colonies.

So the late swarming possibly comes from a belated inclination to make up for the spring failure, for swarming may come with any honey flow. In the North they have what they call "buckwheat swarms" which come out with the flowing of that crop.

And yet, I am more disposed to explain this unusual phenomenon in another way. I can't see that we have just at this time, any special honey flow to induce swarming, but, in going over my bee yard, I do find in an empty hive in which there are no dead bees, but a full stock of empty combs.

My conclusion, then, is that the bees of that particular hive were starving and sought relief in flight. They had no stores to carry with them in the usual way, and when I put them in a new hive they still had nothing to eat and came out. If I had only known and given them a comb of honey and brood, or put one in the old hive in time, all might have been well. I simply had neglected to look after my bees as I should have done and hence their strange conduct.

T. C. KARNS.

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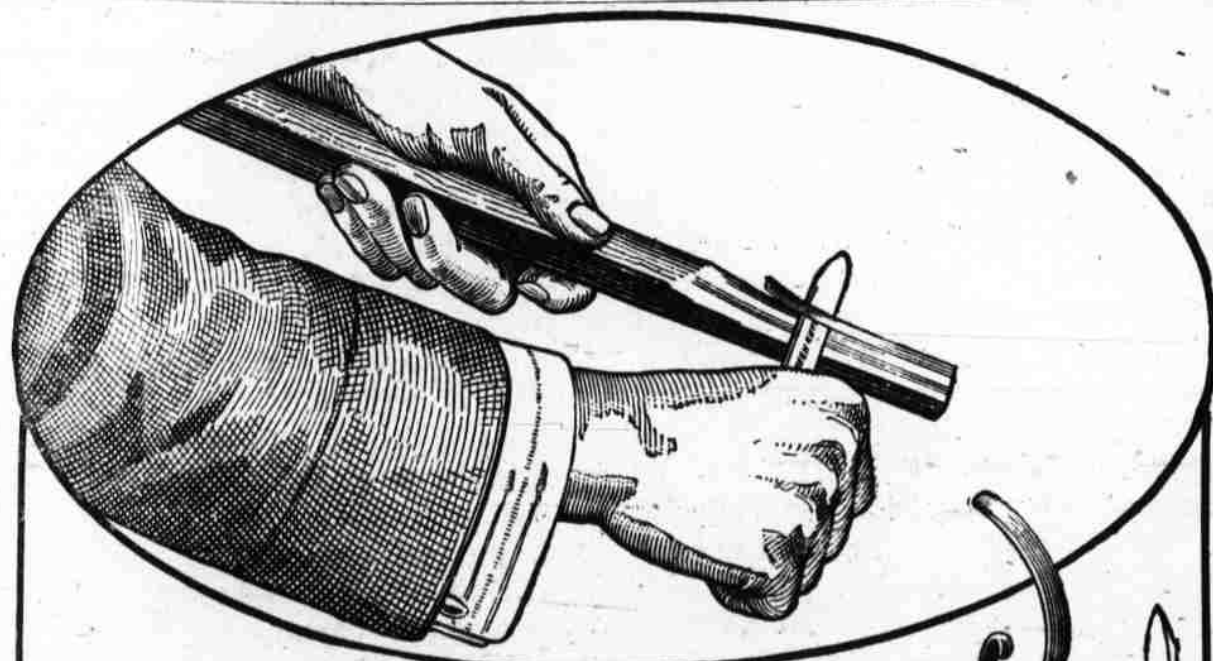
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