

SEASONAL NOTES.

THE FARM.

SEPTEMBER is always a busy month in all classes of farming, and owing to the exceptionally wet, broken weather experienced during the past winter this year there will be an even greater rush of work than usual.

EARLY SPRING SOWINGS.

The sowing of cereal crops—wheat, oats, and barley—should be pushed along, except where the land is very wet. In such situations it is better to wait until it is reasonably dry before sowing, for where grain is sown on very wet land a great deal of it rots, and what does germinate makes poor growth.

For many districts Algerian oats give the best results, Gartons and similar varieties being very liable to rust. They should be sown at the rate of 3 bushels per acre, and on small areas where birds are likely to be troublesome it will pay to put in an extra half-bushel. Care should also be taken to see that the oats are well covered, in order to prevent birds getting them before they germinate; if the land has been firmed by rolling after sowing the birds will not pull out anything like so many seedlings after they come through the ground.

The Major variety of wheat is to be strongly recommended for the south Otago and Southland districts (as well as the North Island) on account of its early-maturing and quick-ripening characteristics. It yields well, and has proved a most suitable variety to grow.

Barley may be sown towards the end of September, or even in October, as it matures quicker than other cereals.

Grain crops sown at this time of the year will generally benefit from 1 cwt. to 2 cwt. of superphosphate per acre, according to the quality of the land. This fertilizer, besides bringing the crop away rapidly, stiffens the straw and helps the crop to ripen more evenly.

Many farmers will be sowing out grass-seed with the spring oats. This practice, although not of the best, has much to recommend it from an economy point of view, but the oat-sowing should be light, 1 bushel per acre being sufficient to give cover to the young grass. Heavy sowings of oats have a very depressing effect on pasture-establishment. The seeding with grass can often be delayed until the cereal is advanced well enough to stand harrowing.

A mixture of 20 lb. of Western Wolths rye-grass, 1 bushel of oats, and 4 lb. to 5 lb. of red clover per acre makes a good spring-sown hay crop, and may be put in early in September. Other special crops for hay or ensilage were dealt with last month.

FEEDING DOWN CEREAL CROPS.

The final feeding of autumn-sown crops should take place towards the end of September, the exception being rich areas where there is danger of the crop lodging. In such localities feeding may be continued into October. After the last feeding give the land a good harrowing with the tine harrows to open up the soil. If this harrowing leaves the land unduly rough, follow in a week with the roller. Owing to the subsoil being well soaked a very rapid growth can be expected in spring-sown cereals, and it may be necessary to feed off with sheep to prevent lodging and encourage tillering.

PREPARATIONS FOR LATER CROPS.

Lea land intended for late spring-sown forage crops should now be ploughed. It is most essential to allow plenty of time for the turf to rot before sowing the crop. Spring-sown forage crops require a large amount of water in the soil, and the only way to ensure an adequate supply of moisture is by means of early ploughing.