



## What Farmers Want to Know

By W. F. MASSEY

### Artichokes for Hogs

**WHAT is the value of artichokes for hogs?**

I have never planted artichokes but once and I was then sorry that I did, for in the heavy clay soil I then worked, the hogs did not find them all and they got to be a troublesome weed. They seem to answer as a succulent appetizer for hogs and keep them in healthy condition, but do not make much fat. Cowpeas, soy beans, and sweet potatoes are far better.

### Poison for Tobacco Worms

**NORTH CAROLINA:** "I will use a two-row duster and want to know what to mix with Paris green for dusting tobacco."

I would not use Paris green at all. It is more apt to damage the plants than other arsenates. I would mix calcium arsenate one part in two parts of air-slaked lime. I find this a very effective insecticide. I use it even for the plum and peach curculio, as soon as the present bloom is off. I do not grow tobacco now, but know that it will beat Paris green.

### "Nary" a Twin

**I READ an article in your paper that sweet clover is twin sister to alfalfa and would like to hear more about it.**

I have often given my opinion of sweet clover. It is a long way from being twin sister to alfalfa. Both are in the great order of Leguminosae but in different families or genera. Alfalfa is in the Medicago genus and the sweet clover is not a clover, but a mellilotus. So you see they belong to different families, and hence, cannot be twins. In sections where soy beans, cowpeas, and crimson clover do not thrive as in the North, the sweet clover may be of use.

### Bush or Climbing Lima Beans

**WHICH is best to plant, the bush or pole Lima bean, in Pender County, N. C.?**

The climbing small Lima bean I would prefer. The large Lima will make a small crop in comparison with the small or butter bean. The Fordhook Bush bean may produce a fair crop. This belongs to the thick meated or Potato Lima bean. I grow it here but find that even though it will do fairly well, I get far more beans from the butter bean which I let run on my wire fence, and to my taste, the little butter bean is better eating than the large Lima.

### Rooting Shrubbery Cuttings

**LAST fall I buried cuttings of a number of varieties of shrubbery and would like to know now the treatment needed.**

It is very simple. Simply set the cuttings nearly full length in the ground in rows where they can be cultivated and kept clear of weeds. They can be transplanted in the fall. The privet cuttings can be set at once in the row for hedge and need not be transplanted.

I thank you for the pleasant compliments you write in regard to my work. Many of my friends write in a similar way, but I am too modest to use the space in the paper for printing these pleasant words.

### Liquid Fertilizer

**CAN I make a liquid fertilizer with nitrate of soda for pecans, fruit trees, and grapevines? If so, give the proportions of water and nitrate.**

It is easy to make a liquid fertilizer with nitrate of soda. I have used in greenhouses a solution of one ounce in three gallons of water used after watering plants in pots with clear water. For use in the open ground, I can see no advantage in making a liquid, since the nitrate is so very easily dissolved in the soil moisture. Then it

is necessary in fertilizing trees and vines to put the fertilizer where the roots of the trees and vines can get it. The root hairs which are taking the food from the soil are at the extreme ends of the roots, and fertilizer placed around the trunk of the tree will reach few roots. The feeding roots are out where the limbs drip and beyond. That is where the fertilizer should go.

### Kudzu From Seed

**I HAVE been told that kudzu will not grow from seed, but the seed are offered in a catalog I get every spring. Will they grow?**

Yes, the seed will grow for I have grown them. But I can see no need for growing them from seed. In fact it seems sure that there are different varieties of kudzu. The first plant I grew over 20 years ago, and I paid 50 cents for it, was simply a rapid climber and never sent out any runners on the ground. The variety I have had for the past 12 years will climb but prefers to run on the ground and spread in that way. The roots are now for sale cheap in Virginia and there is no need for sowing seed. I have never seen it bloom here, but had a bloom sent me from Philadelphia some years ago. It was a dark purple raceme like a miniature cluster of Wistaria flowers. Of course the plant blooms somewhere or there would be no seed sold. The flower from Philadelphia must have been from an earlier variety than mine.

