



What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. MASSEY

VALUABLE IMPLEMENTS FOR THE SOUTHERN FARMER

How Land Rollers, Fanning Mills, Planters, Cultivators and Mowing Machines May Be Used to Save Expensive Labor

VERY few farmers in the South seem to appreciate the value of a good roller in the preparation of the soil, especially in getting land ready for the fall sowing of small grains. A good roller not only compacts the soil, but fines the clods. A smooth roller should never be used on hill land that is inclined to wash, as it will leave loose places for the water to get into. But I have used a roller that overcomes this difficulty. It was made of a series of fluted steel rings about three inches wide each turning loosely on the same axle. These rings sink into every inequality of the soil and leave the surface looking as though a drill had gone over it.

Another farm implement that is not used as it should be is a good fanning mill for the cleaning of grain. This is especially valuable in the cleaning of oats and wheat for seed, so that only the heaviest and plump seed will be sown. A good fanning mill will take out of the oats all the light cheat seed, and your oats will not "turn to cheat" if there are no cheat seed sown. A friend of mine in Maryland has a fanning mill arranged in the second story of his granary, and he made three grades of the wheat, coming down to the lower floor in three chutes. Down one come the trash and lightest grain and weed seed, which are used for the chickens. Down the next chute comes the medium milling wheat, and down the third chute comes the heaviest of the wheat, which is used for seed. This farmer found that some people were buying his milling wheat and using it for seed, and he stopped selling any of this except to millers, and never sells any but the heaviest for seed, as he has made a reputation for his seed wheat, and does not want it injured by farmers sowing the lighter grain. This same man has a home-made grader for corn which allows all the small and misshapen grain to go through, and retains the corn of uniform size, so that the corn planter will drop it uniformly and only the best grains, and he makes nearly 100 bushels of corn an acre all over his fields. Another friend has made an improvement on an implement for cutting down corn. Up in Pennsylvania and northern Maryland they cut corn with a long-bladed knife like the machete of the Cubans, and this leaves a tall, sharp-pointed stubble dangerous to the legs of mules. This man had small-blade steel hoes made from an old cross-cut saw blade, with eyes that set the blade at right angles to a short handle. The blade is well sharpened and with it he can cut the corn stalks right off at the ground and leave no high stubble.

One of the most useful garden implements now sold is a five-tooth cultivator with curved steel shanks attached to the ordinary hoe handle. With this one can cultivate narrow rows in the garden, working backwards and cultivating the crops better than with the wheel cultivator used by many. This costs only a dollar and I find it the handiest of garden cultivators.

On the farm the cotton planter can save a great deal of labor by using the dropping planter that spaces the seed in the rows, and does away with hand chopping. In these days of labor scarcity we have got to study the use of implements, that mules or horses may replace the costly man power.

In one day's ride I noticed a great difference in this respect. I rode from Wilmington, Delaware, down the Peninsula to Cape Charles, Va. Oh the beautiful and well farmed lands in the upper part of Delaware I saw men riding on two-row cultivators over clean fields of flourishing corn. As I came southward in lower Delaware and Maryland, I saw them going through the rows with one-horse cultivators, doing twice the human labor that the men farther up were doing, and doing it on foot, while the others were riding. When I reached the Virginia counties I saw them going through the corn rows with one-horse turning plows, barring off the corn to be later thrown back and the middles plowed out with two more furrows, doing nearly six times the man labor that the farmers in the upper counties were doing, and doing poorer work.

Then I have seen farmers going through the corn and cotton fields in laying by the crops with a turning plow or sweep, piling the soil to the rows to dry out, when they could

sure to make what they call compost, and then dribbling this diluted manure in the rows to make cotton, when they would have gotten better results from the manure by loading it on a manure spreader as fast as made and then driving off and leaving it where the plant roots would find it. I have seen otherwise good farmers loading manure in wagons and then forking it off in little piles to be handled again, thus handling the manure three times when one handling would have sufficed and given better results from a more uniform distribution with the manure spreader. I have seen farmers stripping the leaves from their corn while the green ears stuck straight up ready for the food the leaves were getting from the air, and making less corn by this labor, while what the corn lost would have paid for all the fodder.

I have seen men every year chopping down the rank growth of open ditch banks by hand, when the labor thus spent would in a little while have put tiles in the ditches and given them clear fields and no bushes to clean and no ditches to dig out every year. And I have seen them digging out ditches and piling the earth in a dam alongside to keep the water out, when a horse scoop would have sloped the ditch banks and made even

feet apart and eight or ten inches in the rows. The crop can be dug any time in fall and winter whenever the demand is good. The best variety is the Maliner Kren.

