

Crook County Journal

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A Mountain of Gold.

could not bring as much happiness to Mrs. Lucia Wilke, of Caroline, Wis., as did one 25c box of Bucklen's Arnica Salve, when it completely cured a running sore on her leg, which had tortured her 22 long years. Greatest anti-septic healer of Piles, Wounds and Sores. 25c at D. P. Adamson and Templeton & Son Drug store.

DRY LAND ALFALFA

It is No Longer a Theory but a Fact.

SOIL PREPARATION.

How the Land Should be Cultivated to Get the Best Returns.

The cultivation of alfalfa without irrigation has long been a mooted question with Crook county farmers. Some have tried the experiment and failed while others have had only doubtful success. The trouble has been the lack of definite information on the subject. The United States Department of Agriculture supplies the lacking information and it is hoped our ranchers will again take up the experiment. Byron Hunter, who is in charge of farm management investigations in the Pacific Northwest offers some practical suggestions that have been found to work well in practice. He claims that if these methods are followed the success with alfalfa will be in the same proportion as success with wheat at present, and the yield of wheat be increased by reason of an improved condition of the soil.

Alfalfa is now generally recognized as the most satisfactory hay and pasture plant that has been grown on the dry wheat lands of eastern Oregon and eastern Washington. On such land it does not reach its highest development until about the third year, since it requires some time for the root system to develop sufficiently to take up the required moisture for the plant. Therefore, little must be expected from it the first year. When properly sown and cared for, a fair crop of hay may be expected the second year. Since alfalfa does not give its largest returns for two or three years, it should be sown with the expectation of allowing it to occupy the ground for a number of years.

The success of alfalfa in this region depends largely upon the preparation of the soil, the method of seeding, and the care of the stand. The writer has spent considerable time in studying the methods of the farmers most successful in growing alfalfa without irrigation and what is said in this article is based almost entirely upon this study.

Preparation of the soil.—The ground selected for alfalfa should be as free as possible from weeds and in perfect tilth. In all localities where the rainfall is not sufficient to grow wheat without summer fallowing every year, the land should be plowed deep in the fall, winter, or early spring. It should be thoroughly cultivated during the spring and summer to kill weeds, retain moisture, pack the subsoil, and put the soil in good tilth. In such localities the subsoil of new land is comparatively dry when compared with the subsoil of the same kind of land that has been farmed for a number of years. Alfalfa is a deep feeder and requires plenty of moisture for its best development. It is very essential, therefore, that land be selected that has been farmed for a number of years to be sure that there is plenty of moisture in the subsoil to carry the young plants through the first dry summer.

Near the mountains where the rainfall is sufficient, the growing of a thoroughly cultivated crop of corn, potatoes, roots, or sugar beets will put the land in good condition for alfalfa. Land that has produced a crop of wheat, oats, or barley may be plowed and thoroughly prepared in the spring and the seed sown with the land in apparently good condition. However, a study of the results of farmers who have tried the two

methods leads to the conclusion that, even where rainfall is plentiful, alfalfa gets a much better start and begins to give satisfactory yields so much quicker if a cultivated crop of corn, roots, sugar beets, or potatoes, is raised to prepare the soil. If the cultivated crop can not be grown, it will pay to summer fallow, the object of either being to germinate and kill all weed seed in the surface of the soil, retain moisture and get the land into good physical condition. Thorough cultivation is therefore, essential. In the early spring after summer fallowing or growing the cultivated crop, the land should be thoroughly cultivated and put into the best possible tilth. Too much preparation of the seed bed can not be given. As soon as danger of killing frost is over, the soil should be cultivated again to kill weeds and the seed sown immediately.

Sowing the Seed.—Repeated trials throughout the country have demonstrated that it is a waste of time and seed to sow alfalfa with a crop of grain. The grain shades the alfalfa too much and robs it of the moisture necessary to carry it through the first summer. Ten to fifteen pounds of good seed per acre is generally sufficient. It is usually sown broadcast and covered with a tooth harrow. Perhaps the most satisfactory and economical way to sow alfalfa seed is with a common grain drill with a grass seeder attachment. For this purpose seeders should be used that are provided with tubes to carry the seed into the hose or beside the discs of the drill. If such a seeder is not to be had the tubes may be detached from the feed box of the drill and attached to the spout of the seeder. In dry localities where there is little or no danger of crusts forming on the surface of the soil the drill is set to cover the seed from 1 1/2 to 2 inches deep. In moist localities where crusts are liable to form the seed should not be covered so deep. When all of the seed is covered the proper depth in this way, much less seed is required than when it is sown broadcast.

Treatment of the Stand.—If weeds are numerous and tend to crowd out the alfalfa during the first summer, they are usually mown often enough to hold them in check. The cutter-bar of the mowers should be set about five inches high in order that the young alfalfa plants may not be cut too closely. If the weeds are heavy and tend to smother out the alfalfa, they should be removed from the field; if not numerous they may be permitted to lie where cut.

The leaves and stems of alfalfa sometimes turn yellow and the crop then assumes a very unhealthy appearance. As soon as this condition begins to manifest itself, the field should be mown immediately, even though the growth be very small. If the growth is sufficient the first year it may be used for either hay or pasture, but under no circumstances should it be pastured closely the first year.

When alfalfa is one year old it should be disked in the early spring as soon as the ground is in good working condition. The harrow should be set straight enough to prevent cutting off the roots of the alfalfa. It is sometimes necessary to weight the harrow to make it cut deep enough. The worker must use his own judgment as to weighting the harrow, the angle at which to set the discs, and the amount of harrowing to be done. Instead of using the disk harrow, some prefer to use the spring tooth harrow or a cultivator with narrow shovels. A tooth harrow should follow the disk to smooth and pulverize the surface of the soil. Treating alfalfa in this way will form a dust mulch and conserve moisture for the use of the crop during the dry season. As stated above, alfalfa should always be treated in this way in the early spring on the dry wheat land without irrigation. It may be given the same treatment also just after cutting a crop of hay or at any

time when it has made but little growth. As the stand becomes older and the roots larger the disk harrow may be set to run deeper. After it is well established the more cultivation the better.

