

Sow Crimson Clover Now!

Not Too Late Over Most of the South to Sow This Great Cover Crop and Thus Largely Increase the Corn Yield Next Year—Keep Winter Cover on Lands and Prevent Loss of Fertility.

By T. B. Parker.

THE BETTER our farmers become acquainted with crimson clover, the more highly they value it as a soil improver, especially if corn is to follow. The reports that come into my office give testimony to its value as a crop to precede corn.

In a letter just received from an eastern Carolina farmer, living in a county where a few years ago it was supposed crimson clover would not grow, he states that if he could grow each year such crops of crimson clover as he grew last year he could reduce his fertilizer purchases to only enough to side-dress his crops. He also stated that if he could have gotten a good stand of corn where he had crimson clover, he would have made from 40 to 50 bushels per acre. His is simply one letter out of several all testifying to the great value of crimson clover as a soil improver.

With such experiences as growers of crimson clover are having, the wonder is that every farmer is not growing it, at least to some extent.

In central and eastern Carolina, and the States south of us, now is the time to sow crimson clover. Sow about 15 pounds of seed, if bean seed, or twice or three times the many if in the chaff, per acre and harrow in. The seed are very high-priced this season retailing at about 12 cents per pound, but the results, if the crop does well, will justify the purchase.

\$8.20 Worth of Nitrogen Per Acre.

According to chemical analysis, a ton of crimson clover hay contains about 41 pounds of nitrogen which is practically all taken from the air, if grown on land well inoculated with the crimson clover bacteria. This is more nitrogen than an average 8-2-2 ton of commercial fertilizer contains, which accounts for its great corn-producing proclivities. This quantity of nitrogen, at 20 cents per pound, is worth \$8.20, which is well worth spending two or three dollars to procure. If the crop should produce more than one ton of hay per acre, the quantity of nitrogen would be still larger. This does not include the nitrogen which the roots, stubble, etc., contain, which is quite worth considering.

Nor is the nitrogen added to the soil the only benefit we get from the clover. It makes a fine winter cover crop and as such is a great protection from winds, rains, etc., keeping in the land much fertility that would otherwise be lost. Being a deep rooting crop it will help to make our soils deeper after the roots decay by permitting the air and moisture to follow the holes they made through the subsoil and by their action make fertile soil deeper down than it now is. The vegetable matter or humus which it will add to the soil will act as host for millions of bacteria so necessary for making available plant food for the crops that may follow.

The advantages of crimson clover are so many that they can not all be treated in the space allowed for this article, therefore I suggest that those who are interested in the crop write to the Department of Agriculture at Washington, D. C., and ask for bulletins on crimson clover, also ask for bulletins on other legumes.

How to Inoculate the Soil.

Crimson clover, being a legume, requires the presence of the bacteria for that plant. Unless these bacteria are in the soil the crop will be disappointing. If it is not known that the

soil already contains the necessary bacteria, it will be well to procure from a field which grows crimson clover successfully soil to inoculate the land with. Apply of this soil, broadcast, from 200 to 500 pounds per acre, preferably on a cloudy day or late in the afternoon and harrow in at once. If the soil is allowed to remain uncovered in the hot sun for some time, millions of the bacteria may be killed by the sunshine and the land fail to be sufficiently inoculated to make a satisfactory crop.

Hairy Vetch Another Good Cover Crop.

What I have here written about crimson clover applies with equal force to Hairy vetch. Hairy vetch is even richer in nitrogen than crimson clover and in some respects makes a better hay than clover. However, if it is to be planted for hay, it will be best to sow it with oats, or a smooth-head variety of wheat, say 25 pounds of vetch and 1 1/2 bushels of oats or 3 pecks of wheat per acre. Cut when the wheat or oats are in the dough state.

I regard vetch as an exceptionally fine crop and advise those of our farmers who have never grown it to put in at least one acre this fall. It can be put in even later than crimson clover but the earlier it is now put in, the better. If sown alone, use about 30 pounds of seed per acre.

A Cowpea Thresher That Does the Work.

Messrs. Editors: During December I heard that a pea thresher, for threshing peas from mown vines, had been purchased by one of our neighbors and that it was perfect success. A few days ago Mr. Scarboro, the owner said to me, "I want you to see this machine at work. It is a perfect success. Can't you come to Mr. Thomas Barham's Monday and see us thresh his hay?" I went, but I just did get there in time to see the last of 16 stacks of hay go into the mouth of the machine. It was manufactured by the Koger Pea and Bean Thresher Co., of Morristown, Tenn., and sold for \$300, f.o.b. It is as large as a small wheat thresher. It cuts the hay and cleans the peas perfectly without breaking them. The hay was hauled from the field where it had been stacked since the fall.

A 4-horse-power International gasoline engine, with ease, was furnishing the power. Mr. Scarboro said he had threshed between four and five hundred bushels of peas. It will thresh a half bushel per minute from good hay.

He bales the hay as it is threshed. The hay is in much better condition after it is threshed. It is cut fine, yet not so fine but that it can be handled with only two wires on each bale. Two wires would not be enough if the hay is to be shipped. I must say, I don't think that more than two wires will be necessary in this community for sometime yet.

E. L. SHEARON.

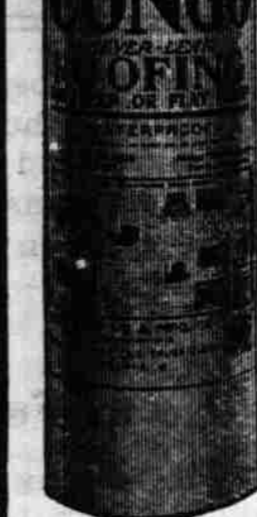
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