Growing Cantaloupes

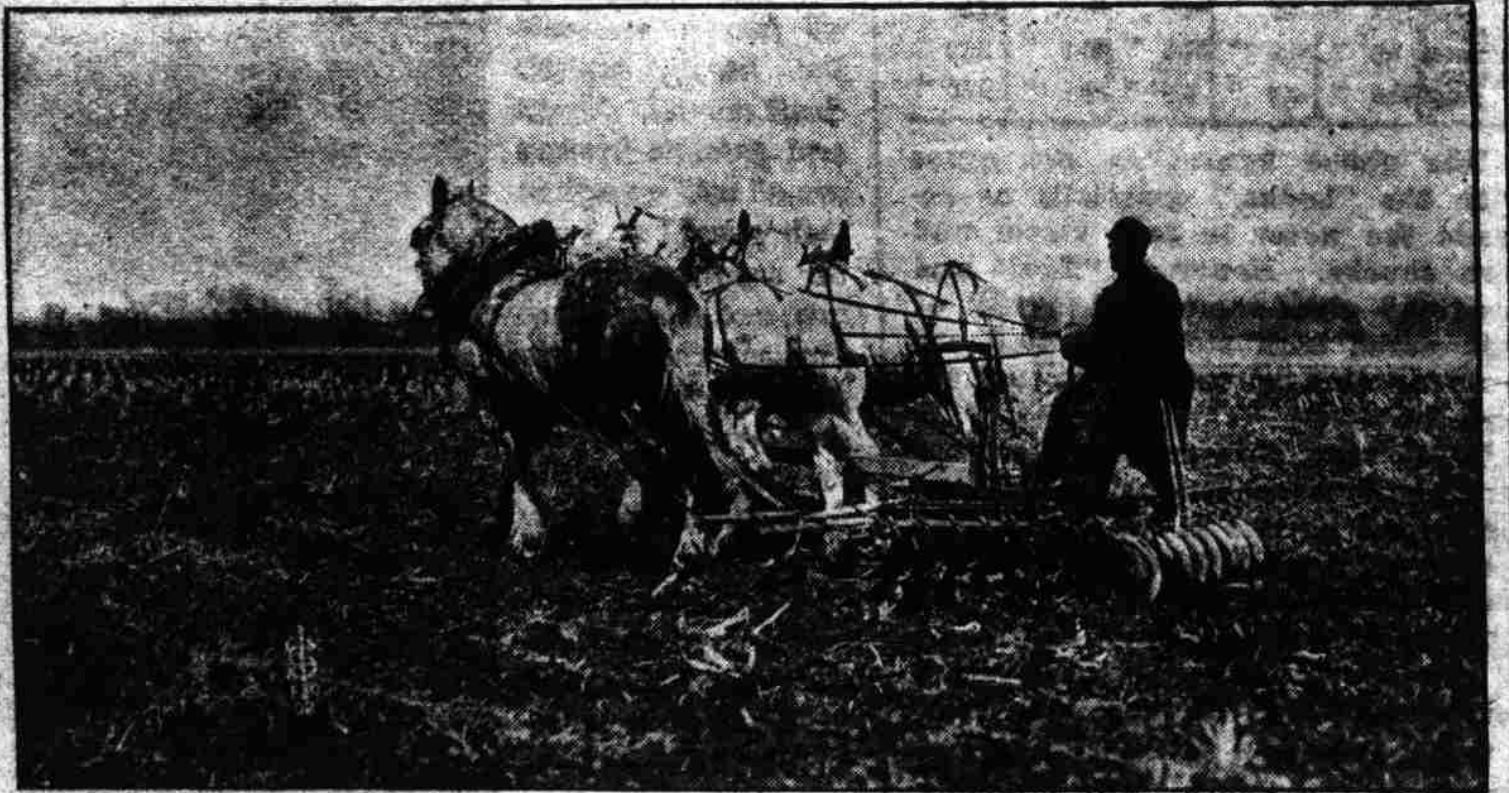
I INTEND to plant 10 or 12 acres in cantaloupes, and would like to know where to buy the seed, how to prepare, fertilize and cultivate, and where to sell."