### Biloxi and Ootootan Soy Beans

**I SEE that the Ootootan soy bean is advertised. Is this a new bean? What are its advantages? Is it the same as Biloxi?**

The Biloxi and Ootootan soy beans are distinct varieties. Both are heavy forage makers. Both are late, the Ootootan later than the Biloxi. Bringing the seed from the Gulf Coast to southeastern Maryland at one jump caused them to fail to mature seed here the past dry summer. Both the Ootootan and the Biloxi made a very heavy growth even in the intense drought. The Biloxi seemed a little heavier than the Ootootan and perhaps rather earlier. When seed are made a little further north, they will be valuable here, and are worth trying in the South.

### Concerning Cabbage and Cabbage Heading

**WHAT influences favor the heading of cabbage? What influences favor its going to seed without heading? Does pinching the tap root at transplanting have any influence on heading? I set out last November some Jersey Wakefields and some Succession cabbage. The Jerseys headed in February as I expected, but the Successions are going to seed. Can you explain?**

1. The influences that favor the heading of early cabbage are first well-bred seed from selected early plants. 2. Clean shallow cultivation till they show some inclination towards heading, and then a check to growth by running a bull tongue deeply through the rows cutting some roots. Conditions that favor seeding instead of heading, are (1) too early sowing in the fall and overgrown plants, (2) sowing varieties that do not naturally head among the earliest. There used to be grown an early variety of the Flat Dutch cabbage. Wanting an early flat head, I tried to get this cabbage by fall sowing, but it always ran to seed. In more recent years, the Copenhagen Market cabbage was introduced. I tried it at first by fall sowing and every plant went to seed in spring. Succession is another second early, and I have never found a second early cabbage that will head from fall sowing. They can be sowed in a frame under glass in January and will head all right. No cabbage except the earliest should be sowed in the fall for early heading. The Charleston Wakefield is

not so bad as Copenhagen, but it will run to seed very badly. Late plowing between the rows will, as I have said, favor heading. We need an early variety of well-bred seed, and sowing twice in the fall, as one sowing may, in a late season, get overgrown, and we need a fair-sized plant. The reason for the printed disclaimer of responsibility in seed catalogues was caused by an inexperienced gardener in New Jersey. He bought Wakefield cabbage seed from a leading seedsman and sowed them in August. Every plant ran to seed, and he sued the seedsman for damages and, in spite of testimony showing that it was his own fault, the jury gave him damages. He sowed nearly two months too early. The seed trade then had a lawyer prepare the disclaimer which every seedsman of standing has printed in his catalogue. They cannot be responsible for the ignorance of the gardener.

### Wants the Best Velvet Bean

**WILKES COUNTY, N. C. "Please tell me the best variety of velvet beans."**

The Osceola made the best record here. But I think it doubtful that any of the velvet beans will mature with you. Osceola made a tremendous growth here and buried the fences of the field where it grew, but it did not mature any seed, hardly bloomed fully. It was chopped up with tractor and disk and finally turned under for strawberry plants. As a means for adding humus making material to the soil, this bean seems valuable. But I cannot see why anyone should want velvet beans in corn. Peas and soy beans grow rankly enough. I want to give corn a better chance than to bury it under velvet beans. If the field here where the velvet beans grew had been planted in corn, no one would have been able to find a cornstalk. There seems to be a tendency now among Southern farmers to rush after every new legume. Velvet beans are splendid for humus making, but there are three legumes for the South that are hard to beat, cowpeas, soy beans and crimson clover.

