







Farm Management in the Gulf Coast Country

(\$2 Prize Letter)

WE FARM about 200 acres and try to rotate our crops so as to use each acre to the best advantage. We grow sweet potatoes for the early summer market, but do not plant sweet potatoes on the same land more than one year in three. The other two years we use corn and velvet beans very largely, with a few other crops to a limited extent, and will try to show how we make these crops fit in.

This year we had 45 acres planted in early sweet potatoes that we marketed in July and August. As soon as the potatoes were dug, we turned a bunch of hogs in this field to pick up the sweet potatoes that we left. A considerable growth of potato vines and Mexican clover was made, and we turned the dairy cattle in this field also, in order to consume this growth. A few acres of Dwarf Essex rape was planted where the sweet potatoes were, for winter grazing for registered sows and pigs. We also planted a few acres of late Irish potatoes after the early sweet potatoes. A temporary fence will be run across the field to fence off the rape for winter grazing.

The balance of the land planted to early sweet potatoes was planted in oats during October for winter grazing, and about 20 acres of this will be allowed to mature oats for seed. The balance of this ground will be planted in Irish potatoes in February. The 20 acres of oat land where the oats are allowed to mature will be planted broadcast in peas as soon as the oats are cut for hay. This year we made 30 bushels of oats to the acre, and 11/2 tons of peavine hay, without fertilizer for either crop. We planted all of our peas and oats with a two-horse disk grain drill, and saved 25 per cent in the cost of seed, and get a much more uniform stand.

We have 100 acres planted in corn and velvet beans. Two rows of corn are planted three feet eight inches apart, with a two-row corn drill, and a disk marker is used in marking the next row, leaving a space of six feet, in which space we plant a row of velvet beans, four to six weeks after the corn is planted. The corn gets two applications of fertilizer, 150 pounds of cottonseed meal and phosphate mixed, one to two, at time of planting, and the same quantity applied between the two corn rows when the corn is about 12 inches high. We get an average of 40 to 60 bushels of corn per acre, and a ton of velvet beans in the pod. When the corn is sufficiently matured, we husk it in the field, and make two grades of it, one for seed and the other for feeding.

We arrange to have corn and beans in three different fields, or else use temporary fences. We allow our dairy cattle to have the use of these fields just a few weeks in advance of our beef cattle. This practice is all right where grades are used. Hogs are also allowed the run of these fields at the same time the cattle are allowed the use of them.

As soon as the first field is sufficiently grazed off, we disk it with a tractor, using a double-action disk, and the ground is immediately plowed with a 16-inch turning plow, using three mules to each plow. We use this plow instead of having four mules to a riding plow, with two bottoms, as we can plow the ground a little deeper. This plowing is usually done after Christmas, on account of the grazing. Unless we have a great deal of rain, after the ground is plowed, disking with the tractor will be sufficient, although sometimes we find it necessary to plow the ground again before planting, in order to get the best seed bed ..

L. T. RHODES.
Bay Minette, Ala.

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