

KANSAS STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE

Agricultural Experiment Station

Circular 31.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRONOMY

SEED CORN FOR KANSAS

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Kansas plants, on the average, over one million bushels of seed corn annually. Because of the large increase in the amount of wheat seeded last fall, the acreage of corn in 1914 will probably be below normal. The quantity of seed required will probably be between 800,000 and 900,000 bushels. Kansas produced in 1913 about 18,000,000 bushels of corn, which is only 12 per cent of the normal crop. Very little of this corn is fit for seed. Because of the drouth and heat it did not mature properly, and even where yields of from five to ten bushels to the acre were obtained the corn produced is, as a rule, inferior in quality and vitality. While much of it may germinate, it lacks the vigor and vitality necessary to obtain a good stand of strong, vigorous plants.

A large per cent of the seed corn for next year's planting must come from sources other than the Kansas 1913 crop. Probably the best source of seed for any given locality is the home-grown 1912 crop. This crop was above normal in quality, and where the corn has been kept under proper conditions it will make good seed. If the corn is of good vitality, it will undoubtedly be superior to seed introduced from other states, or from distant localities within the state. In all probability enough good seed can be selected from the 1912 crop, together with a little good seed obtained in 1913, to supply the needs of the state, but to do this the seed must be selected at once and put on the market and properly distributed.

The Agronomy Department of the Kansas State Agricultural College is endeavoring to assist farmers who have a surplus amount of seed for sale in finding a market and at the same time help those who desire to obtain the best seed for their respective localities. Prior to January 3, 1914, there were listed with the Agronomy Department over 43,000 bushels of seed corn, some of which has now been sold. All

of this is Kansas-grown corn, and as all parts of the corn-growing section of the state are represented the list offers a good opportunity to locate seed corn adapted to all sections of the state. Farmers who have a surplus of seed corn and wish assistance in disposing of it should notify the Agronomy Department at once, giving the name of the variety, amount, and price per bushel, and send at the same time a small representative sample for inspection and germination test. Farmers who wish to secure seed should write the Agronomy Department and secure a list of farmers having seed corn for sale. In this way farmers desiring seed can secure it from other farmers having seed for sale.

WHERE TO OBTAIN SEED.

In many localities it may be impossible to obtain home-grown seed. In this case seed should be obtained that was grown as near home as possible. Where corn must be obtained from distances of one hundred miles or more, the locality from which it had best be obtained will vary with the portion of the state in which it is to be planted.

In northeastern Kansas there is sufficient home-grown corn of the 1912 and the 1913 crops to more than supply the local demand, and in this part of the state it is not necessary to import seed from other sources.

In southeastern Kansas the situation is not so fortunate, since both the 1912 and the 1913 crops were short. In a few favored localities of this part of the state fairly good seed corn was produced in 1913. This and the 1912 corn should be the first choice of seed. The next best source is seed corn from Missouri that was grown directly east of the locality in which it is to be planted.

In north-central Kansas, especially in Smith, Jewell, Republic and a few adjoining counties, there is sufficient old corn to more than supply the local demand and this should be obtained for seed if possible. If home-grown seed is not available, corn from east-central and eastern Nebraska should be secured.

The same thing applies to central and southeastern Kansas with the exception that corn from northeast Kansas is to be preferred to that from more distant sources to the northeast.

For south-central Kansas, early varieties from central and eastern Oklahoma will be better than those obtained several hundred miles north and east. In bringing corn north there is danger of obtaining varieties that will not mature, and care should be taken that suitable varieties are secured.

For the western one-third of the state, corn from central and southern Nebraska and southern Dakota is perhaps the best source of seed, in that the varieties obtained will mature

under western Kansas conditions. There is danger in obtaining northern grown seed for any locality in Kansas that the varieties obtained will mature too early to take advantage of the longer growing season and are, therefore, not capable of producing maximum yields.

AVOID PLANTING MIXED CORN SHIPPED IN FOR FEEDING PURPOSES.

A large quantity of shelled corn is being shipped into Kansas this winter for feeding purposes. As a rule, it is a mixed lot from unknown sources. Many farmers will be tempted to use this corn for planting rather than to obtain good seed of varieties known to be adapted to their conditions. No one can afford to take this risk. The risk involved is far too great and more than offsets the trouble and expense of obtaining good seed. This corn may be a poor variety unsuited to Kansas conditions and the vitality of the corn is likely to be low. Such corn should not be planted until every possible effort has been made to obtain better seed.

GERMINATION TESTS.

Corn used for seed next year should be tested for germination regardless of the source of the seed. If it does not germinate ninety per cent or better, it is unfit for seed. No farmer can afford to plant corn a large portion of which will not grow. A little time and effort spent in making a germination test will often save replanting a field or a reduced yield due to poor seed.