

# THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER

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## COVER CROPS OR FALL PLOWING?



Lime  
Potash  
Phosphate  
Crimson clover  
turned in.

No Lime  
Potash  
Phosphate  
Crimson clover  
turned in.

No Lime  
Potash  
Phosphate  
Crimson clover  
STUBBLE turned in

No Lime  
Potash  
Phosphate  
NO CRIMSON CLOVER  
turned in

A STUDY IN BALANCING PLANT FOOD ELEMENTS  
Note particularly the great advantage derived from plowing in crimson clover

—From Alabama Experiment Station

ONE of our problems this fall will be to determine whether we shall fall break our lands or plant them in winter-growing crops; for, for several reasons, we doubt the practicability of both deep breaking and the seeding of cover crops. By far the larger part of our lands is now in cotton or corn, and to harvest these crops, pasture the fields as they should be, and then to break thoroughly and seed to clovers, rye or oats, is almost out of the question. So the problem at once resolves itself into doing that which will be most practicable and which will result in the greatest profit.

It may well be doubted whether there has ever been sufficient merit in deep fall plowing, or even subsoiling, to justify its general recommendation. Under certain local conditions fall plowing and leaving the land bare until planting time may be justified; but over by far the larger portion of the cotton belt, where rolling, sandy loam lands are the rule, there can be little question but that fall breaking, when not followed with a winter cover crop, is a poor practice. As we have repeatedly pointed out, soil washing is one of our biggest

losses, and its prevention one of the quickest means toward rich land and bigger crops. To leave our lands bare and exposed to the rains of our open winters is almost certain to result in heavy losses from leaching and erosion. Particularly is this true where light, sandy soils predominate.

The problem, then, is to avoid the heavy plowing that will take so long that the seeding of cover crops afterward will be practically impossible, and at the same time to get these valuable cover crops seeded on every possible acre. Fortunately cotton fields that were well prepared and well cultivated last spring and summer are usually in excellent condition, without expensive preparation, for seeding small grain and clover. So we believe, after a liberal acreage has been planted to oats, that there is no question as to the superiority of clover, planted in the cotton middles, over fall breaking and leaving the land bare until spring. As such a winter cover crop crimson clover, particularly at present prices for seed, stands above all others.

The farmer who is wise will see that every acre now in cotton and intended to go in corn next spring, goes in crimson clover at once.

### DON'T FAIL TO READ—Page

|   |    |
|---|----|
| About the Farm Home . . .                   | 9  |
| Attend the State Fairs . . .                | 12 |
| Cotton Ideas from Several Sources . . . . . | 12 |
| Demonstration Work for Women . . . . .      | 10 |
| Drainage Ideas . . . . .                    | 8  |
| More Views on the Cotton Crisis . . . . .   | 6  |
| Rape for Hog Pasture . . .                  | 14 |
| Rotations and Tobacco Wilt                  | 5  |