SUCCESS WITH OATS AND WHEAT

Prize-winning Letters From Progressive Farmer Readers

$10 AN ACRE NET PROFIT FROM OATS

Mr. Taylor Tells How He Uses Oats in His Cropping System—First Prize Letter

I HAVE just sold 1,700 bushels of oats out of the 2,240 bushels I made on the 70 acres of my farm which were devoted to this crop. I made 32 bushels to the acre, which is almost exactly the average yield of oats in the United States.

With this yield and under my present system of management, I find oats my most profitable crop, with the exception of alfalfa. The oat crop fits well in the rotation I am planning to follow, and the use of oats or some other small grain in the system enables me to handle the largest acreage possible with the amount of capital and labor I control.

With my experience as a farmer, I find the most essential requirement in making any crop is to be on time. Many of my neighbors emphasize thorough preparation especially, but with the low yields we have I find that any crop can very easily become unprofitable through too much work and the increased expense accompanying this work.

My oats were planted on land which had been devoted chiefly to corn. They were planted between October 10 and November 10 after the land had been plowed with two-horse plows and harrowed. Some of the oats were planted with a drill which I borrowed, and some were sowed on top of the ground and disked in. These were Texas Red Rust-proof oats which seed I had grown myself. They were treated for smut by sprinkling with a solution of formaldehyde and stirring, after which they were covered with sacks and left all night to dry.

They were harvested the last week in May with a three-horse binder (7-foot cut) and were left in the field 16 days, hauled up and shocked and threshed five days later. They were sold three weeks after threshing at a price of 49 cents per bushel delivered to the mills in Montgomery in bulk.

Below is a summary showing the cost of making the oats and the profit per acre made. The figures are on the basis of one acre:

Expenses

Plowing	$1.50
Harrowing	.20
Drilling (disking cost is equal)	.30
Seed, 1½ bushels @ 60c	.90
Harvesting	.60
Shocking	.07
Hauling	.40
Threshing (32 bushels @ 4½c)	1.44
Baling straw	.60
Hauling oats to market	.40
Rent on land	2.25
Total cost	$8.66

Returns

32 bushels oats @ 49c	$15.68
700 pounds straw @ 50c	3.50
Value of crop	$19.10
Cost of crop	8.66
Profit per acre	$10.44

The value placed on the straw was determined by the value it had in the market less one dollar a ton for hauling ten miles on a good gravel road.

I believe that oats should not be plowed in, but planted after plowing and should preferably be drilled. The ground should be well worked, but working up to that degree of tilth which alfalfa seed demands is wasteful because it is not needed.

The biggest advantage of the oat crop is that it is a safe crop which can be made without inter-cultivation. Besides this, oats keep readily and they come off the land in time to allow the planting of peas, beans, sorghum or corn or the cutting of Johnson grass hay. I will be able to do the last named, while the weather prevented my planting anything.

Oats protect the land during the winter months when it is so apt to suffer from washing and leaching, and they bring in money when it is most needed. I am using the money I got from the oats to meet current expenses and to buy stock, hogs and steers, which I will be able to handle profitably. The money in this way may be turned over twice before rent is due November 1, instead of just once as in the case of corn or cotton. Then too the use of hogs and steers will enable me to use my corn, alfalfa, straw, and velvet beans to better advantage than I otherwise could.

By using a number of comparatively safe crops a farmer can safeguard himself against losses due to rains, winds, drouths, floods, and insect and other pests. For this I use alfalfa, corn, velvet beans, cotton, and oats. The rotation system of my farm would be incomplete without oats.

B. R. TAYLOR.

Snowdoun, Ala.

WHAT SAVED BILL JONES

I MET Tom Brown the other day—our Tom who used to be so gay—and as we talked of farmin' life, of crops and markets, toil and strife, I noticed Tom seemed kind o' sad as if he might be feelin' bad. And so I says to him, "My boy, you seem to lack your old-time joy; what sort o' trouble's worryin' you? What is it makes you kinder blue?"

