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Don't Let Any Muddy Water Leave Your Farm

THE farmer who let's muddy water run off his farm is a poor farmer. Muddy water means water freighted with the cream of our soils, with expensive plant foods; muddy water pouring down our creeks and rivers means that somewhere soils are gullyng, washing and wasting, and farmers are becoming poorer and poorer year after year.

Let's stop this waste. Let's henceforth see to it that all waters leaving our farms are clear and clean, and not carrying with them plant foods that have cost us hard work and hard cash. Of course the excess rainfall must be gotten rid of, but let's make it go *through* the soil, rather than *over* it; instead of letting it *rob* us, let's make it *work* for us.

Don't ever think this matter of muddy water is not important; for, in truth, it is so very important that the farmer who neglects it is on the road to failure. Soil maintenance and soil building lie at the very foundation of successful farming, and the man who fails to look to them, as his first, biggest and ever-present job, had better seek another calling.

Muddy water and land washing away really mean the same thing, and the longer we study the problem the greater faith have we in winter cover crops of crimson clover, vetch, rye, or oats as a means of solving it. Since the December rains began all cotton fields unprotected by a carpet of green have been wasting their very best plant food elements. Tons and tons of nitrogen, at \$500 a ton, have gone, lost to our fields forever. On the other hand, the fields protected by cover crops have not only held their fertility for the summer crops, but where covered with the clovers or vetches, have been enriched with great quantities of nitrogen from the air.

"Let's make the South a land of painted farm houses" has long been a Progressive Farmer slogan; now we propose another: "A carpet of winter green for every Southern farm." Our choice above all is crimson clover, because it is not only a legume, a nitrogen-gatherer, but it is also well adapted to a wide range of



PLOWING UNDER A COVER CROP OF RYE ON THE GEORGIA EXPERIMENT STATION

soil and climatic conditions. Next comes vetch, which is a legume and also does well nearly all over the South. But if neither vetch nor clover are grown, rye, preferably Abruzzi, is an excellent winter cover and grazing crop, making a very considerable winter and early spring growth. If none of the above can be planted, ordinary oats, planted in September or October, will, even if plowed under in

March, be worth several dollars an acre in keeping the land covered and protected from the winter rains.

So really there is a wide list from which a choice may be made—so wide, indeed, that there is simply no excuse for our leaving our fields in their shameful nakedness. If you can't plant clover or vetch, plant rye; if you can't plant rye, plant oats. And don't just plant patches; plant acres, fields, your whole farm. Paint the winter landscape green; change it from an ugly brown to a bright emerald that will be the talk of the county. Progressive farmers everywhere are doing this, and finding it the road to wealth, and you, too, can do as well.

"A carpet of green in winter for every Southern farm"—won't you help us make this ideal come true by seeing to it that there is one on your fields hereafter?

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