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FALL TERM OPENS SEPT. 3, 1912

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MORE EXPERIENCE WITH VETCH.

Mr. Hudson Tells of His Success and Failures.

LAST summer Mr. Poe requested me to write him the results of my work with hairy vetch, especially what my yield of seed was per acre. I promised him that I would do so, but upon thinking the matter over I concluded that the results were so very gratifying that it might be well to wait another year for fear that successive crops would prove disappointing. And it is well that I did, for results this year from the grain end of it were exceedingly disappointing, but the yield of hay was tremendous.

Last year I threshed the hay from seven acres and secured 3,500 pounds of seed or 500 pounds per acre. This year my yield was less than 200 pounds and the quality not so good. Last year, tho, my yield of hay was about 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 tons to the acre (the season was very dry) while this year on the same quality of land it ran at least a ton better. The growth was so rank in places that it came over my horse's back. I had a few shocks of corn that were left until spring as we did not care to damage the grain by running the wagon over it and these shocks were completely hidden by the vetch.

As to sowing the grain, my results are not in accord with those of most writers. In seeding on good land I would use the same quantity of oats or wheat that I would use if I did not intend putting in the vetch and would then add 25 pounds to 40 pounds of vetch seed. My experience has been that a light seeding of oats would not support the vetch and it would fall down and cause you to lose a large portion of your crop. I have yet to find the kind of land that will not grow vetch successfully always provided you inoculate for it. I have been growing vetch for a number of years but never take in a new field without inoculating before sowing. The best form of inoculation is from soil where the vetch has been grown. I have made complete failures without inoculation on fields adjacent to the ones that had been growing vetch. The soil can be put down by hand or in the fertilizer part of a grain distributor. I have used a distributor running one time to cotton rows and secured sufficient inoculation to inoculate a 3 1/2-foot row. I have a friend that puts his soil, seed and everything through the fertilizer part of his grain drill, but I have never attempted this. I never seed vetch after October 20, and never use any but the hairy.

We are running a three-year rotation, the farm being divided into three great fields, the rotation being cotton, corn, oats and vetch followed by peas. This year is the first that cotton has come since the rotation begun. We have cut out nitrogen entirely upon 60 per cent of our cotton, only using it where the soil was badly worn. The cotton is growing off fine and is now lapping in four-foot rows. There are fields adjacent where the owner has simply run all cotton that will not average one-third the size and he has used a complete fertilizer. With another round of the rotation I will cut out all nitrogen on my corn. I have found it more profitable to grow vetch and oats than cotton, and at the same time the improvement to my soil is simply wonderful. Anyone that will follow this rotation will be able to cut down more than half of his fertilizer bill. We expect to use ground phosphate rock this fall.

Where soil is used for inoculation it must be kept out of the sun and covered as soon as put on field. I would be ungrateful in conclu-

sion did I not give credit to A. G. Smith of the Bureau of Farm Management of the United States Department of Agriculture for my success. The Department is willing to assist anyone that is really interested.

ALEX D. HUDSON.
 Newberry, S. C.

Editorial Comment: In a later letter Mr. Hudson says: "I read Mr. Smith's article on vetch, in August 3 issue, with a great deal of interest due largely to the fact that Mr. Smith gave me my start with vetch. I was disappointed, tho, at your following it in the same column with Mr. Fant's article on sowing rye. I believe in sowing rye and do not mean to take issue with Mr. Fant on the value of any crop for adding humus to the soil, but I do most emphatically disagree with him when he says that it is necessary to sow rye on poor soil before you make a success of vetch. The view run with Mr. Smith's article was taken on my place and that particular field was practically turned out when I took the farm. I put it in vetch to bring it up, not preceding it with any other crops. As Mr. Smith stated, I made a failure of my first sowing solely because I did not inoculate. I failed to inoculate because I had a field only a few yards away and I thought that probably the inoculation had been carried in some manner. The second year, as Mr. Smith stated, I inoculated and secured a heavy crop. This I followed with peas. Last winter following the peas I had a very heavy volunteer crop of vetch to come up which I turned under the first of the past May and put in cotton using only acid phosphate under the cotton. That field is today as black as my hat and the cotton is lapping in four-foot rows. Altho the sand is a little bad it will make me more than a bale to the acre. This is what one crop of vetch followed by peas did for an abandoned field. My advise is to sow it anywhere if you only inoculate and prepare the soil."

Rape a Great Feed Crop.

I BEGAN breaking my land last September with a two-horse plow. Broke 40 acres and harrowed with a disk barrow and divided in different lots, ten acres each except first. I broadcasted 200 pounds of fertilizer per acre. Planted Canada field peas eight acres and two acres of rape, which I consider the best green feed for all kinds of stock. Then I sowed ten acres in oats, ten acres in rye and ten acres in rye and clover and got a good stand of all.

In eight weeks it was ready for the stock, seven Jersey cows and calves and 30 head of young hogs, and I never saw stock mend so in my life. The cows increased in milk and put on fat and the hogs were thrifty and grew off at once. And the quantity of feed was hardly hurt at all by the drouth. The stock was taken off the last of February and the rape was then cut for the hogs in the runs, which consisted of five head of Tamworth hogs, four brood sows and a male.

The Canada peas were almost a failure, being planted too thin, but the rape far exceeded all my expectations. Some claim it is no good for milk cows, but I think it is the best green feed for the South and I have a patch just coming on now. I think it can be successfully grown all times of the year and our chickens and turkeys had free range on the patch and kept laying right on, after our neighbors' had all quit laying.

R. M. HENDRY.
 Live Oak, Fla.

I enclose one dollar to renew my subscription. This makes 24 years I have been a subscriber, so you know I love The Progressive Farmer.—E. T. Crawford, Pikeville, N. C.

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