The Farm.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Communications upon subjects of interest to the farmer, the gardener, the fruit-grower and stock-breeder are solicited for this department of the paper. All such communications should be addressed to DANIEL STRICKLER, Agricultural Editor, Conestoga, Lancaster county, Pa.

When Should Corn Be Planted?

BY THE EDITOR.

This is a question upon which farmers differ somewhat, but the weight of authority seems to favor planting about the 10th of May. Some farmers make it a point to plant as early as possible, generally in April. We have been informed that several farmers in Lancaster township, south of Lancaster city, planted corn this year in the beginning of the second week in April. Those farmers seem to take a pride in being ahead of all others, in regard to time, not only in planting corn, but with all other work. It is true that land is not only of the best quality, but is among the very earliest in this county. It contains large quantities of calx (lime) therefore being warmer, admits of planting crops earlier in Spring, and ripens them sooner. There are advantages, as well as disadvantages in early planting, but we think there is no advantage in planting so extremely early. The advantages claimed by the advocates of early planting are that when it is done they can attend more conveniently to other work; that they can finish cultivating it in good season, so as not to interfere with making hay; and that it ripens earlier, and can be husked and housed earlier. The advocates of later planting claim that their method will give an average produce larger crops.

When planted very early, corn is a long time coming up, and if the ground is wet as well as cold a large portion of it frequently rots, and does not come up at all. This necessitates re-planting, whenever it has failed to come up, and hence it becomes irregular in forwardness. It also, if the Spring is cold and wet, frequently comes up quite yellow and sickly-looking, and makes but little growth before the weather and ground have become warm, while that planted later comes up green and vigorous, and grows right ahead, soon catching up with the early-planted, and maturing fully as early, without the farmer having the vexatious trouble of re-planting a portion. But if it comes up regular, and the weather is favorable, the early-planted will produce taller and coarser stalks than that planted later; and large stalks generally bear smaller ears than those of a medium size, besides the fodder is inconvenient to handle, and not as well-relished by cattle. Again, there is generally a dry spell in the latter part of Summer, and this occurs more frequently about the time that early corn is earing, than when the late does.—After all a great deal depends upon the state of the weather while corn is pushing ears; if the weather is warm and a good, soaking rain falls at the proper time, corn will ear well; but, if it ears during a drouth, the ears will be small, and "nubbins" not scarce. It, undoubtedly, more frequently happens that the rains fall at the proper time for late corn, than for early, and this alone should caution us against having our corn too forward.—We have seen good crops of corn which was planted in April, and also in June, but we prefer planting about the 10th of May, and not later than the fifteenth. If planted later than the latter date, it is in danger of being caught by early frosts. Observation has satisfied us with many other farmers, that in general, corn planted from the eighth to the fifteenth of May, will produce larger ears than that planted in April.

Corn in Hills and Drills.

We observe a statement in an exchange, as to the experiments made by the Michigan Agricultural College, with corn in hills and drills. The plots for trial were 48 rods long and 2 rods wide. The rows were 4 feet apart—the corn, yellow Dent. The plants were thinned, so as to leave the same number of stalks on each plot. The soil and manuring, and the cultivation, was as nearly alike as practicable. Both were cut up at the same time, the corn husked, and corn and stalks all weighed separately. The drilled portion produced 74 1-6 bushels of shelled corn per acre, and that in the hills 65¾ bushels. The drilled plot yielded stalks at the rate of three tons per acre; the other at the rate of two and two-thirds tons.

We think an improvement might be made in the manner of conducting the experiment. The great advantage of planting in drills, is that its more even distribution of stalks admits of a larger number of stalks on the same space of ground without crowding. A farmer in Cayuga county, N. Y., succeeded many years ago in raising 132 shelled bushels per acre, by placing single stalks a foot apart over the whole surface; the labor of hoeing was great, but the experiment corroborated the principle here laid down. If one-fourth more stalks had been allowed to grow in the drills, in the Michigan experiment, we have no doubt that the crop would have been correspondingly large. Possibly the Dent and the more Southern varieties may not possess so great an advantage in this respect as the more Northern sorts, but the experiment we have found by many years trial that at least one-half more stalks (that is as three to two) may be generally planted in drills, as in hills with rows both ways. As a general rule, other things being equal, we get from one-third to one-fourth more corn in drills, and a still larger amount of stalks. In conversation a few years since on this subject, with John Johnston, he informed us that his own experiments gave a very similar result, the corn being at least one-fourth more in drills, and the corn-fodder in still greater proportion—amply repaying any extra labor required in drill cultivation.—*Country Gentleman.*

How to Know the Age of a Horse.

