



What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. Massey

Keeping Vegetables in Winter

A GOOD dry cellar where there is no artificial heat will be a good storage place for some things. Late Irish potatoes can be well kept in a cool and perfectly dark cellar, or they can be heaped up outside and covered thick enough with earth to keep out actual freezing. What they need is darkness and a temperature about 35, or just above the freezing point. In the warmer sections they can be headed in barrels and these laid on their sides in an outbuilding and well covered with pine straw.

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When sweet potatoes are grown on a large scale the grower will of course have a curing house, such as I have often described. But they can be kept in heaps if properly managed. Put 25 bushels in a pile on a thick bed of pine straw and cover the heap thickly with the straw. Make a shed over the heaps to keep them dry, and when the nights get colder cover with six inches of earth. Earth kept dry will do far better than earth allowed to get wet. I have kept them sound till June in this way. They must be handled carefully and not bruised, and no cut potatoes stored.

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Cabbage and collards heading in November should be simply turned over with the head to the north and the soil banked well over the stem and lower part of the head, leaving the top open but sheltered from the winter sun. They keep well in that way here in southeast Maryland.

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Carrots, parsnips, salsify and late beets I leave in the rows where they grew, simply pulling the soil to them on each side. The parsnips and salsify are so hardy that they will keep growing most of the winter. The carrots will lose most of the tops, but will be all the sweeter for the frosting.

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Well grown green tomatoes can be pulled when frost threatens and each wrapped in paper and stored in crates in a cool place away from frost, and then a few can be brought into a warm room to ripen up, and in this way I have had tomatoes for slicing till January.

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Snap beans that are grown late can be packed down in brine in stone jars and can be used all winter by soaking them overnight in clear water and cooking them the next day, and they are very good indeed.

Growing Cabbage Plants for Spring Heading

A NUMBER of our readers write for information in regard to growing cabbage plants for sale or setting in the fall. I have already told all about this crop, but people do not seem to read what is printed.

I make the first sowing of cabbage seed just after the middle of September, and the last of the month I sow again, as the first sowing in a late season may get too large and be apt to run to seed in spring. We want good-sized plants, but not overgrown. Sow the Early Jersey Wakefield cabbage. For planting prepare the ground well and run out furrows two and a half to three feet apart, and in these furrows apply 1,000 or more pounds of a high-grade fertilizer especially strong in nitrogen and phosphoric acid. Cabbage needs less potash than any other truck crop, and if the nitrogen is from cottonseed meal it will furnish all the potash needed. Bed on these furrows, which should run east and west, and then open furrows down the beds, and in November set the plants about 16 inches apart, in these open furrows, deep

enough to cover the stems. In early spring the beds are levelled and the plants will be all right on the surface. If you want to winter the plants for sale in late winter and spring, set them thickly in these open furrows, or about two or three inches apart. Then you can thin out for sale and have the crop remain for heading on the ground.

Lime for Cabbage

DO YOU think it advisable to use ground limestone costing about \$2.25 a ton under cabbage plants? Would a ton on quarter of an acre be too much? If limestone is not suitable, how would a mixture of dirt and chicken manure do?"

You seem to think that the limestone will be a manure for the cabbage. Lime is not used as a manure, but to cure unfavorable conditions in the soil. If your soil is acid and needs lime, then a ton of the ground limestone spread broadcast and har-

spread over the ground. Then after planting the stems sow about 10 pounds of orchard grass an acre to help out the sod in winter and brush it in with a smoothing harrow.

Worms in Wheat

FROM North Carolina: "I have a lot of wheat with small white worms in it. How shall I destroy them?"

I have told, and so have others, time and again how to destroy insects in grain, and still I get letters daily asking for this information. The worms are the larvae of the insects the eggs of which were laid in the green wheat. You can get in Raleigh, in pint tins, carbon-disulphide for about 25 cents a can. Put the wheat in boxes that can be closed up tight. For 100 bushels of wheat put a pint of the chemical in a pan and set it on top the wheat and close up tight. It evaporates rapidly and the fumes, being heavier than air, will sink through the wheat and kill all insects in it. When all has evaporated open up and air out. If more hatch out repeat the dose. The fumes are very explosive and all fire, even a cigar or pipe, must be kept away. Do not keep the stuff in the house where there is fire, and do not breathe the fumes more than

the land, while the grain and forage crops take two-thirds. If a farmer's land now makes one-third of a bale an acre, and by good farming he brings it up to making a bale an acre, it is evident that he needs but one-third as much land to make the cotton he has been making, and in the improvement of the land he will also have improved its production of corn, hay, oats or wheat, and will not only have his supplies but plenty to sell and get a better price for than cotton brings.

The only crops grown on the farm that should properly be classed only as "supplies" are the garden vegetables for the farmer's family, and to class all the great market garden crops of North Carolina as "supplies" is a great error. Of course every farmer should grow the feed for his stock and the corn for his family use, but to make that the sole purpose of growing the grains is too much like the carrying of all the eggs in one basket. Grow more of all the crops in your rotation than you need on the farm, and always have something to sell when cotton, tobacco and peanuts do not pay.

