DIGEST

Hemp has been grown in Wisconsin for ten years. It has been found that hemp can be grown very successfully in the state, that the climate and certain soils of Wisconsin are particularly suited to the crop, and that the development of labor saving machinery has made the hemp industry one of far reaching importance. Pages 3 to 6.

Several hundred acres must be grown in a vicinity to make hemp production profitable. Cooperative growing is necessary. The state hemp association is stabilizing the industry in the state. Pages 6 to 9.

Wisconsin is the second largest hemp producing state in the Union. The principal centers of production are Fond du Lac, Green Lake, Dodge, and Racine Counties. Pages 9 to 13.

Hemp fiber is a national necessity. In addition to its important use for wrapping cords of all kinds, it is now being used for such vital purposes as thread for sewing army shoes and harness, as caulking in battle ships, and for binder twine. Pages 13 to 15.

Hemp should be grown on fertile soil. Poor soils are not suitable. Hemp is not hard on land, for it removes less plant food than many other farm crops. It improves the physical condition of the soil and is a successful crop for smothering quack grass and Canada thistles. Pages 15 to 20.

Fiber hemp does not mature seed in Wisconsin; consequently, seed for planting is principally obtained from Kentucky. The seed weighs 44 pounds to the bushel and 40 pounds are required to plant an acre. Pages 20 to 24.

Hemp is drilled in a well-prepared seed bed, in the spring, and requires no further attention until it is ready to harvest in September.

Hemp is harvested with a special harvesting machine which spreads the stalks in a thin windrow. After remaining in the windrow several weeks, the stalks are tied into bundles, shocked, and stacked. Pages 24 to 32.

The dry, cured hemp stalks are hauled to a breaking mill. Here the fiber is removed from the woody portion of the stalks. To perform this separation of the fiber, especially constructed and equipped hemp mills are necessary. Wisconsin now has nine of these mills. Pages 32 to 38.

Large yields of hemp fiber are obtained in Wisconsin, averaging 1,200 pounds an acre. The cost of producing the crop is from $8 to $11 more an acre than for small grain crops. The gross returns average $75 an acre. With the advent of modern machinery, hemp can be produced just as easily as corn. Hand labor is no longer necessary and as a result, the hemp industry in Wisconsin is firmly established. Pages 38 to 46.

Wisconsin's Hemp Industry

Of the 42,000 acres of hemp grown in the United States in 1917, Wisconsin grew 7,000. Among the several states growing hemp, Wisconsin ranks second in acreage and production of fiber.

Large areas in Wisconsin are admirably suited to hemp culture, and a firmly established dairy industry helps to insure the continued productiveness of the soil.

The climate of Wisconsin is particularly suited to the production of dewretted fiber of good strength and high quality. The fall months are cool and moist, which makes it possible to ret the crop without scorching or over-retting, an item of vital importance in the production of good fiber.

The yields of fiber obtained in this state have been entirely satisfactory, ranging from 1,000 to over 1,500 pounds to the acre; the quality of Wisconsin's hemp fiber is equal to that produced in any other state; and our farmers have received profitable returns from the culture of the crop.

In the improvement of machinery for handling the crop one of the most serious problems of the industry is being solved. Hand labor is now unnecessary in handling Wisconsin's hemp crop. It is harvested by special machinery, and especially constructed and equipped mills are established in the state for separating the fiber from the stalks. In fact, Wisconsin now has over 70 per cent of the total number of hemp mills in the United States.

Hemp has been demonstrated to be the best smother crop for assisting in the eradication of quack grass and Canada thistles.

Characteristics of the Hemp Plant

Hemp is a woody, tall-growing, annual plant. It may grow from 5 to 15 feet high, but in Wisconsin the average height is from 6 to 9 feet, although it sometimes reaches a height of over 10 feet. Hemp, of course, is grown for the fiber that is in its stems, and in order that the stems may be long and slender the