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GROWING SUDAN GRASS

Experimental Results at Ontario Agricultural College.

Average Yields for Five Years for Green Crop and for Hay—How it compares with Millet and Sorghum—A Good Emergency Crop—About Alfalfa.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

This forage plant, which belongs to the sorghum family, and is one of the finest in leaf and stalk of this group of plants, was introduced into the United States from Africa in 1909. During the last ten years it has obtained considerable prominence in the South-western States, and more recently has been advertised and sold by seedsmen in Ontario, and also grown by a few farmers in the Province.

Sudan Grass has been under test in the experiments at Guelph for the past eight years. During this time it has been grown for its total green fodder yield, for hay, for seed and for pasture.

Average Yields for Five Years.

The following table gives the average yield for five years of green fodder and of hay per acre of this crop, and of three types of Millet, Mand's Wonder Forage Plant and Early Amber Sugar Sorghum:

Varieties	Green Crop Tons	Hay Tons
Early Amber Sugar Sorghum	16.92	8.19
Mand's Wonder Forage Plant	12.16	6.22
Japanese Panicum	10.43	4.41
Millet	11.23	4.33
Sudan Grass	8.90	3.69
Siberian Millet No. 71	8.52	3.55

For the results of this experiment the plots were all sown broadcast.

It will be seen that in yield of green fodder and of hay per acre the Sudan Grass was surpassed by five of the six crops included in the test. The quality of hay made from Sudan Grass was superior to that made from Early Amber Sugar Sorghum and Mand's Wonder Forage Plant, and slightly inferior to that made from the three Millets. This and other experiments indicate that Sudan Grass, although it yields somewhat less per acre, makes a better quality of hay than any of the other eight classes of sorghums which we have had under test.

In the average of two years' tests in which Sudan Grass was grown for seed production in comparison with three varieties of millet, tef grass and early amber sugar sorghum, the Sudan Grass weighed 38.1 pounds per measured bushel, yielded 4.52 tons of straw and 36.7 pounds of grain per acre. This was a smaller yield of grain than that produced by the early amber sugar sorghum and three different varieties of millet.

In pasture experiments at Guelph, Sudan Grass has stood the hot, dry summers very well. Sowing a mixture of six pecks of O.A.C. No. 72 Oats and 15 pounds of Sudan Grass seed per acre produced a greater amount of pasture than when Sudan Grass was sown alone.

Must Be Sown on Warm Soil.

Our experience with Sudan Grass leads us to believe that the plant is more subject to injury by late frosts in the spring than the average variety of dent corn. In drought resistance it is the equal, if not the superior, of Indian corn. It is essential in sowing Sudan Grass that it be not sown until the soil is warm. We have had the best results from sowing this crop just after the corn has been seeded. When sown for hay or pasture, Sudan Grass is usually sown broadcast or in close drills. 25 to 30 pounds per acre should be sown when Sudan Grass is sown alone, and when used in mixtures for pasture about 15 pounds per acre is sown. Sudan Grass should be cut for hay when the heads are in full bloom, and may be cured in much the same manner as timothy. This crop has been little grown for silage either in the United States or Canada. The reasons for this being that it is a better hay and pasture than a silage plant and that Indian corn is a larger yielder of silage than Sudan Grass.

We have had different classes of sorghum under experiment at Guelph for twenty-eight years, and Sudan Grass for the past eight years. Up to the present time we have had no trouble from sorghum poisoning in the feeding of Sudan Grass or the other sorghums to stock.

Worth Trying as a Pasture Crop.

From the experimental evidence at hand, it would seem that Sudan Grass has shown sufficient promise to warrant its trial in a limited way for pasture, and as an emergency hay crop on the warmer soil of Southern and South-western Ontario, and in favored areas even farther north. Sudan Grass has been included in the co-operative experimental tests in each of the past four years, and will be distributed again in the spring of 1924. Any farmer in Ontario, therefore, who desires to test this plant under his own conditions may have an opportunity of doing so.—W. J. Squirrell, O.A. College, Guelph.

Ontario Variegated and Grimm Alfalfa.

Ontario Variegated is not a Grimm alfalfa. The seed of the former was obtained from Lorraine in 1871 and has been grown in Welland County for the last half century. The Grimm variety was brought from Baden, Germany, by Kulaheim Grimm and was sown in Carver County, Minnesota, in 1858, where this type of alfalfa has been grown since that time. Both varieties have variegated flowers and are similar in some characteristics.

SOW THE BEST BARLEY

The World Has Been Searched For the Finest Variety.

The O. A. C. No. 21 Was Then Developed From the Manchouri, From Russia—Started From a Single Seed at Guelph in 1903—Feeding for Horses.

(Contributed by Ontario Department of Agriculture, Toronto.)

The O.A.C. No. 21 barley has been such a marked success in Canada that a few words regarding its origin and development may be of interest to the many farmers growing that grain.

A World Search for the Best Barley.

During the year 1888 the Field Husbandry Department of the Ontario Agricultural College made a world search for the best variety of barley in existence. In the spring of 1889, fifty-seven different kinds of barley were grown under test. A variety from Russia, under the name of Manchouri, gave such good results in the first and following tests, surpassing all other varieties in a five year average by five bushels per acre per annum, that it was multiplied for distribution. In 1892 this variety, Manchouri, was distributed in pound lots to co-operative experimenters throughout Ontario and was continued in co-operative test for each of eighteen years. It gave such good returns that from the pound lots sent to the farmers this barley was rapidly increased until it became the most extensively grown barley of the province.

