

THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER.

Consolidated, 1904, with The Cotton Plant, Greenville, S. C.

PROGRESSIVE FARMER—VOL. XXI. NO. 2
THE COTTON PLANT—VOL. XXIII. NO. 1.

RALEIGH, N. C., FEBRUARY 22, 1906.

Weekly—\$1 a Year.

THIS WEEK'S FEATURES.

SPRING OATS AND ALFALFA.

—Right now is the time when every farmer is interested in these subjects, and Secretary T. B. Parker of The Progressive Farmer gives his experience with each crop. Page 1.

DEEDS TO REAL ESTATE.

—Judge Montgomery concludes his valuable paper as to the law on this subject. Page 2.

DON'T BURN TOBACCO BEDS.

—Those who read Mr. W. A. Petree's article in The Progressive Farmer a few weeks ago already know the best possible substitute for burning a tobacco bed. See reference to it by Danbury Reporter. Page 2.

IS A SHIFTLESS FARMER EVER HONEST?

—Mr. A. L. French argues that a man who takes the Creator's primal gift to man, the soil itself, and robs it of its treasure, handing it down to the next generation impoverished and wasted, is essentially dishonest. It is a striking article. Page 3.

RAISING THE NEW BIDDIES.

—Don't let your wife (or whoever else attends to the young chickens) overlook Uncle Jo's letter. It is packed with invaluable suggestions. The first two weeks, he says, practically raise the chickens—and he tells how. Page 4.

SOUTH CAROLINA STOCK ASSOCIATION.

—A member of The Progressive Farmer staff attended its sessions in Columbia, and this week we have a good report of the proceedings. Page 4.

PROGRESS OF GEORGIA FARMING.

—Hon. Martin V. Calvin, Secretary of the Georgia Agricultural Society, presents facts and figures covering the last two decades. Pages 10 and 11.

A VIRGINIA FARMER.—A new Virginia correspondent has a spicy letter on general farming subjects. Page 12.

Dark Tobacco Growers Organize.

The Dark Tobacco Grower's Association of Kentucky, Tennessee and Virginia, was formed in Lynchburg, Va., last week, representatives of the three State Associations meeting together. Vice-Presidents are to be elected from each State. The Association is for the purpose of co-operation in the sale of dark tobacco. Representatives from the Interstate Bright Tobacco Growers' Association, of Virginia and North Carolina, were present and co-operated. Fuller particulars will appear in next week's Progressive Farmer.

FOR SUCCESS WITH ALFALFA AND SPRING OATS.

I.

A correspondent writes: "Will you please tell me through The Progressive Farmer about when is the best time to sow spring oats? Also what kind of oat is the best and most profitable to sow in spring, and what kind of fertilizer would do the best under them on stiff loam soil?"

For best results, spring oats should be sowed as quickly as possible in the warmer sections of the State, and from now until April, according to location, extending toward the extreme western part of the State. Land should be well plowed before seeding oats. The better the preparation, the better the oat crop. I sow two bushels per acre, though some advocate three bushels per acre. By mistake a friend of mine, a few years since, sowed five bushels of Burt oats on one acre and made the best crop of oats he ever made. In telling me about the mistake and the yield, he said he had been farming all his life (nearly fifty years) and had just learned how to sow oats. After he discovered the mistake he applied 400 pounds of guano to the acre and harrowed in. Notwithstanding his experience in growing this mammoth crop, I think he has gone back to two or three bushels of seed per acre. It seems to be a hard matter to get old farmers into new practices.

I prefer the Burt oat for spring sowing, though many good oat growers think there is no oat equal to the Red Rust Proof. On rich land perhaps the Rust Proof will make more grain than the Burt, but on the average land of North Carolina, I am inclined to think the Burt will prove more satisfactory.

The common white or black spring oats usually does not grow tall enough unless sowed on very rich land. I have made some fine crops by sowing the Virginia Gray oat in spring, but it comes off very late and is not so sure to make a good crop as some of the other kinds.

A mixture composed of equal parts of cottonseed meal, acid phosphate and kainit, from 300 to 400 pounds per acre, makes a good fertilizer for oats. The fertilizer can be put in with a drill or sowed broadcast and harrowed in.

II.

Another correspondent submits this inquiry: "I have a piece of alfalfa put in the 14th day of last September. Please tell whether to let my calves run on it or not. It is a fairly good stand, say from two to five inches high. Those few warm days it grew very fast, but cold has made it flop again. It grew up in fall some of it to six or eight inches high. Please tell me the best way to manage it to make a success."

The calves would doubtless enjoy the fine grazing afforded by the alfalfa,



In last week's Progressive Farmer Mr. T. K. Bruner mentioned as one of the noteworthy changes in farming in the last twenty years the trend away from the laborious ridging system of rows and towards generally level cultivation—favoring as it does on most lands the better retention of moisture, and avoiding that wholesale destruction of root feeders which the high ridging system always involved. Contrast this picture of level culture of cotton with the high ridging policy formerly obtaining among us.

fa, and would probably be very much benefited; but the alfalfa would suffer. In fact, alfalfa should never be grazed until after it is a year or more old. Even then I think it would be better to cut the alfalfa and feed to stock—unless we except hogs. They might be permitted to graze it, provided they have rings in their noses to prevent rooting.

I advise top dressing as quickly as possible with stable manure; then let it grow until time to cut, which will be as soon as the first blooms begin to appear.

III.

In this connection, I will answer the questions of the many who have lately written asking for information about alfalfa, preparation of land, time to sow, etc.

Those who contemplate sowing this spring should lose no time in preparing the land. As I have already so often said, the land should be fertile and free from grass and weed seeds. I consider crab grass and weeds the greatest drawback to growing alfalfa in this State. The land must be either naturally dry or well drained and limed sufficiently to take all acidity from the soil. Alfalfa, probably more than anything we grow, delights in an alkaline soil. Use stable manure on the land and harrow in well. Also apply a top dressing of commercial fertilizer rich in potash and phosphate acid at the rate of 1,000 pounds per acre and harrow in before sowing the seed. About the last of March in Georgia and the warmer sections of the Carolinas and Virginia, will be the right

time for spring sowing. Sow thirty to thirty-five pounds seed, inoculated preferable, to the acre. Inoculated seed will cost about twenty-two cents per pound. In advising using inoculated seed I realize that I am treading on disputed ground, but my own experience with the culture has been so very satisfactory that I recommend it to others.

Recently I had the pleasure of having Dr. Hume, of the Department of Agriculture, visit my farm near Goldsboro and examine the alfalfa that was sowed September 5th, last. The growth was fine and Dr. Hume said he had never seen finer inoculation. The seed were inoculated with the culture, applied by Mr. John S. Davis who lives on the farm. He sowed the same plat in the spring but the grass and weeds, or too much rain, overpowered the alfalfa and Mr. Davis plowed up and re-seeded in September with the above results first mentioned.

I realize that it is too early yet to claim alfalfa growing down there a decided success. It will require time to prove that, but up to this time the prospects there are the finest I have ever seen. This leads me to think the fall, about September 1st, the best time to sow it in the eastern or sandy sections.

My continued experience with alfalfa confirms me in my belief that it can be profitably grown in many sections of The Progressive Farmer's territory, and that its value will justify persistence in endeavoring to grow the crop.

T. B. PARKER.