The colt is born with twelve grinders; when four front teeth have made their appearance, the colt is twelve days old; and when the next four come forth it is four weeks old. When the corner teeth appear the colt is eight months old; when the latter have attained to the height of the front teeth it is one year old. The two-year old colt has the kernel (the dark substance in the middle of the tooth's crown) ground out of all the front teeth. In the third year the middle front teeth are being shifted; and when three years old these are substituted by the horse teeth. The next four teeth are shifted in the fourth year, and the corner teeth in the fifth. At six years the kernel is worn out of the lower middle front teeth, and the bridle teeth have now attained to their full growth. At seven years a hook has been formed in the corner teeth of the upper jaw; the kernel of the teeth next at the middle fronts is worn out, the bridle teeth begin to wear off. At eight years of age the kernel is worn out of all the lower front teeth and begins to decrease in the middle upper fronts. In the ninth year the kernel has wholly disappeared from the upper middle front teeth, the hook on the corner teeth has increased in size, and the bridle teeth lose their points. In the tenth year the kernel is worn out of the teeth next to the middle front of the upper jaw; and in the eleventh year the kernel has entirely vanished from the corner teeth of the same jaw. At twelve years old the crown of all the front teeth in the lower jaw has become triangular, and the bridle teeth are much worn down. As the horse advances in age the gums shrink away from the teeth, which, consequently, receive a long narrow appearance, and their kernels have become metamorphosed into a darkish point, grey hairs increase in the forehead, over the eyes, and the chin assumes the form of an angle.—*Journal of the Farm.*

Premium Butter.

In answer to our inquiry, we have the following description from Thomas Gawthrop, of the mode of making the butter for which his daughter, Jeanie Gawthrop, received the first premium at the recent exhibition of Winter butter of the Oxford, Chester county, Agricultural Society:

"Our plan of making Winter butter is to have a room devoted to that purpose, to be heated to from 60° to 65° Fahrenheit,—if possible, never to exceed the latter temperature, and to have the utmost care taken that no gas from the stove or other offensive odor shall be present to be absorbed by the cream, which they will be, if allowed to be present, and give a taint to both milk and butter; to which end the ventilation must be thorough. The room is arranged with shelves around the sides at sufficient height from the floor to profit from the heat. Under these conditions the milk will begin to "lobber" on the bottom of the pans, in from 24 to 36 hours, and should then be skimmed, the cream set in a cool place and stirred every day, or as often as it is added, until the time of churning, when the temperature is raised to 60° or 62°, and churned in the usual way.

"The process of manufacture of the specimen in question, did not differ in any way from this, except it was made from sweet cream, which we consider is sacrificing quantity to a very slight increase in quality.

"I must here take exception to the idea advanced in an article on packing down butter, published in the *Practical Farmer*, (Feb. No.) that it is necessary to add any coloring matter, as that end can in all cases be attained in winter, by attention to a few essentials to success—viz: temperature of the room, thorough ventilation, care in selecting of cows, and judicious feeding.—*Practical Farmer.*

Planting and Cultivating Sweet Potatoes.

A correspondent writes to the *Country Gentleman*, from Burlington, N. J., the method of raising sweet potatoes in that State. It is as follows:

Sweet potatoes are most readily grown on deep, sandy soil; but all farmers' lands are not sandy, and with those whose soil is a heavy loam they may be grown of good quality, by a proper method of planting and cultivating.—But sandy soil is the best for the production of sweet potatoes of the *best* quality.

About the second week of May, in this latitude, prepare the ground to have plants set out in hills. Soil that is sandy should be plowed seven inches deep; but soil that is heavy loam, five inches deep, as potatoes grow short and chunky by shallow plowing. After the ground is plowed, harrow it over thoroughly; but on soil that is a heavy loam, use the cultivator after harrowing, getting it in as mellow condition as possible.

