

1953

CC116 Suggestions for Handling Summer Fallowed Land which will not be Planted to Winter Wheat

J. C. Swinbank

F. L. Duley

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist>

Swinbank, J. C. and Duley, F. L., "CC116 Suggestions for Handling Summer Fallowed Land which will not be Planted to Winter Wheat" (1953). *Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension*. 3049.
<http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/extensionhist/3049>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Extension at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Historical Materials from University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

AGRI
S
544.3
1953
NAC33X

C.C. 116

Suggestions For Handling Summer Fallowed Land

WHICH WILL NOT BE PLANTED TO WINTER WHEAT

UNIV. OF NEBRASKA
LINCOLN LIBRARIES

JUN 3 1988

STACKS

EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AND U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COOPERATING
W. V. LAMBERT, DIRECTOR

Suggestions For Handling Summer Fallowed Land Which Will Not Be Planted To Winter Wheat

J. C. Swinbank and F. L. Duley

Many farmers who summer fallowed more land than their wheat acreage allotment are wondering what they can do to utilize this acreage or otherwise protect it from winter erosion until the spring planting season. A few suggestions are being offered in the hope that they may be helpful in deciding what may be done to make the most effective use of fallowed land that will not be planted to wheat.

1. Immediately select the acres which will not be planted to wheat this fall. On this land, one or more protective practices may be found helpful.

2. Keep crop residues on the surface. If any old crop residue remains on the fallow now, use only those tillage methods which will preserve what is left. A rod weeder is a good tool for this purpose. Don't bury the crop residue!

3. Maintain cloddy fallow. If the land is heavy, keep clods on the surface. Chisel type implements or those with narrow shovels may be used to bring up the clods. Disc type machines that pulverize the soil should not be used. Do not attempt to maintain cloddy fallow on sandy land.

4. Plant oats or barley. Spring grains such as oats or barley may be planted in the fall to provide ground cover. Plantings may be made as late as mid-September if soil moisture conditions are favorable. Let the crop freeze down and remain on the land to protect it.

A spring grain crop used in this manner will remove less soil moisture than sudan which must be planted earlier.

Rye is not recommended as a cover crop on land that will be planted to wheat next year unless the rye

can be destroyed before it heads. Otherwise grain mixtures are likely to result from volunteer growth.

5. Plant winter barley. Two new, semi-hardy, winter barley varieties (Kearney and Dicktoo) were released from the Nebraska Agricultural Experiment Station in 1952. These varieties can be used to advantage on summer fallowed land - especially in the south central and southwestern parts of the state. The seed supply, however, is extremely short. A limited number of farmers may be able to obtain seed for a small seed increase field, but no extensive acreage can be considered at this time.

Non-hardy winter barley varieties may be used like oats - purely as a winter cover crop. Winter barley grows more rapidly than oats in the fall and should provide more cover.

6. Plant sudan grass. If moisture conditions are favorable and if temporary fall pasture can be utilized, sudan grass may be planted in early August.

Under favorable conditions there will be sufficient growth for pasturing before frost occurs. The crop should not be grazed too closely. Leave sufficient growth to provide cover.

Pasturing sudan after frost is hazardous because of the danger of prussic acid poisoning to livestock.

7. Strip crop the land. Winter wheat may be planted in alternate strips with oats or barley. The oat or barley strips will not count as wheat acreage.

In some cases, protection for unplanted fallow strips may be provided by cloddy fallow, weeds, or crop residues. Strips should not exceed 10 rods in width and may need to be narrower on sandy soil which is not protected by a cover crop.

8. Plant permanent grasses. Serious consideration should be given to permanent grass seedings wherever a pasture, hay, or seed crop can be utilized. Marginal crop land may be profitably retired from grain production in this manner.

Cool season grasses, such as crested, intermediate, tall, and slender wheatgrass, or brome-grass are best suited for fall seeding. Oats may be seeded with the grass to control wind erosion and protect young seedlings. Plant the oats at 1/2 of the normal rate.

Further information regarding the best grasses for your locality, seeding methods, etc., may be obtained from your county extension agent.

9. Leave weed growth and residue. Under extremely dry conditions, where some weed growth has already started, it may be desirable to discontinue all tillage operations on fallow land which will not be planted to wheat this fall. Limited weed growth, combined with any crop residue remaining on the surface of the soil, should provide some protection against wind erosion.

If the season should continue very dry, special care must be taken to protect the soil from blowing and keep it in condition for future production. The moisture and available fertility that has been stored in the soil during the fallow period should be preserved for utilization by the next crop. Preservation of this stored moisture and fertility offers the greatest assurance of a crop next year on the fallowed acres not planted to wheat this fall.