

SEASONAL NOTES.

THE FARM.

CULTURAL OPERATIONS.

PLANS should be made at this period for next season's cropping-operations, and land required for spring sowing turned over. Where old pastures are to be broken up, skim ploughing in the autumn or early winter, followed by disking, especially on the heavier soils, as a preparation for the deeper spring ploughing, is a good insurance against dry summer conditions, besides allowing the natural elements—frost, air, and sunshine—to ameliorate the soil and make fresh plant-food available.

The relatively dry autumn experienced in several districts this season has had the effect of reducing to a great extent the usual autumn growth of pastures. This has there caused an earlier and more extensive feeding of roots and other forages, which in many cases may involve a shortage in early spring. A June sowing of Algerian oats, combined (on the heavier soils) with winter vetches, will help to fill any such deficiency.

AUXILIARY FEEDING OF DAIRY STOCK.

Wherever it can be managed great saving results from pulling and feeding out roots in clean paddocks, rather than turning the stock on to the crop, and a much smaller quantity of roots is required. Experiments go to prove that 60 lb. of roots per day fed to a cow in conjunction with good hay gives very much better results than where the cow is allowed to eat as much as she can. In the latter case the animal may eat 1 cwt. or more, and her system is not able to deal with the material satisfactorily. The ideal ration is a medium quantity of good material rather than large quantities which the animal cannot digest. Great care should also be taken to see that stock eating roots have a liberal supply of good hay or a run-off on pasture with plenty of roughage.

The present is a good period for pulling the mangold crop, so as to give the roots ample time to mature before being fed. Such time should be at least one month, but two is much better. A mangold is not in proper condition to feed out in quantity until soft enough to allow a pocket-knife to be stuck into it easily and drawn out again without lifting the root. A great many may have to be fed before reaching this condition, but full maturity is the condition to aim at. When starting cows on mangolds they should be fed lightly for a few days, commencing with 15 lb. to 20 lb. per day and increasing at the end of a week to 40 lb. or 50 lb., which should be the maximum for a day. In the milder localities the roots may be pulled and left in the field to ripen, but when there is danger of heavy frosts or the land is required for further cropping it is best to cart them off and store in a dry, warm, situation, according to the methods described last month.

Carrot crops will still be making some growth, but may now be fed at any time. These roots are best pulled and fed straight out from the field.