2. THE UTILIZATION OF LEGUMES IN THE ROTATION

A. In the East

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This discussion proposes to present a survey of the present status of the legume problem in the East, with a view to depicting the progress that has been made and the needs along extension and experimental lines for future progress. Specific attention is directed to the forage legumes, leaving out of consideration such crops as field beans which are very important in New York. Attention is given to those legumes which are grown in rotations and the places occupied by them in the rotation. The incidental uses are also stressed and the uses and methods of growing legumes outside the rotation quite fully developed.

The material for this presentation comes from three distinct sources, as follows: First, by personal observation as an extension specialist; second, by studying the results of the various experiment stations in the region; and third, by accumulating the experiences of farmers as presented by articles appearing in the agricultural press.

In the region in question the legume situation has in recent years been very much to the fore, both because legumes constitute an excellent and economic source of protein for animals and because through legumes soils can be improved and at the same time produce crops of real value to the farmer. These valuable features of legumes have been the chief talking points of the legume propaganda carried on by the extension services. Within the past ten years the general economic situation has made propaganda for legumes very timely. High prices for animal products—in the northeastern States mostly dairy products with sheep occupying a very secondary situation—and high prices on sale crops make the use of legumes desirable in order that the farmer may produce as cheaply as possible and, in times of high prices, secure the greatest net return from his efforts. In times of low prices legumes also play an important part helping, as they do, to keep production costs of animal and soil products down to the minimum. In the propaganda for legumes these advantages have been emphasized and for so long a time that farmers very generally appreciate to a greater or lesser extent some of their possibilities.

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