### Hyacinths in South Carolina

**MY HYACINTH bulbs often rot when I leave them in the ground in summer. Should I take them up every year after they bloom? Would it be all right to take up the gladiolus bulbs, crocus, and tulips?**

The hyacinth bulbs imported annually from Holland have been grown to their full development and after the first bloom here are ready to break up and form offsets for increase. These set in a cool climate, and proper treatment, will make fully developed bulbs in three years. But in our hot climate, they ripen up too soon and we can never grow the bulbs such as we get from Holland. After the first bloom, the flowers form in clusters and are inferior. You had better take them up when the leaves turn yellow and cure and keep in a cool, dark place and re-plant in September. But you will never get the large bloom like the first one. If you buy what they call Dutch Roman hyacinths, you get the bulbs just like the main Dutch bulbs but younger ones. I buy these as they are cheaper than the full-grown ones, and I can get two seasons' full-grown spikes of flowers by taking them up and re-planting. Gladiolus corms are taken up as a matter of course as they make new bulbs or corms annually, and these must be separated from the old exhausted ones and the small offsets that grow between them can be sowed in the fall to grow into blooming bulbs. Crocus and tulip bulbs are as well left in the ground unless you wish to increase them. This is harder to do in a warm climate, and the bulbs are sold so cheaply that it is just as well to buy for future needs.

### Saving Cabbage Seed

**IF CABBAGE plants set last fall run to bloom and make seed, will these seed be good to plant? If not, how would you save seed?**

No good seed grower would save seed grown in this way. A tendency to fall heading might be developed. But at any rate you do not know what sort

of a head the plant would have developed had it headed, and hence the tendency would be to breed mixed forms. One of the most skilful gardeners around New York in the production of the Early Wakefield cabbage grew his own seed, according to the account given by the late Peter Henderson. He would not sell any seed. The other gardeners watched his process. They found that there were stalks from which heads had been cut. After selling the heads he planted the stalks to themselves. In the late summer they had made a number of sprouts to each stalk. These he cut and put in his greenhouse sand bed and rooted them like ordinary cuttings. Then he planted these in a coldframe and carried them over winter and they ran to seed in the spring and he gathered seed from these. He had selected the earliest and most typical plants, and cut the heads knowing that the stalks that produced these heads would be most likely to produce plants of similar character. Without this means of rooting cuttings, you might grow some early cabbage late, so as to have them head just before frost. Then select the earliest and best heads and use them and bury the stalks full length in the soil in rows. In spring these will make seed and good seed.

### Curing Onions

**THERE will be some onions here that will ripen about the last of June. As it is often rainy at that time, would it not do to cure them in a large lumber drying kiln not in use at that time?**

Pull the onions when the tops fall over, and do this in early morning, letting them lie in the sun during the day. Get them under cover before dew falls. The kiln will make a good place for them if there is no steam on, as it will naturally be hot at that time. But do not keep them there after the tops are dry. Spread them out thinly. After drying, get them into the coolest and darkest place available and do not pile too thickly.

### Killing Nut Grass

**A LADY writes: "My father had a field thick with nut grass. He prepared it and planted it in cotton and turned a flock of geese in. The geese not only bit the tops off the grass but ate the nuts that were turned up in the cultivation of the cotton."**

This is just what I have uniformly advised. You must keep the green tops off if you wish to destroy a persistent weed. Either you must do this yourself or get somebody else to do it, and the geese will answer as they are always on the spot, and will be very hungry when there is no other grass to eat. But in the cotton field it will be cruel to the geese to make them depend on the nut grass alone, though I have seen cotton fields where there was grass enough to fatten them.

### Wants Analysis

**I HAVE bought my fertilizer. It is the 8-3-3 grade. I want to get it analyzed and not have to depend on the company's statement. Where can I get this done?**

If you will send to the Commissioner of Agriculture, Raleigh, N. C., who has all fertilizers made in North Carolina analyzed, he can tell you whether the brand you have is correctly stated on the sacks. A commercial chemist would charge you a good price to make a complete analysis. You can usually depend on the statement on the sacks of any fertilizer made in North Carolina.

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