

Farm Queries

Address All Letters to Farm Editor, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto. All Answers Will Appear in This Column. If Personal Reply is Desired, Enclose Stamped and Addressed Envelope.

B. F.—We are planning to grow a small acreage of sugar beets this coming year, and as it will be our first experience along this line, can you advise us as to what analysis of fertilizer to use? Which is the best soil for sugar beets? We have one field heavy ground with clay subsoil, the other is blackish ground with gravelly bottom.

Answer.—Sugar beets do not do well on excessively heavy ground. For this reason I would advise you to put your beets on the blackish ground with gravelly bottom, provided, of course, that it is not too open and sandy, and drying out early in the growing season.

Moreover, the sugar beet develops very largely below the level of the soil. This requires that the soil be deeply worked and of a sufficiently open texture that the beet can develop its full growth. Sugar beets send their roots more deeply into the soil than is generally thought, another reason for the more open soil.

As to fertilizer for sugar beets, for the past four years the Department of Chemistry, Ontario Agricultural College, has been carrying on cooperative tests with several sugar beet growers. Each year a number of fertilizers have been tested. The choice of fertilizers seems to lie between 2-15-6 and 2-15-6-1. For your type of soil I believe 2-15-6, per acre of 2-15-6 would give excellent results.

A. T.—I am growing up, low, heavy, field of soil, six years old. What would you advise sowing on it for sheep pasture? In the spring or fall the best time to apply fertilizers?

Answer.—The success of your sheep pasture will depend to quite an extent on the drainage that you have in the field. In any event, the soil should be thoroughly worked in the spring, and if you are planning on sowing a mixture for sheep feed for next summer the probability is that you may be able to work this land fairly well along in spring so as to get the best fall time to apply fertilizers.

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For cultivated crops, as a general rule, fertilizers are applied in spring. There is some argument for applying the phosphate and potash in the fall, although, comparing results with those obtained from spring application, there is no argument in favor of the fall application.

J. D.—I have a few patches of soil starting on my farm. Will you kindly let me know the best way to kill them? Will salt kill them? If so, what is the best way to put it on?

Answer.—It is questionable if anything can be done at this time of year to effectively kill soil thistles. It has been claimed that certain salt materials can be applied to advantage on soil thistle patches, but the great difficulty is that anything that will kill soil thistles will kill all other crops that grow on the soil, for some time. In tests conducted in Perth county during the past three years, most effective treatment of soil thistles was obtained by midsummer, plowing, letting the land lie in ridges till it was nearly dried.

In the spring, a well mixed grain after spring thoroughly working the soil and seed with alfalfa or clover mixture. In order to give the grain a vigorous start and to insure a healthy stand of legumes, apply about 250 to 375 lbs. of fertilizer per acre. On medium loam soil, 2-15-6 has been found a better. With this aid the grain makes a very vigorous start and it success fully competes with thistles.

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