



## What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. Massey

### Preventing Cut Worm Damage

**WHAT** will prevent cut worms from destroying young plants? Can the tomato blight or wilt be cured or prevented?"

To destroy the cut worms use 50 parts of wheat bran and one part of Paris green. Dampen the bran and add the Paris green and some corn syrup to make it stick and better attract the worms. Mix all very thoroughly to get the poison on all the pieces of bran. Scatter some of this around each plant after setting it. The worms are fond of bran and will be destroyed. The bacterial blight or wilt of tomatoes cannot be prevented nor destroyed by spraying. The main thing is to avoid infected soil. Something may be done by getting seed from tomatoes which lived and thrived while others around died, and in this way breeding a strain that will resist the blight.

### Plants Mixing

**YOU** say that cucumbers and cantaloupes will not mix. I know that they will, for years ago when planted close together in my garden they mixed and were worthless. And you say sweet potatoes will not mix, and 25 years ago I planted red potatoes and yams side by side and they were a mixed color. There is no guess about this."

I grow cantaloupes and cucumbers side by side every summer and always get good cantaloupes and good cucumbers. You can use the pollen of a cantaloupe on a cucumber bloom, and the seed will make cucumbers and not a hybrid. The change in color in sweet potatoes is no evidence of mixing, but simply a natural sport and the potatoes were still yam and red potatoes. You can cross sweet potatoes only by getting ripened seed from blossoms that have been fertilized by the pollen of another variety. But sweet potatoes seldom make seed except in the tropics, and we do not grow them from seed, and hence there is no crossing, for plants do not cross by their roots. Sweet potatoes will often show reddish streaks when there are no red potatoes around. Nancy Hall very commonly has the reddish streaks.

### Precipitated Limestone

**FROM** South Carolina: "Some time ago I sent you a specimen of rock found here, and you advised me to send it to Clemson College for analysis. They have sent me the following analysis:

Water .....	13.49 per cent
Insoluble .....	2.45 per cent
Oxides of iron and alumina.....	.40 per cent
Calcium carbonate .....	81.02 per cent
Magnesium carbonate .....	2.74 per cent

The chemist said this was one of the purest limestones they had ever analyzed from my section of the state, and that I would see that it runs over 90 per cent of carbonate of lime and magnesia on a moisture-free basis. Please tell me what calcium carbonate and magnesium carbonate are, and oxide of iron and alumina. The chemist said that if the bed runs uniform and transportation facilities are good it will be well worth grinding for sale and certainly for local use."

The sample sent me is the spongy looking article of precipitated limestone like that now being ground at Roanoke and in Alleghany County, Va. As you wrote that you got it under water, the water content was large. Carbonate of calcium is simply lime as it exists in nature, and your rock is richer than most quarry limestone. Ground limestone is now sold in Virginia for \$1 a ton in bulk in carloads, but farmers in your

section cannot afford to freight it even at that price, and you could grind it for the same price and supply it in bulk locally and for a moderate distance, or you could put up a kiln and burn it and make a very high quality of lime. Magnesia is also useful to plants, and the oxides of iron and alumina, simply iron rust and clay, can be disregarded.

### Sheep Sorrel

**I AM** sending you a weed and wish to know what it is. It is spreading in my pasture and threatens to run all over it. How can I destroy it?"

The bunch you sent is largely a mass of seed, and people allow weeds to thrive and fill the land with seeds instead of keeping them mown off the pasture. The weed sent is sheep sorrel, *Rumex acetocella*. It thrives when the soil gets too acid for the better plants to keep ahead of it. Better turn the sod and lime well and

son. I know a large corn grower who claims that he makes corn at an actual cost of 9 to 11 cents a bushel, and he uses no fertilizer, but always has a rank sod to turn under for the crop. What we need is good farming rather than speculating on fertilizer for every crop grown.

### Late Cabbage

**CAN** I grow late cabbage on moist bottom land by properly manuring and fertilizing?"

You certainly can. In your section in the Piedmont region sow the seed of the Late Flat Dutch in July, and never allow the seed bed to suffer for lack of water. Get strong plants for setting in late August. Manure the land heavily, and put in fine order and set the plants three feet apart each way, and cultivate rapidly. Give side dressings of 150 pounds an acre of nitrate of soda to urge the growth. Keep off the green worms by spraying with lead arsenate, 1 pound in 30 gallons of water. The poison will not affect the cabbage, as the heads form from the inner bud. They should head in late November, and any that are slow in heading then can be made to head by pulling them till you hear some roots crack.

## GET ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR

**"GET** acquainted with your neighbor." Perhaps you have had the experience of taking a dislike to some one on account of some minor personal habit or mannerism. Perhaps this dislike has been deepened with time until you reach the state of mind that you not only would do nothing to assist the person, but where you might go out of your way to prevent him doing something for himself which would be to his profit. Such states of mind are quite common. And then perhaps something will happen that will show that you were entirely mistaken in your estimate of the person. Perhaps you may get acquainted with him! And perhaps you will find that what you thought was a lump of clay is a piece of priceless metal.

"Get acquainted with your neighbor." A farmer's neighbors do not all live out in the country; neither do the townsman's neighbors all live within the corporation. The farmer has business in town, and the merchants, mechanics, bankers, railroad men, lawyers, doctors, etc., all do business with the farmers—lots of it. Get acquainted with the folks that you meet in a business way. A personal acquaintance will often make a business transaction much easier.

