

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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It is Not a Hard Matter to Improve Southern Soils.

It is the merchant's business to sell goods. It is the farmer's business to sell plant foods. It is the merchant's business to buy goods to keep up his stock in trade. It is the farmer's business also to keep up his stock in trade—the fertility of his land. If the merchant expects to do a larger business this year than he did last, he must lay in a larger stock—must buy more goods. If the farmer wishes to do more business than he did last year—that is, raise larger crops this year than he raised last, he must increase his stock in trade. He must increase his soil fertility. In short, all hope of better farming, of better living, and increased usefulness and pleasure on the part of farmers as a whole must come through increased soil fertility.

The source whence greater success must come is plain and certain. There is no question or doubt about it and this of itself is cause of much encouragement. But still more encouraging is the fact that, since the remedy is known, its application is easy and may be made quickly and wonderfully effective.

The average acre in the South produces about 200 pounds of cotton or 18 bushels of corn.

There is not a practical farmer of average intelligence in this whole Southland who does not know that one crop of legumes grown on such land and plowed under, or that one good application of stable manure will increase the yield on such an acre 50 per cent or to 300 pounds of lint cotton or 27 bushels of corn. Every practical farmer who has tried it also knows that two crops of legumes plowed into the soil of this acre, that produces 200 pounds of lint cotton or 18 bushels of corn, during the next three or four years along with deeper and better plowing will increase the yield of such an acre to 400 pounds of lint cotton or 36 bushels of corn, if the money now spent for complete fertilizers be all spent for phosphoric acid.

In what other business will so little expense and labor increase the production so quickly or so easily? No extra capital is required, merely the growing of such crops and in such way as to obtain two or three crops of legumes during the next four or five years. It is simply folly of the most stupid sort for any man to continue growing the average crops when they may be increased 50 or even 100 per cent with just a little more intelligent effort on his part.

Sometimes men give as an excuse for continuing to farm unproductive land that they have not the means to improve it. No greater mistake was ever made. It does not require increased means to improve the fertility of average soils. Any man can do it and make money while doing it.

When the only thing that stands between a man and greatly increased and cheapened production is his own lack of intelligent effort what more encouraging prospect is possible? Southern soils are not now productive. Our average yields prove that, but our climatic and other conditions make their improvement easier and cheaper than in any other section. This is our glorious heritage, and what could be more to the encouragement or liking of any real man than an opportunity to improve matters and the certainty of success? Truly the opportunities of Southern agriculture are marvellously attractive. No other section with equal capital or effort can accomplish half as much. Will we live up to our splendid opportunities? A few are doing so, enough to prove how easy it is, and many more will follow their example in the next ten years.

In fact, every farmer who really loves his business and wishes to make a success of it will set to work at once to improve his soil. A proper pride in their work and a proper regard for the welfare of their families and their country will alike forbid a continuance of soil robbery by Southern farmers.



DUTCH BELTED CATTLE.

This is one of the most economical ways of increasing farm fertility and farm profits.

—Courtesy G. G. Gibbs

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