Where I live there are thousands of acres planted in cantaloupes. The ground was plowed in December and the furrows run out five feet apart, and filled half full of stable manure. This lies till planting time in April, and then about 1,000 pounds an acre of a high-grade fertilizer is applied on the manure and furrows thrown over from each side. The ridges are slightly flattened and the seed drilled in in a continuous row. After a stand is sure the plants are thinned to 18 inches and then a little nitrate of soda is scattered around each hill, and the plants worked clean till the vines cover the rows. The cucumbers are grown in the same way. As the fruit makes, crimson clover seed are sown over the entire field to make a winter cover. The variety mainly planted is the Eden Gem strain of the Rocky Ford. They are shipped in

ARE YOU COMPETING WITH A MACHINE, OR ARE YOU MAKING IT WORK FOR YOU?

THIS is an age of machinery on the farm, and the farmer who attempts to do his farm work with inadequate machinery must remember that he is competing with farmers who are reducing the cost of production by using good implements. If he, with his crude labor, continues to compete with a machine, he will soon be forced to reduce his standard of living.

—Prof. J. O. Morgan.



A TWO-LEVER DISK HARROW AT WORK

have retained the needed moisture by level and shallow cultivation; and I have seen them hilling tobacco with hand hoes when the same level cultivation would have given better results.

I have seen hundreds in the South scratching over red hills with a bull-tongue or a one-horse plow, about three inches deep, and then wondering why their lands washed so badly, even with terraces, when in fact the only way for the summer floods to go was down hill, since no deep loosening of the soil had been done to retain the water, and the best terraces will not stop the washing when the hard subsoil is only three inches down. The subsoil plow, following in the same furrow with a good two or three-horse plow, will do much to stop washing. To the farmer on the red hills the subsoil plow is an important implement, while useless to the man on the level sandy soils of the coast plain.

I have seen farmers allowing sassafras and persimmon bushes to grow all summer and then because they were told that the dark of the moon in August was the time to kill bushes go over the land chopping them off by hand when, if they had run the mower over them when just starting, and kept them mown off, the mowing machine would have destroyed them. Pastures grow up in sprouts and briars simply because the mowing machine is not used as it should be.

I have seen farmers laboriously hauling a lot of earth from the fence corners and mixing it with their ma-

with the open ditches better conditions and better crops.

In short, we see farmers in every direction complaining of the scarcity of labor and then using many times more human labor than would be needed if they used more horsepower and better implements.

Horse Radish

I AM thinking of planting an acre in horse radish, and would like what information you can give on the subject, when to plant, distance apart, depth, method of planting, when harvested and how cured? Will frost injure it?"

Horse radish is grown from cuttings of the smaller side roots. It is very commonly planted between the rows of an early truck crop, for instance between early cabbage. Holes are made with a crow bar and the cuttings dropped in and the crop has possession of the ground after the cabbage are cut. The roots are dug and trimmed any time in the late fall and winter, for they do not mind any amount of freezing. The trimmings are made into cuttings for the next season and buried for the winter. The trimmed roots are shipped and sold by the ton. To make good horse radish roots the soil must be deep and very rich. No stable manure should be used, as it will tend to make the roots forked, but heavy applications of high-grade fertilizers will be needed, no matter how rich the soil may naturally be. In planting the crop alone, plant in rows two

crates holding 45 cantaloupes. No one here ships on this account except the largest growers, who can load one or more cars daily. Most of the growers sell to buyers at the stations or ship through the Produce Exchange, which has traveling agents in all the Northern cities taking orders for car loads. Hence a man working alone will be badly handicapped in freights and having to ship to commission men, and it is out of my power to advise you about the selling. You can get the seed from any reliable seed house in Norfolk, Richmond or Baltimore.

Budding Peach Trees

HOW are young peach trees budded?"

The nurserymen sow seed of the peaches in the fall in rows, with a drill made for the purpose. The next summer, generally in August, shoots from bearing trees are taken, and the leaves clipped off so as to leave the leaf stalk as a handle. The buds are then cut out in a shield shaped piece, a half inch of bark above and below the bud. Then an incision is made in the seedling tree just above the ground, cutting the bark in a T-shaped manner. The two flaps are turned aside and the bud slipped in under the bark and tied. After the bud has gotten hold, the ties are cut, and the bud remains dormant till the following spring. Then the top of the seedling is cut off and the bud thinned up to make the future tree. The trees are ready for the orchard after one summer's growth.