An' then our Tom he scratched his head, and said his cotton crop was bad; that when he paid his yearly rent, paid back the money friends had lent, he wouldn't have enough to buy the makin's of a good peach pie. An' then I says, "Friend Tom, you're wrong in singin' that old-fashioned song; instead of pilin' sigh on sigh, you ought to jest diversify. I used to plant a single crop, but found that that just had to stop. Fust thing I plant what I can eat, enough of corn, of oats and wheat, and when my money crop is bum, I'm independent still, by gum! 'Nuff home-raised oats to feed your hosses, and wheat for bread will ease your crosses!" An' Tom then, after thinkin' 't over, has vowed he'll grow wheat, oats and clover!—*H.*

SUCCESS WITH WHEAT

Humus, Legumes, Right Varieties, a Good Seed Bed and Sowing at the Right Time Are Essentials—Second Prize Letter

ABOUT ten years ago I purchased a farm, and when I began raising crops I found that eight to twelve bushels of wheat and fifteen to twenty bushels of corn was about all I could make per acre. I soon saw that this was a losing proposition for me; so I went to work to build up the land so it would grow a paying crop.

I commenced by sowing 15 pounds of crimson clover seed and 25 to 30 pounds of rye per acre in my corn field at the last cultivation of the corn, and the following spring, when the crimson clover is in full bloom, I turn down and sow to peas, using 200 to 300 pounds acid phosphate per acre and one and a quarter to one and a half bushels of peas. When the peas are full grown, I plow these down and seed to wheat, first harrowing the land until I have a perfect seed-bed.

On five acres of land treated as above I harvested 145 bushels of wheat. This piece of land was in many places cut full of gullies, and the previous corn crop did not average over 15 bushels per acre. This same piece of land is now in clover and timothy that I sowed following the wheat crop, which is waist high; in fact, much of it will come up well under a man's arms.

I have just threshed this year's crop, and will give results: One field of five acres that I had in corn in 1914 I sowed to crimson clover and rye as above stated, and as the spring of 1915 was rather dry, I did not plow this as usual, but grazed hogs on it until some time in August, when I plowed it well and harrowed and dragged it until I had a good seed bed. I then drilled to wheat, using 250 pounds 16 per cent acid phosphate per acre and 18 quarts Marvelous wheat per acre, sowing the 25th of September. From this field I threshed 140 bushels of wheat (28 bushels per acre, 51 bushels from one bushel's sowing).

Another field containing five acres, I had in corn in 1914 and sowed to crimson clover and rye when I laid the corn by, and last spring about the middle of May plowed down the rye and clover and planted to corn again. After the corn was cut off I plowed this and sowed to wheat, seeding the 28th of October, using 250 pounds 16 per cent acid phosphate, and one and a quarter bushels of Leap's Prolific wheat per acre.

This threshed out 100 bushels. The yield of this field was reduced by winter-killing, as it was sowed too late. It was fine wheat, but thin on the land. I have found by experience that if we expect to make good crops of wheat we must see that the following conditions are met:

(1) Humus kept up in the soil by turning under crops or using manure.

(2) Nitrogen supply kept up by sowing legumes.

(3) Sow as early as possible after the first white frost.

(4) Prepare land so as to have a fine seed bed; without this you will fail no matter how good your land is.

(5) Sow only the best varieties. The best beardless variety I have ever tried is Leap's Prolific; the best bearded variety, Marvelous.

C. H. MARSHALL.

Sylvatus, Va.

Ninety Bushels of Wheat on Two and One-half Acres

I SELECTED a piece of land which had been farmed, or "butchered," 50 years. I determined to make this land yield a profitable wheat crop. I took the stones and stumps off and broke the land with a two-horse plow, making a good seed bed. Then about the 20th of June I sowed three bushels cowpeas using 15 tons stable manure, and disking in.

In October I cut the cowpea vines off to make hay. Then I disked the stubble down, dragged the land well with a spike-tooth harrow making a firm seed-bed. On November 1 I drilled in three bushels of bearded wheat, using 200 pounds of 16 per cent acid phosphate per acre, there being two and one-half acres of land in this piece.

I made 90 bushels of wheat on this two and one-half acres of ground.

T. Q. L.

NOT IN THE WAY

"Come, all yo', and be baptized!" the colored evangelist was pleading to his congregation.

"But Ah's been baptized by the Presbyterians," said Rastus.

"Lo'd!" cried the Baptist minister; "yo' only been dry cleaned."—Exchange.

WHEAT GROWN BY W. J. BANKS, DYER, TENNESSEE