

PRESS BULLETIN NO. 9.

Crimson Clover.

MICHIGAN EXPERIMENT STATION, }
Agricultural College, May 1, 1896. }

Returns from seventeen counties in the Lower Peninsula indicate that Crimson Clover passed the winter of 1895-6 much better than the preceding winter. The steady cold during March this year was favorable, but the variable weather of the last few days of that month and the first week in April destroyed some pieces that were in good condition up to that time. On sandy lands, particularly in the western part of the state, Crimson Clover which had a good start last fall has in many cases passed the winter and spring with little or no injury. On heavy soils in exposed situations it has usually killed out. On the College farm several seedings of July and August on sandy soil, some of it low, passed the winter safely and are now looking fairly well, while another piece sown later on heavy soil in a young peach orchard is fully three fourths killed, the injury being mainly done during the first week in April.

The reports indicate that many still practice seeding in the spring, notwithstanding that directions are generally given to sow in summer or early fall. The results from spring seeding have in some cases been more favorable than might have been expected, particularly when sown on rather low, damp soils, and cut for hay or pastured before reaching maturity. In such cases some pieces have made good summer and fall pasture. The best results on the whole however have come from mid-summer seeding, giving the plants a good start before winter. Last summer being very dry, many seedings failed to catch, or the young plants died from drouth before becoming well established.

We would again state that Crimson Clover is an annual and that its use as a general farm crop in Michigan appears to be extremely limited. Only in rare situations can it be depended upon for hay in this state, the chances being especially small when sown in the spring. As a catch crop for fertilizing purposes, particularly in orchards, it possesses greater promise and in certain favorable soils and situations it now seems likely to prove of permanent value. The following abstracts of letters received will give a fair indication of the condition of this crop in the localities mentioned.

S. S. Bailey, East Paris, Kent Co., April 20: Mr. Bailey sowed an acre early in August after strawberries on well drained sandy loam. It made a good stand, passed the winter uninjured, and at the date of writing fully covered the ground and was being used for pasture. Other pieces sown in corn and raspberries were injured by drouth and gave a poor stand but safely passed the winter. In conclusion he says "Crimson Clover has come to stay in Michigan when we learn to give it proper treatment."

A. B. Burgess, Cadillac, Wexford Co., April 13: I sowed ten pounds of seed April 24, 1895, on a side hill, part clay and part sand. On the lower side next to a creek the soil was black and somewhat moist. On the upland the clover did not grow over eight or ten inches high but on the lower land it cut in July a fairly good swath of hay. In the fall it made excellent pasture and entered the winter in good condition but the

freezing and thawing of March has killed it all. Another piece sown the 10th of last September on wheat has also entirely killed out.

John E. Dunham, Oshtemo, Kalamazoo Co., April 19: I sowed seventeen acres after rye about the 20th of August on sandy loam. Part of the field is flat and the remainder somewhat hilly. The freezing and thawing of March killed nearly all the clover on the flat, but on the upland it stood the winter very well. I notice that where the clover completely covers the ground the freezing and thawing has had less effect upon it than where it was sown more thinly.

W. F. Raven, Brooklyn, Jackson Co., April 8: I have between ten and twelve acres of Crimson Clover sown July 4 in corn and covered by going over the field with the cultivator once each way twice in a row. By November 1 the clover covered the ground and at the present time it seems to have passed the winter in first class condition. The soil is sandy loam sloping south, east and north.

C. M. Bowen, Chelsea, Washtenaw Co., April 21: I sowed 4½ acres the 5th to 10th of August on rye stubble and among white beans; both lots are now looking quite promising, though killed in a few spots from which the snow was blown off. About the 15th of August I sowed five acres more in corn but it did not come up well and though not winter killed much is too thin to leave.

G. R. Agnew, Erie, Monroe Co., April 9: I seeded ten acres with oats last spring, partly on clay upland and partly on low land consisting of muck more or less mixed with sand. On the low land I had a very fine stand last fall which has wintered well. On the high ground it has all killed out.

J. F. Taylor, Douglas, Allegan Co., April 13: I sowed ½ bushel of seed in August on sandy soil in a peach orchard, and on another part of my farm where the soil is a clay loam I plowed under some Crimson Clover last season after the seed had ripened. There was an uneven stand over the whole but it has all passed the winter in good condition.

T. T. Lyon, South Haven, Van Buren Co., April 6: A block of Crimson Clover was sown Aug. 24 immediately after a shower and came up promptly. The soil is a light sandy loam occupied by peach trees. The clover was scarcely two inches high at the setting in of winter and was covered by snow but little during that season. It is now badly browned except near a windbreak of Norways between it and Lake Michigan, but even where not seriously injured it is now showing considerable green giving promise of at least partial recovery.

R. Morrill, Benton Harbor, Berrien Co., April 9: I sowed two acres about September 1. It made a small growth last fall but has surprised me by coming through in perfect condition. I feel that it is valuable for our sandy lands.

W. H. C. Mitchell, Traverse City, Grand Traverse Co., April 22: I put in 16 acres of Crimson Clover on gravelly, sandy loam Aug. 14 and 15, 1895, immediately after our first rain. It came up and was a good catch, but as it did not rain again for three or four weeks the clover made but a small growth before winter set in. During March the field was mostly bare of snow and we had very heavy freezing weather which killed all the clover except where the snow had drifted and remained on the ground until Ap