GROWING CLOVER FOR SEED.

The high prices paid for clover seed during the past few years has caused many farmers of Wisconsin to consider the advisability of turning their attention to this line of effort. It seems quite conclusive from the success experienced by those who have pursued the raising of clover seed, giving the subject the thought and care due to so important a crop, that Wisconsin farmers can raise clover seed in conjunction with a hay crop at a good profit.

Some localities of the state are more especially adapted to raising clover than others, and in these favored districts the clover does not only grow better but the heads seem to fill out with seed better. This fact has led many farmers who live in what is known as the clover belt to raise clover for seed extensively and attract buyers of clover seed to that section of the state. These farmers realizing the money that can be made by growing this important legume for seed purposes have given the plant special care and attention, in other words, have made a study of growing clover. It seems quite conclusive that this clover belt proper could be made much wider and longer, as a matter of fact, could be made to extend all over the state if farmers made a study of the proper conditions under which clover is raised for seed. It also seems quite conclusive, that it would be an important crop for the general farmer to turn his attention to, as Wisconsin seems naturally adapted for raising most legumes, and especially clover.

The Medium red, or common red clover is the clover most commonly grown by farmers of this state. The Mammoth, Alsike and white clovers are also grown but not so extensively as the medium red, consequently we will consider the common clover specifically and the other varieties generally.

The medium red clover is a biennial plant, the seed being sown one season and the harvest proper to take place the following year. If sown without a nurse crop often a cutting of hay may be produced the first season. The usual practice followed by most farmers is to sow in the spring with barley, oats or some cereal as a nurse crop, and depend on the crop for hay the year following. Whichever practice in sowing is followed to get the best seed crop it seems advisable to retain the second cutting of medium red and the first cutting of other varieties named the year following seeding. Where the first cutting of clover is retained for seed it should be pastured or clipped back by running a mower over the field about June 1st. The reason for reserving
the second cutting of medium red clover for seed is from the fact that it ripens quite unevenly at first and few bees and other insects are present to aid in fertilizing the many tiny florets of the numerous blossoms, which is not the case later in the season when the white and alsike clovers are out of bloom and bees are forced to work upon the red clover. This is very essential as unless pollination is quite complete it does not pay to harvest the crop.

Where the second crop is to be retained for seed it is quite essential that the first crop be cut somewhat earlier than if the desire was not to save the second cutting for seed. When the clover is nearly in full bloom, before any of the blossoms turn brown, is about the proper time to cut to insure the best chances for a good seed crop later. After the first cutting has been removed for hay, the clover plants come on quite evenly and reach the blossoming period approximately at the same time.

When the clover heads begin to turn brown an examination of the crop should be made to determine if it will pay to retain the crop for seed. Fifty or one hundred heads should be selected from different parts of the field and each head examined and the seed taken out.

From estimates that have been carefully made by clover growers it has been found that if from the number of heads examined the number of seeds found only averaged twenty per head and the clover considered a fair stand, the yield would be about two bushels per acre; if thirty seeds to the head, three bushels per acre, etc.

Unless approximately one and one-half or two bushels could be secured per acre, it would not be advisable to wait and cut the clover for seed. It could be cut for hay or turned under as a fertilizer.

If from the test it should be found that a yield of two bushels per acre or over could be secured it is then well to wait until the heads are brown and the leaves turning dark, then cut with self-rake reaper adjusted so that sufficient clover will accumulate on the table before being raked off to make the gathering of the clover most convenient. A mower can be used to advantage with buncher attachment. The clover should remain in piles until thoroughly dry when it can be hauled directly to the machine and hulled. In parts of the state where only a limited number of farmers raise clover for seed it will be hard to get a clover huller to thresh from the field in which case it will be necessary to stack or place on the barn floor or some other convenient place where the seed can be saved to the best advantage. Clover should be hauled in a rack with a tight bottom so as to
save the seed which shells. Under no circumstances should
damp clover be stored away in barns, stacks or hulled direct
from the field. After threshing if a large quantity of seed is
on hand place in shallow bins and shovel over from time to time.
In no case leave the newly threshed clover in sacks or deep bins
as there is danger of heating, thereby reducing the viability and
vitality of the seed.

CURING AND STORING SEED CORN.

ONLY CORN OF HIGH VITALITY SHOULD BE USED
FOR THE SEASON’S CROP.

Too much cannot be said on the importance of good seed
corn. With everything else equal in connection with growing
corn it is safe to say that seed of high energy and vitality means
double the crop in comparison with seed of low or medium
vitality.

Farmers who have investigated this matter fully realize the
wide variation in yields brought about by seed that has been
saved under various conditions. It is safe to say that the yield
of Wisconsin corn the present year has a variation in yield of
from five to one hundred bushels of shelled corn per acre. Why
this great variation? It is true that the variation in soil, latitude and cultivation plays an important part in the yield, yet
the greater portion of the variation has been caused by the
difference in the energy and vitality of the seed. Any farmer
worthy of the name, on good corn ground can by using judgment in selecting and curing and testing of his seed corn double
the average state yield annually. One of the chief reasons for
small yields of corn is improper stand of corn of low energy.

The remedy for this evil lies in the selection and curing of
the seed so as to lock the energy within each kernel and keep it there until planting time. It will then stand adverse condi-
tions.

For small seed plots and breeding plots we study the charac-
ter of the stalk and ear development. upon the stalk before
selection and only select seed corn of the highest perfection yet
where the desire is to save a portion of the entire corn crop
for seed which we desire to sell to individual farmers or seeds-