

New Forage Plants Introduced From Foreign Countries

Various Kinds Being Tested For Use in Canada.

By L. E. KIRK,
Dominion Agrostologist
(Experimental Farms Note)

It is an interesting fact that nearly all of our most valued forage crop plants have come from foreign lands. Many of these were brought to America a long time ago by the very early settlers, while others, such as brome grass and crested wheat grass have been introduced in comparatively recent times.

In every part of the world an intensive search is being carried on for new kinds of hay and pasture plants which can be grown successfully under special soil and climatic conditions. It is of great importance that these new crops should be brought to this country and tested under the various conditions which are to be found here. This is being done by the Division of Forage Crops, Dominion Experimental Farm at Ottawa. When anything shows signs of promise, it is tested on experimental farms throughout the Dominion.

In recent years the number of plant introductions have been large. As would be expected, most of them prove to be of little value, but a fair number show considerable promise. Among the latter are certain strains of millet from Asia which are so promising that several of them may come into general use.

A number of legumes are being studied because of their adaptation to acid soils. These include strains of Lespedeza, crown vetch, lupins, serradella and a perennial type of red clover. Lupins and serradella grow very well on sandy acid soils in the Maritime Provinces and crown vetch produces an excellent growth at Ottawa. Lespedeza, to date, has been somewhat disappointing.

A number of perennial plants which do not survive Canadian winters have, nevertheless, shown promise as annuals.

These are all new plants in Canadian agriculture. To these must be added numerous improved varieties of those crops which are commonly grown in this country.

RAGWORT IN THE EMPIRE

Ragwort is a noxious weed which is a serious menace to economic farming in the Highlands of Scotland and also in New Zealand in the King County of North Island. It is the cause of a curious and fatal disease of the liver in cattle. In New Zealand it is being fought with the larva of the Cinnabar moth (imported from England) and by the use of sodium chlorate. In Canada the weed was introduced from Europe and is found in the Pictou and Antigonish counties of Nova Scotia and in parts of Prince Edward Island. It has also been reported from Quebec and some parts of Ontario. In Canada its seeds are seldom found in commercial samples of grain and the weed is eradicated by rotation of crops and the close cutting of pastures. It is a perennial with very showy, golden-yellow flowers.

POOR HONEY SEASON

Melbourne. — Officials of the Victorian Apiarists' Association say the Australian season for honey production has been the worst since 1914. Reports from every district except Gippsland indicated there was an almost complete failure of the honey crop.

HAD MOSQUITO BITE

Hull, Eng. — Judge Beazley held a mosquito bite may incapacitate a man and ordered payment of wages to a timber worker who was off the job several days following an attack by a swarm of insects.

AGRICULTURE

How To Start Bee-Keeping Discussed In Farm Bulletin

This Business Requires Experience To Be Successful.

By C. E. GOODERHAM,
Dominion Apiarist
(Experimental Farms Note)

Due to an increasing demand and the good prices received for honey, many people are being attracted to beekeeping as a means of making a livelihood or of supplementing a reduced income from other sources. Beekeeping, however, like all other lines of endeavor requires experience to make it a successful undertaking, and many a beginner has finally given up in disgust just for the want of it.

Details of management cannot be given in an article such as this but to gain experience in the manipulation of bees the beginner is well advised to spend at least one full season working with an experienced beekeeper before purchasing bees for himself. Failing this the next best method to obtain one or two colonies, a good text book and to visit nearby beekeepers as often as possible. A beginner is often misled into buying his first lot of bees during late summer or in the fall, this is a mistake and likely to cause a lot of trouble and possible loss of the colonies. The best time of the year to start beekeeping is during the spring, for if anything is wrong with the colonies it can be rectified during the summer but not during the winter. Often bees are purchased by a beginner as a bargain when a little experience would show that they would be expensive as a gift. Never buy bees unless they are in movable frame hives of not less than ten frame size, and that they are absolutely free from disease. Furthermore, be sure that each colony is headed with a good queen. Do not buy colonies of bees from a nearby beekeeper and move them during the active season, for if you do, the field force of the colony will return to their old home and your colony will be left in a week condition. To prevent this the colonies should be moved for at least two miles. A new swarm can be moved anywhere. All the way through the active season there are problems of manipulation upon which almost everyone is anxious to give the beginner some advice, which if accepted more often than not leads to trouble. Get all the experience you can before starting, and if in doubt write to the Bee Division, Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, for information.

PLACING OF CANADIAN FEEDING STUFFS ON A DIGESTIBLE BASIS

Should Be Used With Regard To Food Value.

By C. J. WATSON,
Ottawa, Ont.
(Experimental Farms Note)

If feeding stuffs in Canada were bought and used on the basis of their content of digestible nutrients, a more intelligent selection in buying them and a more economical use in feeding them could be made. At the present time these feeding stuffs are bought on the basis of their chemical composition and home-grown feeds are evaluated according to the quantity of protein, fat and carbohydrates they contain.

Using only the chemical composition as a basis of evaluation, important deductions have been made and will continue to be made regarding the suitability of the various feeds for specific purposes.

For years the Division of Chemistry at the Central Experimental Farm has maintained an advisory service in connection with Canadian feeding stuffs. Samples submitted for a chemical analysis have been examined and, based upon this chemical examination, recommendations concerning their value and use have been made.

This method of evaluating feeds upon the basis of their chemical composition possesses a disadvantage. Although it determines the amount of total protein, it gives no indication of the degree to which each nutrient is utilized in the animal body. A determination, however, of the digestible protein, digestible fat and digestible carbohydrates contained therein will aid greatly in remedying this defect.

