

Farmer's Department.

Scare Crows.

I have tried for years in succession all of the nostrums to prevent birds from pulling worms from eating, and steep of various kinds to stimulate its growth, and find that tarring the seed makes it distasteful to birds; they will pull and eat but a little; but as to worms eating it, they seem to relish it equally well. The attempt to stimulate growth, rolling gypsum, &c., amounts to little. You cannot make any perceptible difference, and unless the soil is in special favor, the corn will not come so well as if planted dry. For instance, if you steep the seed, and after planting it is very wet and cold, it will not grow as well; or if it is very dry, it will not come as well; tarring it will retard its germination in any case. For the last five years I have planted the seed dry, recently handshelled from the cob.

For scare crows, the best I know of is a few crows shot and hung up in different parts of the field by one leg, or bait and catch them in steel traps. In my younger days, for years these scarecrows were ample to keep of birds. Every Yankee farmer should have a good gun and ammunition, and know how to use it. Find all the crows nests in your immediate neighborhood, break up their nests, seize their young, and then is the time to shoot some of the old ones. I once secured sixteen in two hours. Go over your cornfield daily, and if the crows have drawn away, be there the next morning by three o'clock with your artillery or the crows will be there before you, and salute the first comer with cold lead from your early morning gun, and if you do not succeed in bagging him, he and his neighbors will come to the conclusion that he had better let the man's corn alone. Another way of keeping crows from your cornfield is by twining. String wool twine from stake to stake once in fifteen rows, directly over the row. You can cultivate the first time, and let it remain. Do the twining immediately after planting, and it will be rare to have a crow light on the field while the twine remains.

Crows grow bold by the cry of their young for food, and by man being slack and easy; instinct teaches them whose corn it will do to pull. The fields for which crows have so strong a taste, are generally shallow and half-plowed, less than half manured, bordered around by bushes, briars, and weeds, and enclosed by a mere apology for a fence. Years ago one of our people men had a field with one of these ugly borders which always have a great tendency to widen; at hoeing, none wanted to hoe the outside row; the alteration between the boys would finally be settled by the old man, "Let the devil take the outside row," and in a few years he had the whole field.

Should the above mentioned scarecrows fail to keep to crows from pulling the corn, soak other corn in rum or whiskey and strychnine, and scatter broadcast on the field. They like the humans, will like the taste, but as certain as they eat of it they die. You will, in most of the liquor on sale, find enough strychnine, without adding more, to do the work for the crows. H. W. LESTER, Rutland, Vt.—Country Gentleman.

TESTING SEED CORN.—There is so much damaged corn this year, that much care will be requisite in selecting such as is suitable. I have seen in your paper and elsewhere, several modes suggested for testing its germinating qualities, but they are inefficient, impracticable, or attended with too much trouble to be generally useful.

The following mode will be found simple, practical and certain, and can be applied to any extent desired. Put the shelled corn in a vessel of such dimensions as are required for the quantity to be tested. Pour water over it of the temperature of milk from the cow, until it is fairly covered, adding to the water from time to time, if the absorption and swelling of the corn should raise it above the surface. Set it in a moderately warm place and let it remain twenty-four hours. Then pour the water off, cover the corn with some thick cloth, which must be kept wet, and let it stand in a mass, still in a warm place, until it sprouts. This will take place in thirty-six hours, usually, if the corn is good.

I prepare all my corn for planting in this manner, though I know the seed to be good. I plant sometimes with the sprout half an inch long. The result is that it brings the plant forward a week or more earlier than planting dry. This advantage in the fall is sometimes very important. The damaged corn from my field last year did not exceed five per cent.—Cincinnati Gazette.

SEED CORN.—Now is the time to try seed corn and know for certain that it will grow before planting time comes. The following is a test which I have proved as sure. Remove with a knife the covering from the chit, if alive it will present a bright and healthy appearance, if dead it looks as though it had been boiled. Corn was very late in maturing last fall in this vicinity. The farmers gathered in the usual season; the cob was not dry, consequently there is but little sound corn in the country.—D.W.A. Paw Paw, Michigan, 1858.—Rural New Yorker.

PLANTING POTATOES.—They say abroad that the secret of getting potatoes ripe in August, that will keep all winter, is "to set them well sprouted. There is no occasion to put them in early. The month of August is the critical time for the winter potato. But by sprouting the tuber before setting, you obtain nearly a month's advantage, so that when the disease does come, the plant is in a stronger state than it would otherwise be, and is hereby enabled to repel the attack." The author who thus writes in the Royal Agricultural Society's Journal, is the Rev. E. F. Manly, and there may be something in his remarks.—Hort.

CABBAGE.—The cultivation of cabbage for stock feeding has how become quite common in many sections of our country. That the cabbage is valuable for this purpose there can be little doubt. The specific quantity of its actual alimentary matter is, however, very inconsiderable; yet, when fed in connection with other vegetables of a more solid and nutritive quality, and which although they greatly exceed it in this respect, are yet inferior to it in volume and bulk, it subserves a very important and valuable purpose in the economy of alimentation, and aids materially by the stimulus of distention which it produces.

The honest man will rather be the slave to his high boots' errors than in any way oppose them.

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