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Our Prize-Winning Soil Preparation Letters

PULVERIZE THE CLODS BEFORE

(First Prize Letter)

WHEN I want to make a good seed bed the first thing I do, is to take a disk harrow with plenty of horse power to pull it and go over the land with the disks set with a good angle, so they will go in the soil to a good depth and cut half the width of the disk. This double cuts the soil and if there is any trash on the land it will be cut into small

By doing this disking I get a good seed bed some three or four inches deep, but this is not deep enough. After I get the land well disked I take a large turning plow and set it to run as deep as possible, but not deep enough to turn more than a very little of the subsoil up on top of the ground. If there are any clods and the weather is dry I run a drag or roller over the land as fast as it is broken up. This packs the soil and crushes the clods before they get hard. When a clod gets hard and dry it is next to impossible to make a good seed

In about a week or 10 days after the land is broken I double disk it again, and if this does not make a good seed bed-but it generally does, -I wait a week or 10 days and give it another disking. It is much better to put off planting a few days and make a good seed bed than it is to plant early in the clods.

If this method of preparation is followed an ideal seed bed will be made and there certainly will not be in the soil any dead air spaces that are so detrimental in time of drouth. A seed bed made like this will not need very much cultivation-just enough to keep down the weeds and conserve the moisture.

C. A. TINSLEY.

Madisonville, Ky.

COVER CROPS AND GOOD PREP-ARATION MAKE BIG YIELDS CERTAIN

(Prize Letter)

OOD preparation on any soils Counts for a large part of our success. I had this very forcibly brought to my attention in the spring and summer of 1914. I had fixed my land early in the fall of 1913 by breaking good with a turn plow and then harrowing with a disk, breaking up the clods and pulverizing the soil well. But I did not stop here. I ran a section harrow across the opposite way to which I had run the disk, and this made a very fine seed bed, it being level and free from clods.

On the 15th of October I drilled in rye and bur clover for a cover crop. This did fine. In the spring it was so fine I was tempted to let it grow, but as I had to have this land to plant corn on I turned it under for a green manure crop. I let it stay four weeks and disked it and laid off in four-foot rows for my corn.

I planted level and kept it level. Now right adjoining my field was my neighbor's. He let his land lie all winter untouched. Rains packed it together almost like a brick, no vegetable matter grew on it, and so some soil was washed away. In March he plowed it with a two-horse plow. It was waxy and stiff, so it clodded behind the plow. In April he laid off in four-foot rows and planted to corn. The corn could not come up, for clods fell on some of the grains. The soil was very hard to work, for as soon ity and cultivated in the same man as we had a heavy rain it ran together, and when the sun came out it cracked open and got hard. He had lots of trouble with poor stands,

grass and hard soil to work. I had fall plowed and used a cover crop and turned under a cover of green sod in spring, and my soil did not get hard by running together. His crop suffered from dry weather, while mine

My yield was 42 bushels per acre; his about 25. This can be accounted for in this way: First, soil plowed in fall allowed rains to enter and be stored up; second, the cover crop took up fertilizer elements that would have been washed away and held the soil in place; third, the green crops plowed under in spring gave humus and fertilizing elements to the soil; fourth, the humus kept the soils from running together after rains and helped to hold moisture in store for dry times in July and August. - F. W. RISHER,

Durham, N. C.

GOOD PREPARATION REDUCES THE COST OF CULTIVATION BY HALF

(Prize Letter)

THE preparation of the seed bed is more important than cultivation, because if the soil is not thoroughly pulverized before planting no amount of cultivation can pulverize the clods under the plants. If the soil is prepared in the right way before planting, better crops will be made, with half the cultivation that is required with a poorly prepared seed bed.

The best way I have found is to pulverize the top soil before breaking. Then there are no clods turned under to give trouble all through crop time. Then pulverize thoroughly and you have a seed bed pulverized as deep as you have plowed.

This is my method: hrst, I cut the top soil with a disk harrow about three or four inches deep. I then harrow with a section harrow, going across the disking; then drag with a flat drag. In this way I have solid ground on which to break the top clods, making it easier to pulverize them: I then break the land deep, let it air until it begins to slack, go over it with section harrow, and then with a roller or drag. It is then ready for the drill, and I have a seed bed that will be easy to cultivate and will hold B. F. DIGGS, moisture.

Paragould, Ark.

\$34 AN ACRE INCREASE FROM THOROUGH PREPARATION

(Prize Letter)

IN THE fall of 1912, the writer prepared a field, which was planted to cotton as follows:

A stalk cutter was run over the old cotton stalks so as to break the stalks into as many particles as possible, so that the organic matter would be evenly distributed and well incorpor-

ated into the soil. We then flat broke this patch with a Sanders disk plow to a depth of ten inches by the rule. The ground was left in this condition until the Although this was on bottom land latter part of March, 1913, when we double disked the entire patch with a Clark "double cutaway." We then took a 12 inch middle breaker and laid off the rows four feet apart, which were then section harrowed twice, making them almost level. This work was followed by the cotton

By comparison with other soils farmed the old way, this patch treated as described above, responded to the tune of \$34 per acre over and above adjacent lands of equal fertilner, the only difference being in the preparation of the seed bed. G. W. HARDEN,

Deeson, Miss.

(Rarles William Stores New York 833 Stores Bldg., New York

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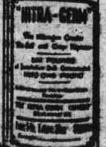
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