

Hot Beds—How Made. Farmer, like other people, are fond of early vegetables. But it is too generally the case, that they neglect to raise them. People in the city will have the earliest to be obtained and are willing to pay exorbitant prices for them.

Farmer could raise, even in the hot bed, the earliest vegetables, at a very little cost. The hot bed requires attention early in the season, when there is but little other work on hand, and consequently could be attended to about as well as not. We propose to inform our readers how they are made.

**Selection of Ground.**—The ground upon which a hot bed should be made, should have a southerly or southeasterly inclination. It should be fully exposed to the sun and the shade of trees, building, &c. A dry place is preferable—where water will not stand in pits one or two feet in depth, after a rain.

**The Frame and Sash.**—The frame or box which supports the sash is generally about four and a half or five feet wide, and may be made to any desired length. The frames are generally made so as to be covered with from three to five sashes, each sash being commonly about four inches wide, and four and a half or five feet long. The frame may be made of iron plank—the side exposed to the north being six or eight inches higher than the southern side, so as to have proper slope to the sun.

The smallest sized glass should be used in the sash—certainly not larger than seven by nine. The smaller the size the better, as a small pane of glass is not so liable to be broken large one, and can be more cheaply repaired. No cross bars are used in the sash—the panes overlapping each other about a quarter of an inch, like the shingles of a house, and resting on bars that run lengthwise, of each sash, just the right width for the panes to rest on two bars. The bars upon which the panes of glass rest should be an inch and a half to two inches wide.

**Preparation of the Beds.**—It is a good plan to dig a pit from one to two feet deep where the bed is to be made, although this is not always done. Over this pit must be placed the frame. Now fill in half full with some fresh horse stable manure which has not been exposed to the rains, and which, within the last two weeks, has been turned over two or three times. If the manure is rather dry, water should be sprinkled upon it. The sashes of glass may now be placed upon the bed frame and the bed left for about 12 hours, when air should be given it and which should be closed again. In three or four days the soil may be put on this bed of manure. Fine garden mould should be used, and it should be spread to the depth of six or eight inches evenly over the bed. In one or two days the seed may be sown. If sown as soon as the soil is put on, the soil is said to burn so as to destroy the germ of the seed. Therefore air should be given to the bed one or twice before the seed is sown. After the seed is sown the bed should be sprinkled with water from the watering pot daily till the plants appear. Air should be given daily when the weather will permit so as to make the plants strong and hardy. The bed should be kept at the temperature of about sixty degrees. The outside of the frame should be lanked up with manure so as to keep the bed warm. In cold freezing weather the beds will need to be protected by being covered with mats or straw.—Valley Farmer.

**SOWING OATS IN FEBRUARY.**—A correspondent of the American Farmer, living in Baltimore County, Maryland, reports having tried the experiment of sowing oats in February. He had prepared in the autumn of 1865 a small strip of tolerably rich clay loam, having an easterly exposure, and on the last snow in February he sowed it down in oats. At the same time the land was top-dressed at the rate of twenty-two horse cart loads of burn-yard compost per acre. For the purpose of covering the seed and manure, he relied upon the honey-comb state of the land, aided by the melting snow and spring rains. The seed germs started vigorously and promised success, and when the plants were sufficiently grown and the land dry, he passed a common drag harrow over it, followed by the roller. He ploughed, manured and managed three acres in a similar manner, and sowed the oats about the 10th of the following April. The oats sown in February produced a heavier crop, greater weight of grain and straw, and was ready for the scythe upwards of two weeks earlier than that sown in April. He says clover and other grass seeds may be sown in February, at the same time of seeding the oats.

This is a striking and useful experiment and should be fully tested. It is well known that there is a great advantage in the earliest possible sowing of this crop consistent with its safety, and which the preparation of the ground will allow. If further trials shall show similar results, a great improvement may be made on our common practice. It will greatly favor to the clover seed, if it can be sown thus early on land prepared in the fall. It may be too late with many farmers to try the experiment on fall-ploughed ground, but it would be a good idea to try it upon ground prepared during this month or early next. We hope some of our Tennessee farmers will give the experiment such a trial.

**SHEEP.**—If troubled with ticks, lice or scab, though at this season it will not do ordinarily to dip them, the spots most affected may be wet with the dipping solution (strong tobacco water, made by boiling tobacco stems mixed with strong country soft-soap). This is best applied by a lottle having a groove cut in the side of the cork with which it is stopped. Give sheep access to water daily. It is a great mistake to force them to eat snow or go without. Feed roots at night and especially to fattening sheep. Very little grain will be a great benefit, if equally distributed. Handle your sheep and know their condition.

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