

The spring ploughing should then be followed up with thorough discing and harrowing to prepare the ground for sowing. A rolling, using the Cambridge roller, generally proves very beneficial after ploughing and before discing.

Overcoming Competition From Paspalum

Many farmers in the north are loath to crop even one acre for maize for winter feed for pigs because of the competition from paspalum in the growing crop, but if thorough cultivation has been done this is not at all serious. More trouble occurs from seedling paspalum plants growing from seed during late November and December than from existing old plants throwing up new growth. These seedlings can be dealt with by the inter-row cultivator or scarifier.

Established paspalum can be dealt with by careful preparatory cultivation. In this case, the late autumn or early winter ploughing is best done as a skim-ploughing. The ground is then left lie over winter, and three weeks before the spring ploughing, which should be at normal depth, it is disced thoroughly. The cut-up material is



Control of paspalum requires good ploughing. A skim-coulter attachment plus immediate discing in the direction of the furrow would overcome the invasion shown above.

then buried under the furrow. If the land is too rough for skim-ploughing, the first ploughing should be as deep as possible, followed by a shallow spring ploughing. This leaves the old plants well buried out of the way.

Where only one ploughing can be given, perhaps the best method is to plough with a long mould-board plough with a skim-coulter attachment. The skim-coulter takes off part of the top edge of the furrow, turns it down to the bottom, and prevents the paspalum growing up between the furrow slices. Discing follows immediately, so that in this manner no light at all can reach the paspalum plants. If the land is ploughed in the ordinary way, the paspalum comes up between the furrow slices.

Time of Sowing

Most of the maize-growing soils of North Auckland are not early soils. Consequently, although the first crops may under some conditions be sown from the first week of November, delayed cultivation—and this, as already mentioned, may prove necessary and beneficial—may result in the crop being sown as late as early December. This is no handicap, provided cultivation is thorough.

Methods of Sowing and Rates of Seeding

The maize drill is by far the most satisfactory method of sowing. Unfortunately, there are few maize drills in North Auckland, and the small areas sown on each farm do not justify the purchase of a new machine. Small areas are often ploughed in, the seed being dropped by hand behind the plough in every fourth furrow. The ploughing should be shallow so that on the heavy soils not too much covering is placed over the seed. Some farmers have successfully sown maize by use of the discs. These are so worked that the seed is dropped in the shallow furrow left between the two gangs; the seed is dropped by hand, and the next time along, as for double discing, it is covered by the soil turned over by the outside disc. Another method is to use a sledge with permanent or temporary runners spaced the distance apart at which the rows are placed. Seed is dropped by hand and covered by harrowing. When only half an acre is planted, the use of a line and a spade or hoe is probably sufficient.

In all cases where the maize drill is not used, the ground must be well prepared, in a good tilth, and free from

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