

Cooperative Extension Circular.

NUMBER 1.

APRIL 1, 1916.

Montana State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts and the
U. S. Department of Agriculture, Cooperating.
Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914.

Program for Local Corn Clubs in Montana

Meetings should be held at least once in two weeks while school is in session and once a month during vacation.

Meeting II.

1. Roll call and minutes of last meeting read by secretary.
2. Discussion on lesson assigned at Meeting I—The Best Variety of Corn for the Locality. Decision by vote of club.
3. Plan for the club leader to order as soon as possible the variety decided upon from your county agriculturist. A limited amount can be obtained at a nominal price from the State Leader of Club Work, Bozeman, Montana.
4. Assign lesson on When and How to Plant Corn. (See Suggestions to Corn Club Members on page 3 of this circular.)
5. Each club member must hand in note book with diagram of one acre of corn showing how he will mark off and plant the acre.
6. Announcements.

Meeting III.

1. Roll call and minutes of last meeting (discussion of Variety of Corn, etc.,) read by secretary.
2. Discussion and correction of acre diagrams and of When to Plant Corn. Assignment for next meeting.
3. Each club member to select ground for club acre, asking parent's advice. Give reason for such selection at next meeting. Hand in diagram of home farm showing location of club acre.

Meeting IV.

1. Roll call and minutes of last meeting.
2. Correction of diagrams of home farm showing location of club acre.

3. Assign lesson on How to Test Seed Corn (allow two weeks for seed to arrive from Bozeman after date of writing for it.)

4. Test Seed Corn between blotters in school room or in box of moist sand or sawdust. Then get each club member to test his own corn at home.

5. Announcements.

Meeting V.

(If time is nearly up omit Meeting IV, and have subject given in Meeting V. But do not omit Meeting VI.)

1. Roll call and minutes of last meeting.

2. Report of percentage of germination at home and seed tests prepared in school.

3. Assign lessons on How to Prepare Soil for Planting Corn. (See Suggestions to Corn Club Members, page 3.)

4. Invite a farmer or the county agriculturist to give a talk at this meeting on How to Prepare Soil for Planting Corn.

Meeting VI—Last Day of School at Closing Exercises.

1. Invite parents; interest them in club work.

2. Plan fall exhibit of corn at school house.

3. Plan prizes for best exhibits, greatest profit, best compositions on How I Grew My Crop.

4. Plan to have basket lunch and play festival for September or October, 1916.

SUPERVISION AND FOLLOW UP WORK.

Reasons for, and Importance of.—In 1915 success in club work was largely attributed to supervision and follow up instruction. At the early part of the season there is always great enthusiasm up to the time of planting and first cultivation of crops; then as farm work gets harder and the sun gets hotter and other attractions come, there is frequently a waning of interest.

The Time for Follow Up Work.—About June 1st is the time for parents to use their influence and for the club leader to call a meeting. Have club members tell how their crop is coming on. If possible, take photographs or get the club members to photograph their acre or garden at different stages for discussion at meetings or for their compositions.

The Importance of a Social Meeting in Midsummer.—Call a social meeting and have a base ball game or some form of picnic

or basket lunch. For the girls, arrange with the State Leader to give canning demonstration; have the mothers and girls bring in vegetables, serve lunch and have a play time in the afternoon. Such plans are being made this year in Fergus, Cascade, Hill, Custer, Dawson, Missoula and Teton counties, where there are county agriculturists to arrange such meetings and bring out the state leader. If you are in one of these counties, write your county agriculturist at once concerning club work. The State Leader plans to give some personal supervision and club demonstrations in these counties.

How to Supervise—The county agriculturist and State Leader plan to give some time to supervision, but this will be limited. The ideal way is for the local leader to visit at least once during the season the club plot of each member, to give advice and encouragement and to interest parents and farmers in the club acre. In North Dakota five years ago people said you could not raise corn; but in 1914, 68 boys had a yield of over 100 bu. per acre. In Montana in 1915, they said the same thing in many sections. In some sections in Montana they no longer say it; because club boys have shown them. Remember, club work is for demonstration purposes as well as to help the individual member to grow crops at a profit and to learn home making. The club motto is to "Make the Best Better" and to "Pass the Good Word Along."

Mother-Daughter and Father-Son Relation—Brings best results. The local leader will try to secure this relation wherever possible. Results in club work and in community work are secured at the same time. In many Montana counties men's cooperative organizations have grown out of Boys' Clubs for marketing or growing potatoes. Every boy likes to work with Dad and every girl likes to work with Mother. If you have time, let's get this most valuable assistance. Nobody can take the place of father or mother in the child's education.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CORN CLUB MEMBERS.

VARIETIES TO GROW.

