

BED OR RIDGE PLANTING IN SUB-IRRIGATED AREAS

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In many areas the soil is being broken down to a point where it is failing to produce adequate crops, a condition that is not entirely due to a lack of fertilization, but a condition that calls for a change in our agricultural practices.

Some leading Agronomists contend that so much attention has been given in preparing and furnishing food for the soil and the plant that we have disregarded or taken for granted the proper conditioning of the soil so as to make available to the plant the maximum benefit of such food.

On sub-irrigated lands this condition has become more noticeable; low yields are compelling growers to give the matter serious consideration. The sub-irrigated land becomes so packed and waterlogged that it remains quite damp and cold during most of the growing season, and that regardless of high expenditures in applying commercial fertilizers, poor yields continue.

Just recently I called on a grower who was experiencing difficulty in obtaining a satisfactory production. His land was free from disease and very highly fertilized. The physical condition of the soil was so compact that there seemed to be no circulation, and a very bad bacterial environment prevailed. This grower had concluded that in order to liberate the plant food he must change his cultural methods, and took very kindly to the idea of ridging his tract of land in the fall for early spring planting.

The following data furnished by six farmers, growing beets on sub-irrigated land show an increase in production on ridge planting:

Henry Roberts	Increase	3.0	tons	per	acre
William Roberts	"	2.3	"	"	"
Frank & Silas Spaulding	"	4.2	"	"	"
Douglas Taylor	"	3.1	"	"	"
Earl S. Hall	"	3.6	"	"	"
Melvin Luke	"	1.2	"	"	"

These gentlemen are enthusiastic over ridge planting. They claim a longer, more uniform sized beet and the plants remain thrifty, and in an ideal growing condition throughout the season; whereas, with regular planting, a short stubby beet is grown and the tops turn yellow in early August thus retarding the growth of the beet.

The deep fall ridging permits the elements to play a more important part in breaking up the soil into smaller fragments, liberating the plant food and aiding its availability to the plant.