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Grow More Flax : Help Win the War!

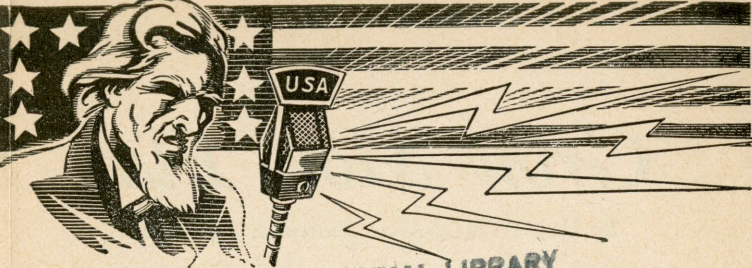
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Uncle Sam Says,

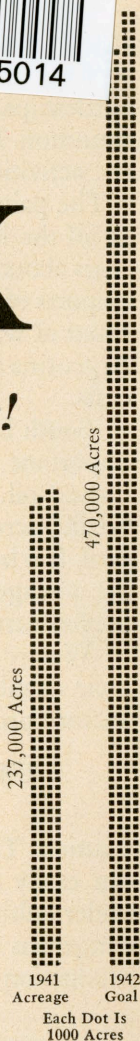
“I want twice as much Flax from South Dakota in 1942.”



Grow More

FLAX

Help Win the War!



EXTENSION SERVICE
 South Dakota State College
 Brookings

1941 Acreage 1942 Goal
 Each Dot Is 1000 Acres

630.732

5087

No. 52

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Grow More Flax

By U. J. NORGAARD, Extension Agronomist

1. What is the market outlook?

The war government is asking South Dakota farmers to double their 1941 flax acreage for 1942. Under present regulations there is a *price guarantee of 85 percent of parity price.*

The World War has greatly increased the demands upon linseed oil for the Army and Navy. Linseed oil is used for painting of guns, tanks, airplanes, battleships, cantonments and even every piece of ammunition. It is likewise used in camouflage and black-out activities.

The paint industry normally uses about 80 percent of all the linseed oil produced and linseed oil represents about 75 percent of the drying oil requirements. Imports of China-wood oil have been curtailed on account of war in the Pacific. Shipping conditions from Argentina are now very difficult with increased freight costs.

South Dakota flax farmers are asked to play a very important role in producing an adequate supply of linseed oil. The government suggests that we plant 470,000 acres which is about 11 percent of the national goal. It is believed that we can attain this goal because the acreage suggested is even 200,000 acres less than the flax acreage harvested in South Dakota in 1930.

We are sure that the farmers of our state will put their shoulders to the wheel and assist in this vital Victory program.

1941 S. D. Flax acreage 237,000 acres
1942 Goal 470,000 acres

Caution: The increase in flax acreage in South Dakota can easily be accomplished by use of land already under cultivation. The government is opposed to the dangerous policy of plowing up virgin sod for flax production in 1942.

EXTENSION SERVICE, SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE
of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, Brookings, South Dakota

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2. How does flax fit into the crop rotations?

Flax should follow a *clean cultivated* crop or a sod crop which is in the regular rotation. The soil should be fertile, *the seed bed firm*, the land well drained and *free from weeds and grasshopper eggs*. Flax is a good "nurse crop" for grasses and legumes in areas where moisture is fairly abundant.

3. What precautions must be taken against flax "pests"?

WEEDS: Sow only *cleaned* seed. Intertilled crop land on which weeds have been thoroughly controlled by cultivation is ideal for flax. Where Russian thistles interfere, delayed seeding, allowing germination and destruction of young thistles before seeding is advisable. Delayed seeding is not effective against pigeon grass since this weed germinates only when soil is warm. *Early seeding is defense against pigeon grass.*

INSECTS: Look out for grasshoppers. Do not seed flax on land where grasshoppers will hatch out in large numbers. Protect crop with poison bait if emergency arises.

DISEASES: Plant wilt resistant varieties. Treat seed with Ceresan for damping-off and seed rotting diseases.

4. What can be done to guard against heat and drought damage?

Sow on land (1) where moisture has been conserved by timely tillage practices. (2) Sow field on contour to prevent water run-off. (3) Sow on field where weeds have been controlled the previous years.

Seed early: According to long time experimental records of the South Dakota Experiment Station, flax should, for the best results, be seeded *not earlier than April 1 or later than April 15*. Flax will stand freezing temperatures as low as 21 degrees to 23 degrees. Delayed seedings are more subject to damage by heat, grasshoppers and certain weeds like pigeon grass which germinate when soil is warm. (The kinds of weeds present in the field may determine seeding time somewhat as explained under paragraph three.)

5. What are the recommended varieties for South Dakota?

1. Bison—Large seeded, late, good yielder, resistant to flax wilt.
2. Redwing—Small seeded, early, good yielder, resistant to flax wilt.

6. What is best rate of seeding per acre?

For small seed varieties: About 20 pounds per acre in limited rainfall areas; 28 pounds per acre in abundant rainfall areas. For large seed varieties, such as Bison, increase the above rates by at least one-third. *Regulate drill to sow four seeds per inch.* If you must sow late, on account of weeds or other causes, plant from one-third to one-fourth more seed per acre.

The above rate of seeding is for seed with germination of 95 percent or higher. *Test all seed before planting.*

7. What about harvesting problems?

Flax does not shatter or crinkle as easily as other grains and, unless grasshoppers interfere, may be left standing in the fields with little danger of loss in yield or quality until the seed is ripe enough to be stored safely. *It is very important, however, that seed be dried out to 11 percent or less before harvesting with a combine.* If green weeds are present, crop should be cut with a windrower, otherwise moisture in weeds will cause seed to spoil.

Flax which is uniform in height, and tall enough, may be harvested with the ordinary self-binder. The bundles should be shocked immediately so that seed bolls be kept off the ground.

8. What precautions on threshing and storing?

Take care not to crack or injure seed in threshing. Injured seed is more likely to cause trouble in heating. Reduce speed of machines handling flax seed to the minimum to prevent injury to seed coat.

Flax seed should not be stored until moisture content is 11 percent or less.