The farmer who grows "supplies" enough to feed a bunch of steers in the winter will not be so much bothered about rural credits, for he will have the cash for them in the spring to start his cropping, and will have a good lot of manure to improve the crops, and will have made a market for some of his "supplies." Let us quit talking about "supplies" and run the farm to make a profit on all the crops grown. There is no reason on earth why a cotton farmer should not have corn and small grains to sell as well as cotton, and by good farming these will increase on him as well as the cotton. But do not keep the surplus grain to be eaten up by weevils; put it on the market in the late fall and it will enable you to hold your cotton under cover, for that is your one crop the weevils will not bother. The farmer with plenty of other things to sell will not be forced to rush his cotton on the low market.

Growing Wheat

FROM North Carolina: "I have a field of gray sandy soil which I wish to sow to wheat. Will it pay me to haul pine straw half a mile and spread on this land?"

No, not only will it not pay, but it would be a disadvantage to the wheat. Your soil is already too light for wheat and pine straw would make it trashy and injure the growth. In fact, in your humid section and on a sandy soil I do not think that you can grow wheat profitably. It will be almost certain to rust, and when wheat rusts the grain is shrunken and unmarketable. You can grow good crops of winter oats all over the Coastal Plain section, and in most of the soils of the coast section oats will be far more profitable than wheat, for wheat needs a strong clay loam and a less humid climate than in your section. And in any section fining and compacting the surface soil is of great importance in the success of the wheat crop.

Potash in Ashes

PLEASE tell me how much potash is in 100 pounds of hardwood ashes and how much in well rotted stable manure."

If the ashes are all hardwood ashes and they have been kept under cover all the time and are dry, they may contain 5 per cent, or 5 pounds in the 100 pounds. If they have been lying exposed to the weather there will be little potash left in them, and only a chemical analysis could determine that. If the stable manure has been saved with all the urine and has not laid out and leached there will be some potash in it, but in manure lying outdoors and heating and leaching there will be very little,—how much it is impossible for me to guess, for there is manure and manure, and the composition varies a great deal.

TWELVE THINGS TO DO IN OCTOBER

1. Keep up with the cotton as fast as it opens; under 12 cents, market only as much as is absolutely necessary.
2. Look to the syrup making, seeing that frost does not catch the cane.
3. Store an abundance of potatoes and other vegetables for winter use.
4. Plant a big acreage of wheat and oats, treating the seed to prevent smut.
5. There is still time, particularly in the lower half of the Cotton Belt, to plant vetch, rye and crimson clover. Sow liberally of these for feed and fertilizer.
6. Get ready to plant fruit and shade trees.
7. Arrange now to run your farm next year according to a well defined plan.
8. Look to the terraces, repairing the old ones and building new where necessary.
9. Drag the roads and keep them in shape for the winter hauling.
10. Look to the cotton you are holding, and see to it that it is sheltered and perfectly dry.
11. Save every bit of feed you can for carrying the livestock through the winter.
12. Visit your local school, looking to the water supply, heating, ventilation and sanitation.

rowed in will be of benefit to the soil, but the cabbage will need heavy fertilization. You can compost the hen manure with rich earth from the woods and make good manure if it is used heavily enough, but the cabbage crop will need, if commercial fertilizers are used, not less than 1,000 pounds an acre of a high-grade fertilizer stronger in nitrogen and phosphoric acid than in potash. In fact if you mix one-third acid phosphate and two-thirds cottonseed meal and use it at rate of 1,000 pounds an acre in the beds under the cabbage, the meal will carry all the potash cabbage needs. But do not imagine that limestone is a fertilizer. It will doubtless help your soil, but the cabbage will need heavy feeding.

Getting Bermuda Grass

FROM eastern North Carolina: "Which is the best way to start a Bermuda grass pasture, to plant the roots or sow seed? I can get plenty of the roots here."

Bermuda grass, either from seed or cuttings, should be started only in the spring, as it is a warm weather grass and does not grow in winter. The seed on the market sometimes have a low germinating quality, and where the grass is plentiful, as it is I know in your section, it is best to use cuttings of the running stems, which are commonly called roots. But the real roots are only the fine roots that put out from the joints of these running stems. No root ever makes joints. Plant the runners in May in shallow furrows about two feet apart and cover lightly, and they will soon

can be avoided, as they are unwholesome. Now I hope that all interested will cut this out and keep it for reference so that I may not have to write it daily.

What Are "Supplies"?

THERE is nothing that makes me so tired as this constant talk about "supplies", regarding the grain and forage crops as simply supplies to enable the farmer to grow more cotton, tobacco or peanuts. In a recent official publication in North Carolina a list is given of the acreage, according to the last census (now rather ancient history), in corn, oats, wheat, rye, peas and vegetable crops, and it says that these are "generally and rightfully called the supply or subsistence crops, while the money crops are cotton, tobacco and peanuts."

Now is there any good reason why a good farmer should not sell corn, wheat, and oats, just as well as cotton? The list given classes the thousands of acres in vegetables in North Carolina as "supplies." What would the truckers of eastern North Carolina do if they regarded these simply as "supplies", when they are their most important money crops? And the writer seems to think that the acreage in these supply crops is about twice as much as that devoted to sale crops. I feel rather sure that the ratio is exactly the other way, or has been till recently. He wants to get the farmers to make the ratio half and half. I would go further than that and make the so-called sale crops he gives occupy one-third of