"Get acquainted with your neighbor." Talk over with him the various problems that you have in common. Perhaps there will come a time when you will feel well enough acquainted to consult him about some of the things that concern you only, but in which his advice will be helpful to you. Perhaps you will be able to help him in settling some matter that may be worrying him. Do not confide in every one. That is not wise. But you will never know the character and disposition of folks, and whether or not you can confide in them, until you really know them.—Ohio Farmer.

plant in corn, and then you can get the land back to grass with some chance for the grass and clover to keep ahead of the sorrel. Then to keep a pasture good and maintain the product in grass keep the weeds of all sorts mown off before seeding, and top-dress the grass every spring with raw bone meal. Pasturing exhausts the phosphoric acid in the soil, carrying off the phosphorus to make the bones of the animals. A pasture will not take care of itself any more than any other growth on the farm.

### Too Much for Me

**PLEASE** tell me how much ammonia, phosphoric acid and potash I will have to use on an acre of ground to make 50 bushels of corn."

I might tell you the percentage of nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash in 50 bushels of corn, but if any one can tell you how much of these in soluble form to apply to an acre of soil to guarantee 50 bushels to be produced, I cannot. Certainly not without knowing the actual productivity of the acre under good cultivation and in a favorable season. Depending on fertilizer to make corn is a very unprofitable way to get the crop. I have seen 98½ bushels an acre over a large field with no fertilizer used, and only a crimson clover crop turned under, and that on land that before its present owner brought it up through good farming, made 25 bushels in a favorable sea-

### Texas Blue Grass

**FROM** Florida: "Please tell me what kind of grass the specimen I send is. It came to me in a box of other things from Texas. It may be rescue grass. Will it make good winter pasture?"

The grass is *Poa arachnifera*, Texas blue grass. It is a very valuable winter grass, but makes little show in hot weather. When the seed are ripe they mat together with a sort of spider web growth, which makes them hard to sow, but sown in bunches it soon spreads. I have seen a pasture of this in South Carolina mixed with Bermuda grass. The Bermuda made the pasture in summer, and as the Bermuda failed in fall the Texas blue grass came in for the winter. Rescue grass is very different, belonging to the same family as broomsedge.

### A Vegetable House

**I SEND** a sketch of a house I propose to build in which to keep sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, turnips, onions, cabbage and beets, and would like your opinion of it." You cannot keep sweet potatoes in a house with the other vegetables you mention. A house warm enough for sweet potatoes will not keep Irish potatoes, which simply need to be kept in the darkness and but little above the freezing point. Then you do not need a house to keep late cabbage. I simply turn the head over to

the north and bank the soil over the stem and lower part of the head and they keep well. Late beets I leave in the rows where they grew and throw a furrow to each side. Carrots I serve in the same way and they keep better than lifted. Onions if cured with the tops left on can be stored in any dark outhouse, and are not hurt at all if they freeze some. An underground house such as you propose would be too damp for onions. Your proposed house would keep sweet potatoes all right if you put a ventilator through the roof that can be closed and opened. Then to raise the temperature when they are stored to 85 or 90 degrees you will need a heating apparatus, till they have dried off from the sweat they always pass through, and after that a temperature of 40 to 50 degrees will be warm enough. But do not try to keep sweet potatoes and the hardy vegetables in the same house, for you cannot do it successfully.

### Blackeye Peas

**ARE** there two kinds of Blackeye peas? There are on our local market some very large ones, almost the size of a kidney bean, and also some small ones."

Yes, there are two kinds of Blackeye peas, the common and oldest known variety, a small and later one than the large white Blackeye. This variety is one of the earliest of the cowpea family. Some have lately got to calling it the California. But I had it years ago, and have made two crops in a season on the same land, one ripening early in July and the second in September. I had it originally from Arkansas, and this spring a farmer in Iowa who went there from Arkansas sent me some fine ones which he had grown and ripened in Iowa. The large peas on your market are probably of this variety.

### Onions Seeding

**DOES** it do any good to cut or break out the seed stem in onions? Does running to seed injure the onion, and what causes so many to run to seed?"

Onions grown from planting sets, are very apt to run to seed if the sets are over large. Medium and small sets seldom do so. If an onion runs to seed that is the end of it, for if you examine the bulb you will find it completely hollow and exhausted. But if you watch the plants and cut out the seed stalk as soon as it shows an inch you can save the onion. It is far better to grow the onions from seed than sets, if they are wanted for ripe onions. Fall planted sets are useful for green onions in the early spring, but for ripe onions you can sow the seed of the New England varieties, such as Danvers and Southport, in February, and can make good onions the same season, or you can plant in the fall the sets of the Yellow Potato onion, which never seeds, and can grow onions and sets at the same time, for the sets of this onion are made as offsets from the base of the bulb. And you can sow in your climate seed of the Prize-taker or the Giant Gibraltar onion in early September and later transplant the plants and they will make very large onions and not run to seed. Here I sow these in a frame under glass sashes and transplant in March from seed sown in January, and you can do this too, and thus avoid the danger of having the plants run to seed.

### Cutting Alfalfa

**WHEN** should I begin to cut alfalfa?"

Watch the growth, and as soon as you see the new sprouts starting at the base of the plants cut at once, before these shoots get tall enough for the mower to catch them, for if they are cut the next cutting will be shorter.