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ABOUT THE FARM - - -

Notes by the Wayside—

Alfalfa Growing Is Studied By Farm Crops Specialist

By John J. Inskeep, County Agent

"It has been a pretty poor week when someone doesn't come forth with a new alfalfa variety," so says E. R. Jackman, Oregon Farm Crops Specialist and Agronomist H. H. Rampton. Seems to us he is right. Most any up and coming farm magazine has a story announcing a new alfalfa now and then. The question commonly asked is, "Is it a good variety for Clackamas county?"



Jackman and H. H. Rampton continue their communication by listing 30 alfalfa varieties much in the public eye of late. We think information relative to merits of these is worth passing on.

Not Recommended

Varieties NOT recommended for Clackamas county:

Arizona Chilean, Buffalo, Ferax, Hardistan, Hardigan, Kansas Common, Ladak, Montana Common—not a true variety, Modoc Common, Oklahoma Common, Orestan, Turkistan, Utah Common, Viking, Williamsburg. This is not to say that none of these will grow here. The point is that some will not and there are better varieties than the others.

Questionable Varieties

CALIVERDE—a new California alfalfa—probably unadapted. Originally from Siberia. Refound in an Alaska nursery. Not good for hay. A creeper which might be a good grazing variety.

NARRAGUSETT—from a new alfalfa breeding program. Really looks good but we don't yet know the place for it here. Seed scarce.

NEMASTAN—from Nevada. Has several of the characteristics of Talent. Jackman suggests Talent instead.

NOMAD—a creeper discussed in our column recently. Grady Bollinger, Sandy, has a small plot. No recommendation, yet under test.

RANGER—the whole U.S.D.A. force is behind this one. In the last trial it looked good for western Oregon. Less aggressive in resisting grass than many others. Needs further study before recommending here. Seed scarce.

SEVELRA—may have promise as a pasture variety. Needs further testing.

RHIZORNA—a Canadian creeper. May have a place as a pasture variety for western Oregon. Needs further testing.

ATLANTIC—one of the few alfalfas developed by breeding with a complex background of variegated and Turkistan strains. Promising in western Oregon.

Approved Varieties

BALTIC—much like Grimm the old Clackamas county favorite.

COSSACK—a little more winter hardy than Grimm.

GRIMM—our recommended variety for many years. Found in Minnesota in 1905. Hardy, variegated bloom. Alfalfa began to spread after Grimm was found. It is responsible for seed certification in the United States, due to enormous demand for it about the time of the first world war. It is leafy, dark colored, vigorous, high yielding. Still one of the best in western Oregon.

MEEKER BALTIC—from Meeker, Colorado. A selection from Baltic, but slightly higher in yield. Recovers quickly after cutting. Fine hay quality. Good wherever Grimm is used.

TALENT (we have heard much about this one) from Talent, Oregon Experiment Station. Selected as one of the best nematode resistant varieties. It is from France originally.

Merits

Nematode resistance. Quick recovery after cutting. High yield, especially in later cutting. Resists grass and weed encroachment.

Superior in southern Oregon and worth trying here.

These further suggestions relative to alfalfa. Plant with grass. Alta fescue or orchard grass four pounds per acre. Always lime up to requirement as shown by soil test. Always inoculate.

Plantings Near Sandy

In the past most of our alfalfa acreage has been limited to Willamette, Newberg and Chehalis soils. But of late years a few fairly good plantings have appeared near Sandy Ridge. William Widmer and Anton Malar have very good plantings here.

Why don't we establish an alfalfa variety nursery and pasture types on one or more good red hill farms? Anyone wanting to establish such a trial might contact us. We shall provide as many varieties as we are able to secure.

Sheep Breeders

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Kassner, Clairmont, and Dr. C. H. Seagraves were the only Clackamas county producers attending the annual get-together of the Oregon Purebred Sheep Breeders held in Salem last week. This is a meeting worthy of more local support. An opportunity exists for more purebred sheep operators in this county.

Dr. Seagraves and son, Ed, raise purebred Romneys on their Logan farm. The Kassners are Corriedale breeders.

Decline In Beef Prices

The recent decline in beef prices is due to appearance on the market of cattle fed soft corn, of which the middle west has a great quantity this year.

At least this is the opinion of R. L. Clark, retired livestock commission merchant who operated on the North Portland yards for many years. He is well known in Clackamas county.

Spring rains prevented corn planting at the normal time over much of the corn belt this spring. This result is—or was—immature corn which had to be fed immediately. R. L. Clark looks at the price drop as one of a temporary nature.

Salem Man Sheep Judge

Oregon purebred sheep breeders are famous for the quality of their stock. Purebred Oregon rams are in demand in California, Idaho, Utah and Nevada. A few are shipped to more distant states. California purebred sheepmen welcome a large consignment of Oregon rams to their annual auction.

Ronald Hagg, Salem Hampshire breeder is famous as a sheep judge—often serves in this capacity for the Pacific Inter-

national Livestock Show and at the great Chicago show.

The Willamette Valley is suffering from a severe hay shortage which we predicted in this column last June. But many of our Clackamas county stockmen have plenty of hay raised right at home.

Walter Fisher, Carus, President of the Clackamas County Livestock Association and Grassman of the Year for this area says, "I regard alta fescue and sub clover, properly raised, just as good as the best alfalfa, even if it does get rained upon."

Judging from comments made at the Sheep Breeders' Association meeting, our Clackamas county farmers have better winter pasture than average throughout the valley. We were surprised to learn that many valley sheepmen do not depend much on winter pasture to any extent.

All feed prices are extremely high. One Clackamas county dealer told us that he has been paying \$80 a ton for oats for shipment to California for feeding. Part of this shortage is due to last summer's drought, part to heavy shipment of Columbia basin wheat abroad. Under what we considered, normal conditions in the past, much of this wheat was fed in this area. Cotton cake is selling at \$100 a ton.

When is a spring lamb? We never were able to decide for sure, but quite a few December ones have put in an appearance. Jack Kassner, Clairmont, reports two. With plenty of good Clackamas county pasture and hay, these should bring fancy prices at Easter time.

New Strawberry Varieties

An interesting exhibit at the recent Clackamas County Corn Show, having nothing in particular to do with corn, consisted of plants of California's new strawberry varieties. This exhibit was made by Elwood Faist, Canby. We forget names of all of them but do remember Shasta and Lassen. Elwood expects to test all of them for production next summer. Regardless of their possible production merits locally, they were thrifty looking plants.

Control for Berry Pests

We can't let the cat out of the bag until a final field check has been made but it looks as if control for one of our worst strawberry pests has been found due to a neat bit of cooperation between three Clackamas county growers, Extension Agent Leon Garoian and O. S. C. Entomologists. If so, this will be a sensational discovery because of its cheapness and effectiveness.

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