For altitudes of less than thirty-five hundred feet, the varieties recommended are:

Rustler's White Dent—An early white dent variety with uniform ears.

Brown County Dent—A yellow dent variety, which is quite early maturing.

Northwestern Dent—A semi-dent variety between the flint and dent. The kernels are red, with white caps, and are rather shallow.

Minnesota 13—This is a rather small-eared, yellow dent variety of very good quality. It is somewhat later maturing than the others and should be grown at lower altitudes.

For altitudes above thirty-five hundred feet, the early maturing flint varieties are safest. The two recommended are:

Dakota White Flint—A low-eared variety with a short stalk and early maturing ears.

Gehu Flint—An early maturing yellow flint variety, with ears growing low on the stalk.

The Northwestern Dent variety does fairly well in some sections of the State at rather high altitudes, but is not as certain to mature as the flint varieties above mentioned.

PREPARING THE SEED BED.

Where possible, select an acre of land that has been plowed several times so that it may be worked into fine condition. When available fall plowed land is usually best. This should be double disked as soon as it is dry enough in the spring, to save the moisture and to warm up the soil by stopping evaporation from the surface. Do not leave the land without cultivation until nearly planting time, as it will dry out and the corn will not come up quickly when planted. If the land has to be spring plowed, have this done as early as possible, to a depth of six inches at least. Follow the plowing with disking and harrowing the same day.

Between the first disking and planting time, harrow the land occasionally to keep down the weeds and to keep a loose soil mulch on the surface. Be sure to harrow as soon as the soil is dry enough after each rain.

Just before planting time, double disk again unless the soil is very loose. Follow the disking with a harrowing to smooth the surface. Then go over with a roller, planker or packer to make the seed bed firm, and follow with a harrow to loosen the top soil so as to prevent the escape of soil moisture.

WHEN AND HOW TO PLANT.

The corn ought to be planted between May 10th and 20th, in hills, dropping four kernels to the hill and putting the hills 42 inches apart each way. This will give 3,556 hills to the acre. The kernels should be planted 2 to 3 inches deep, and the earth pressed over them. It is very important to get the hills planted so they are in straight rows to make cultivation both ways possible.

Where a check wire planter can be used, the planting may be more easily done. This machine plants two rows at a time and drops the kernels in hills which come in straight rows both ways.

Hand corn planters which do good work may be bought for one dollar. Where they are used, the ground will have to be marked off to get the hills in the right places. A marker may be made by nailing three teeth, made from short pieces of 1x4 inch boards, to a 7 1-3 foot board, somewhat heavier. Put one tooth at each end and one in the middle, and they will then be 42 inches apart. Put a handle onto this, braced like a rake handle, and you have a marker. Mark the ground one way and then go crosswise. Plant corn where the marks cross.

CULTIVATION.

After planting, the ground ought to be harrowed, and if it rains before the corn is up, it should be harrowed again to loosen up the surface. When the corn is up a few inches, cultivation between the rows, both ways, should commence, and should be given often enough through the season to keep down the weeds and to keep a moisture holding mulch on the surface. This is very important. The weeds close around the corn hills will have to be hoed out. Keep the corn patch clean and the soil loose all season.

HARVESTING AND SELECTING EARS.

During September, occasionally examine the ears in various parts of the corn patch, and when the kernels are found to be getting firm and dry, carefully select the ripest and best filled ears from every hill. Turn the husks back far enough to show the ear, and if it is well developed, take it along. By September 15th to 20th

there ought to be quite a number of rather well matured ears to select.

As the ears are taken from the field, place them in a shed or open building, laying them out so they can dry quickly. Do not throw them in a heap and do not lay one ear on top of another. This will delay drying and may cause the kernels to mold.

For your exhibition sample, choose ten ears that are firm and that look alike. Do not get them too large, as the big ears are apt to be immature. Six to eight inches is long enough for most varieties. See that the tips and butts are well filled and that the rows of kernels are straight. The best filled ears that are picked earliest are the one's to use for next year's planting.

Cut the stalks close to the ground at about the time of the first fall frosts, and stand 36 hills (six hills square) in each shock, tying the top securely with binder twine. When dry, husk and weigh the ears, computing the yield by dividing the weight of the ears from one acre by seventy to get the number of bushels. Seventy pounds of dry ears will generally make 56 pounds or one legal bushel of shelled corn.

REPORT RESULTS TO MISS AUGUSTA EVANS, BOZEMAN, MONT

State Leader in charge of Boys' and Girls' Clubs, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture and the Montana State College of Agriculture, cooperating.



Ferd and Ernest Daly, corn champions, stringing seed corn for drying. Cleared \$57 per acre in 1915.