With this point in view, investigations are being conducted at the Central Experimental Farm to determine the digestibilities of Canadian feeding stuffs and to examine the factors which may effect these digestibilities. Results have so far been obtained with corn, silage, mixed clover and grass hay, timothy hay, oat straw, oat hulls, soy bean meal and a manufactured proprietary feed.

Particular reference may be made to the above-mentioned proprietary feed. Its chemical composition indicates a value approximating that of timothy. A determination of the digestible nutrients contained therein, however, gave it a value approximating that of oat hulls. This illustrates the importance of ascertaining the content of digestible, as well as total nutrients in a feeding stuff.

New Varieties Of Sweet Corn Have Been Introduced

Earlier Crops Mean More Profit to the Grower.

By L. C. YOUNG,
Fredericton, N. B.
(Experimental Farms Note)

Profit in the growing of sweet corn from the market gardening standpoint is dependent upon earliness. The very early crop sells readily at a distinct profit. The late crop is practically unsaleable. For this reason, the growing of corn for market is confined to districts noted for their earliness. But this is only one factor in the production of early corn. The question of variety is also a very important consideration, and one which has been overlooked to a large extent by the majority of growers.

For many years, the variety Golden Bantam has been considered a standard. Its size of ear, color and outstanding quality rank it easily first as a main crop variety. It is not early, however, and plant breeders everywhere have been endeavoring to produce an early variety equal to Golden Bantam in size and quality. Of the varieties tested at the Dominion Experimental Station, at Fredericton, N.B., two developed by the Central Experimental Farm at Ottawa have proven distinctly promising. Banting is ten days to two weeks earlier than Golden Bantam, but may be criticized on account of size of ear, and it is only fair in quality. The variety Doorinny under a one year's test has proven to be intermediate in season between Banting and Golden Bantam. The ear is slightly longer than that of Banting, but not as large as that of Golden Bantam. In quality, it approaches Golden Bantam.

Both Banting and Doorinny sell readily on account of their resemblance to Golden Bantam in external appearance, and, on account of their earliness, are well worthy of a trial by all growers.

Seed-Cleaning Of Great Importance To The Farmer

Portable Plants For This Purpose Should Be Established.

By R. A. DERICK,
Ottawa, Ont.
(Experimental Farms Note)

An effort has been made in many parts of the country to make it comparatively easy for the farmer to get his seed cleaned. The establishment of local and district seed cleaning plants has been encouraged by government institutions, including the Dominion Experimental Farms, and many have been in operation for a number of years. Where local cleaning plants are in operation, it remains only for the grower to haul his seed to the plant where it will be cleaned and graded at comparatively small cost. When a grower is not fortunate enough to be located reasonably close to a cleaning plant and has no other convenient means of getting the work done, it is good business either to purchase a small sized fanning mill himself or arrange to have the use of one in his locality.

In some parts of the country, particularly in Western Canada, travelling cleaning plants take care of considerable seed cleaning. Complete outfits mounted on trucks do custom cleaning in much the same way as custom threshing is done. To any one who can finance the undertaking, the travelling cleaning plant offers an opportunity of turning spare time during the winter into cash particularly in districts where no modern seed cleaning equipment is available.

Seed cleaning is an off season job and should not be put off until spring when time is more valuable on the farm and cleaning plants are usually running at full capacity. If the cleaning is to be done by the local plant it is best, therefore, to haul in the seed during the winter when better satisfaction can be given by the plant operators and the cost of hauling may be lower. If one waits until spring to prepare or set aside enough good grain for seed, he often finds that the best has been fed during the winter with the result that poorer seed may actually be used that would have otherwise been necessary. It is important in this connection to guard against the purchase of new or little known varieties and further, to insist on government graded seed.

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

DOMINION EXPERIMENTAL STATION,
FREDERICTON, N. B.

PREPARING FOR LAMBING SEASON

The Fredericton Experimental Station is checking up on the condition of the breeding ewes this week. The lambs are expected to arrive in about two months and a little attention to the breeding ewes at this time will help to insure a profitable crop of lambs.

Upon examination some ewes may be found to be too thin. At this station the ewes in poor condition will be separated from the rest of the flock and given a half-pound of grain daily as a supplement to the regular ration of clover hay and pulped turnips. A grain mixture made up of two parts crushed oats and one part bran is excellent, but would be improved by the addition of one part linseed oil meal. All the ewes will be given about a half-pound of meal daily commencing two or three weeks before lambing. This stimulates the milk flow and insures a good start for the lambs. As lambing season approaches, care will be taken to

provide feeds which are slightly laxative, such as good clover hay, wheat bran and oil meal. By taking this precaution, many troubles at lambing time may be avoided.

The Shropshires at the Fredericton Experimental Station have a heavy growth of wool on the face at this time of year and very often have their sight obstructed by the wool. At this station, the wool is sheared from around the eyes when necessary. This makes for greater comfort for the ewes and lessens the danger of their being injured, thus assisting in keeping the flock in a thrifty condition.

The udders of the ewes will also be examined for defects and all loose wool around the udders will be removed to enable the lambs to nurse with ease. This will also reduce the danger of losses through swallowing tags which have a tendency to form balls of wool in the lambs' stomach.



Passenger—"We can't sit here all day, driver! What are we going to do?"
Driver (fed up)—"Well, 'ow about making a nice snow-man?"
—The Humorist, London.