In the dry localities like this where corn, roots, and potatoes do not grow successfully, wheat and alfalfa may alternate. The alfalfa may occupy the land for a number of years, as long as it is profitable. When the alfalfa is plowed up and wheat is raised again in the usual way the yields will be materially increased.

The methods given above for growing alfalfa require some time and expense, but paying returns will be obtained so much quicker and the alfalfa will last so much longer, if sown and cared for in this way, that the extra time and expense are justified.

High Price for Sheep.

Present sky prices asked for sheep is a topic of frequent comment. There is an apparent scarcity with many would-be purchasers making inquiries. Four cents per pound was paid recently for a band of 100 ewes with the result that they cost the buyer \$5.96 per head. Ever since that transaction the general price is \$6 with but few selling, mainly because there is little or no surplus.

The figures are very high, but in many an instance in the past year a sheep has yielded as much as that or even more to the owner. A farmer who discussed the matter said his band of ewes sheared an average of eight pounds of wool which went at 25 cents, making \$2 per head. The band averaged also a lamb to the ewe, and the lambs were sold at \$3.65, a total of \$5.65 per head, making his band of sheep by far the best investment on his farm.

The top quotation for mutton sheep is four cents per pound. The condition presented is, that sheep are worth as much or more for stocking purposes as for mutton.—Corvallis Times.

Transportation Necessary.

Charles O. Johnston, son of one of the principal men in the big Deschutes irrigation work, has just returned from the scene of work, and will depart at once for his home, in Columbus, O., says the Telegram. "I found everything progressing satisfactorily on the Deschutes," said Mr. Johnston, at the Portland. "We are running water through two big canals now, and are pushing work rapidly on other parts of the great project. Settlers have arrived in large numbers during the year, so that we have a large community in the basin. This being the second year for some of them, they will have many good crops, which can find market only by being fed to live stock, as the haul to railways is too long.

"I cannot comprehend the theory of the railway builders regarding such development work as we have undertaken. We have proved that the land will bear good crops, when irrigated, that the water can be supplied economically and that the people are eager to take the land if they are assured a living. Yet the railway builders say that they cannot go in until a tonnage has been developed. Our people will not raise crops merely to rot on the ground, and they cannot market them. If a more confident spirit is not shown by the transportation magnates, we will never get a railway down the Deschutes. Every assurance that moral certainty conveys is awaiting the railway builder now, but the time will never come, I believe, when the people will grow a tonnage of crops sufficient to make the railway profitable before the railway is built into the district."

The fourth annual conference of the engineers of the United States Reclamation Service will be held at Boise, Idaho, September 3 to 8, the fourteenth irrigation congress also being in session at Boise at that time.

PRINEVILLE THE TOWN

One of the Best in Eastern Oregon.

SO SAYS A VISITOR

Many Improvements Noted—Old Acquaintances Renewed.

Last week we visited Prineville, the County Seat of Crook county, which is one of the best towns for business in eastern Oregon says the Mitchell Sentinel. It had been several years since our last visit to the town and of course many changes. Where there was wooden shacks we found in their place large brick buildings. The Prineville hotel, which is now under construction is almost completed, and it is built of stone found near the town. The building will be a credit to any town. And the best part of the story is that it is being built under a lady superintendent, Mrs. C. E. McDowell, who looks after the most minute details of the work of construction and is the sole owner. As we saw Mrs. McDowell passing through the building and watching the progress of the work in her unassuming way, we wondered if she could not cast as intelligent vote as that man we saw a few minutes before staggering along the sidewalk.

We found W. A. Booth, who is well and favorably known in this part of the country, in his bank and prospering, but the same Bill Booth that he was in the days gone by when he was a cow-boy in the Bridge Creek country. Mr. Cornett was there all business and looking after his different stage lines. There are many other names we would like to mention but will have to pass them for this time, but alas, many old pioneer friends have crossed to the other shore and soon no one will be left to tell the story of the early settlement of Crook county, no one to tell of the desert which now glows in luxuriance, no one to tell us how they made one of earth's loneliest places to blossom like the rose, no one to tell how, when westward the living tide was wending its way, the brave men and women left their homes in the east, and the love that had reared them knew their faces no more. Elisha Barnes, Jim Combs, John Samuels, Dave Prine, Col. Nye and others have answered the last great roll call.

Prineville or somewhere in its vicinity will be built the town of Eastern Oregon but where that is to be no one knows, time alone will tell. In the nature of things and with the rich country around it Prineville will remain a good town regardless of any that may spring up.

Grant County Cattle.

L. M. Adams, of McKay, passed through Pilot Rock with forty head of cattle, gathered up in the John Day country, which are to be shipped to Seattle.

Three-year-old steers are selling from \$25 to \$30 per head in Grant county, and cows at from \$17 to \$20. Mr. Adams says there are to be shipped out of the John Day country within the next two or three months upwards of 5000 head of cattle. Prices are better than last year and the present market is inclined to have an upward tendency.—Pilot Rock Record.

The use of crude oil as a dust preventative is proving very successful on the streets of Salem. The County Court recently had ordinary fuel oil put on half of each of the streets surrounding the Courthouse square and the result has been an entire elimination of the dust nuisance there.

1-4 Off 1-4 Off

CLEARANCE SALE ON

Gents' Summer Underwear

CLAYPOOL BROS.

Prineville, Oregon