The Manchouri a Great Mother Variety.

In the spring of 1903 between nine and ten thousand selected grains of the Manchouri barley were planted by hand, at equal distances apart in the experimental grounds. This method gave an opportunity for each plant to show its individuality. At different stages of growth and when ripe the plants were carefully examined, and the most promising ones were selected and threshed, after which the grain from the individual plants was examined. A definite number of grains from each of the selected plants were sown separately in the spring of 1904. The best performers, in decreasing numbers, were continued in the tests from year to year. The plant selected by the writer in 1903 as probably the most outstanding individual was included in the seeding list as number 21, and the progeny gave such excellent results that it was introduced into the co-operative experiments in the spring of 1906 where it has been included continually since that date under the name of O.A.C. No. 21. It gave such good satisfaction throughout Ontario that the farmers increased it rapidly and for the last few years there has been scarcely a field of any other variety of barley grown in the province.

Started From a Single Seed in 1903.

The O.A.C. No. 21 barley, which was started from a single seed in 1903 is a six-rowed, bearded barley with stiff straw and white grain of good quality. In the experiments at the College the common six-rowed variety of barley has been surpassed by the Manchouri in a period of thirty-three years by an average yield per acre per annum of ten bushels, and by the O.A.C. No. 21 in a period of seventeen years by eleven bushels. According to reports of the Statistics Branch of the Ontario Department of Agriculture, the barley crop of Ontario has made an actual increase in yield per acre for the last twenty-one years, in comparison with the two previous decades of 17.33 per cent., or an average yield per acre per annum of four and one-half bushels.—Department of Extension, O.A. College, Guelph.

FEEDING FOR BACON.

Leave Litters With Sows for Eight Weeks—Selection as Important as Breed—Procure Sod for Feed in Winter.

At the Ontario Agriculture College all litters are left with the sows until they are eight weeks old. Skim milk and middlings are the most satisfactory feeds on which to start the newly weaned pigs. Rations are made up with the idea of promoting growth during the first four months, by using growth promoting ration, than fattening feeds until the pigs are five months old. Middlings, skim milk, whey, tankage and clover and protein feeds and capable of building bone and muscle. When the pigs are well grown at five months old the ration is changed for the finishing or fattening period. Two-thirds barley and one-third finely ground oats, along with skim milk has been highly satisfactory. Tankage up to 8 or 10 per cent. has been successfully and profitably used when skim milk was not available.

In the experimental feeding with swine at the Ontario Agricultural College it has been found that there is but very little difference in the cost of gains with the various breeds, but there is a difference in the grade of product, which means more money for the kind that grade "select." Four hundred pounds of meat or its equivalent produced one hundred pounds of gain in weight for four breeds in the test. In cheapness of gain the bacon breeds fully held their own.

Before it freezes up store a wagon load or two of good, tough, green sods away in the barn cellar, pit or shed. Such will be very useful to toss into the pig pens now and again during the winter months. The pigs need mineral matter and this is an easy, cheap and efficient way to get it to them.—Department of Extension, O.A. College, Guelph.

In packing meat, put it in the brine skin side down, except the top layer, which should be turned flesh side down.

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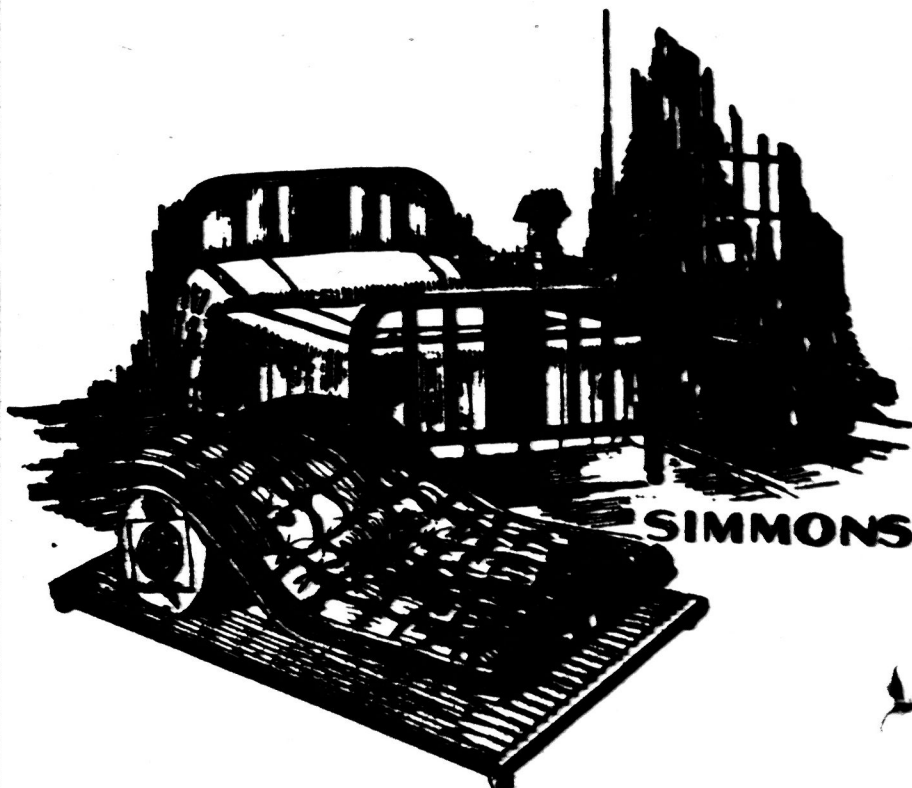
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