The ground may be marked out on sandy soil, five inches deep, with a plow drawing furrows *each way* for hills, three and a half feet apart; this will give space between rows to form the hills each way, with a plow or cultivator; but on soil that is heavy, furrows should be drawn four feet apart each way, as vines run and spread thick over such ground. On such soils they should be further apart. Apply to the hill, half shovelful of horse stable manure that has been well rotted and has lain at least six months in a compost. Hoe up the earth on top of manure placed in hill fourteen inches high. Once hoeing around will form a hill sufficiently large.

After hills are made they are ready for plants. Set one sprout in a hill, which is performed by running the right hand down in the middle of the hill into the manure and with the other hand put in the sprout as the right hand is drawn out, being careful to have all fibres of roots set in the manure and earth, which should be pressed around plants. Water thoroughly and immediately cover the surface of hills slightly with dry earth, to prevent the ground from becoming sodden, especially in soil that is a heavy loam.

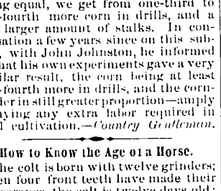
In the course of two weeks, after plants are set out, they require cultivation. In the first place, the soil around plants should be loosened. This should be done with the thumb and fore finger; but on soil that is a heavy loam if the ground has become sodden a trowel may be used—being careful not to disturb any roots or fibres of roots.—They may be plowed once on soil that is a heavy loam—oftener if of choice on sandy soil. This should be done before the vines commence to run and spread over the ground. After being plowed, hoe immediately, loosening the ground around the plants. After vines have run and spread, so as to be in the way of working, they may be turned, so as to leave rows open to the plow or cultivator (cultivator preferable,) as it does not leave the ground ridged up, and the hills have a better access to the rays of the sun. This is important, especially on soil that is heavy.

Turn the vines between rows, right and left; this should be done with the hands, laying vines on every two rows, which will give open way to the plow or cultivator. When rows are plowed or cultivated on one side, hoe up the earth around hills of plants, then turn back the vines, and the adjoining rows will be open to proceed in the same manner. After which spread the vines over the ground.

During the growing season, on sandy soil, they should be farmed once in every two weeks, but oftener on soil that is a heavy loam; and be particular to keep the earth around hills of plants to ensure moisture to the hill. They will require cultivation up to the first of September, and the vines should be kept loose from growing fast to the ground, until within two or three weeks of the time to dig them. The proper time to dig them for packing is the first week of October, and should be dug, if possible, before frost has killed the vines; but should frost come sooner to blacken vines, they should be dug immediately; for if the season is stormy, and ground keeps wet and cold, the potatoes will take injury.

Sweet potatoes, when dug, should lie in the sun, if possible, to dry. But should the weather not permit, spread them out thinly on the floor in a warm, dry room, where there is fire to dry them; and be particular not to handle them roughly, bruise or skin them, or they will rot immediately. They may be packed as soon as dug, if by laying in the sun they are perfectly dry (and this is a much better way,) but if not dry on the day they are dug, let them dry in a warm, dry room, as I have stated, before they are packed. If any quantity of them lie together they will heat within two or three days. They should be packed before heating and must be dry when packed for keeping.

MEDICAL.



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The drawing will take place, as soon as engravings enough are sold to distribute the tickets, before as many ticket-holders as choose to be present, and to be under their control.

We refer to

Thomas H. Kemp, Clerk of Caroline Co. Court.
George H. Rossum, Att. at Law, Denton, Md.
R. K. Richardson, Sheriff of the County.
William Fell, Esq., of Denton, Md.
Mancha & Bro., Real Estate Brokers, Ridgley, Md.

(The above gentlemen will act as Supervisory Committee.)

Refer also to Charles Goading, Esq., Speaker of the Delaware Senate, all the Leading Men, the Banks, the Editor of this Paper, and the Press of the Peninsula, generally.

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Denton, Caroline County, Md., 1st February 1871.

feb15-1yw-7

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feo12-1dawly GEO. D. SPRECHER

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feb15-3mw7

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Persons wishing to view the premises will please call upon David Christy, adjoining the property, by whom the same will be shown or upon the subscriber at Mechanics Grove.

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sep13tfw37

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