A well prepared seed bed.

be governed to a great extent by the regular spacing of the individual plants. There are three alternatives:

1. 7-inch drills, i.e., through every coulter of the drill.

2. Cross drilling, i.e., half the total quantity of seed and fertiliser drilled one way and then crossed with the other half.

3. Broadcasting.

The 7-inch drills will be found the most satisfactory under ordinary farming conditions, giving a comparatively even seeding in the drills. Cross drilling results in uneven gauge in the straw, owing to the density of plants at each intersection. Broadcasting should be undertaken only on strong land that has been very thoroughly worked; provided these two essential qualifications are present the broadcasting of the seed has much to recommend it, inasmuch as there is a comparatively even distribution of seed over any given area of the land, whereas the distribution of seed in 7-inch drills is confined to the coulter runs. Also in cross drilling the distribution is such that there is a heavy concentration of seed at each intersection of the coulter runs, and only a 50 per cent. seeding in the drills between the intersections.

The result of this method of drilling is that the straw at the intersections is fine, frequently quite spindly, while the straw between the intersections is comparatively coarse. This unevenness in gauge is not a feature of good-quality flax. Although, by these comparisons, the broadcasting appears to be the best, the conditions justifying sowing broadcast are so very infrequently encountered that farmers are recommended to use the 7-inch drilling method. The flax seed is sown through the "wheat feed" or "fine" side of the grain box.

The rate of seeding is between 70 lb. per acre on light land and up to 120 lb. per acre on heavy land. On most of the medium land about 84 lb. to 90 lb. per acre is a sufficient seeding. Other factors being equal, quality can be influenced by seeding rate; a heavy seeding will control length and gauge of straw on heavy land, where a light seeding would be disastrous.

Fertiliser

At present the fertiliser ration for this crop is superphosphate at the rate of 1½ cwt. per acre or its equivalent, and judging by results there does not appear to be any necessity for increasing the quantity of phosphatic fertiliser. There is no advantage to the linen flax from an application of lime immediately prior to sowing; in fact, in one area a marked decrease in yield resulted from this practice.

Harvesting

The careful handling of this crop during pulling, stooking, and stacking is important. A standing crop of about 28 to 30 inches over-all length can be well handled by the pulling machines. But difficulties are experienced in making good even butted sheaves in tall crops, particularly if these crops are lodged; growers may, however, minimise the faults in such crops if a little extra time is taken to straighten out the sheaves when stooking and stacking. A good, thick stack-bottom should be provided, preferably of brush and straw, stacks should be as large as possible; a good standard size for "square" stack bottoms is 30 ft. by 15 ft. All stacks should be well sprung to the eave, thereby leaving only the extreme root ends exposed to any weathering.

Whether the stacks be square or round, or long or short in the head, they should be extremely well covered, preferably thatched. No matter how well the head is built to "shed water" it is not good enough for flax as this material must be insulated from weathering. Much good flax has been spoilt in the past owing to the butts of the sheaves being exposed to the weather, so the final advice to the grower of linen flax is "Be sure to thoroughly cover your stacks to prevent weathering."

Don't

permit ashes from wood fires to be exposed to rain. These contain valuable potash which will be leached into the soil.