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METHODS OF SEEDING GRASSES AND CLOVERS

Methods of applying grass and clover seed present a problem in seeding down. The one to use will, of course, depend upon the equipment available and the material to be seeded. Most legume seeds can be seeded through the various seeder attachments now available, but this is not true of some grass seeds. Brome grass will not flow freely by itself, while crested wheat and creeping red fescue will flow reasonably well if it is heavy, well-cleaned seed. These grasses can be successfully sown with grain through the drill box, but great care must be taken to keep the seed well mixed so that the resulting stands will be full and uniform. It has been found that the seed flows more freely and remains more uniformly mixed if the box is kept about one-third full. Cracked wheat or screened wheat chop can be used to advantage as a filler, if a companion crop is not being sown. By proper mixing, the grass seed can be seeded uniformly at approximately the desired rate per acre.

With most steel box drills in good repair, the larger-seeded legumes such as alfalfa, sweet clover, or red clover can be seeded without a filler. By making a few adjustments the operator will probably find that he can seed alfalfa at as little as five pounds per acre by shutting the drill off completely, or by opening it up one or two notches. Since alsike seed is small it will probably be necessary to use filler and open the drill slightly. Most drills can be adjusted to sow these small seeds quite accurately.

Should the seed be drilled into the ground or should it be seeded broadcast? This will depend again on the machinery available. Grass and legume seeds should not be sown too deeply. Brome grass can safely be seeded $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches but crested wheatgrass, creeping red fescue, and the larger seeded legumes such as alfalfa, sweet clover, or red clover are best seeded at about one inch. Smaller seeds, as alsike and white Dutch clover, should be covered by only a half-inch of soil. Where moisture is limited, seeding into the soil is recommended.

With modern drills the pressure can be taken off the springs and by adjusting the depth levers the larger grass and legume seeds can be placed at the correct depth. If the seeding depth cannot be easily adjusted the alternative is to remove the grain tubes and allow the seed to be broadcast from the drill. The dragging of chains will cover the seed and harrowing after seeding will serve to further cover the seed. Where alfalfa or other legumes are seeded through the drill box, two drilling operations will be necessary if a companion crop is used. The extra operation is worth the added expense if the legume is seeded at the proper depth.

Where other equipment is not available the hand or cyclone seeder can be used to advantage for small fields. Regardless of the method, however, the soil should be made as firm as possible previous to seeding. This practically precludes seeding on new ploughing and emphasizes the importance of packing. (C. H. Anderson).