EXPERIENCE IN DEVELOPING A HIGH-YIELDING STRAIN OF CORN

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Corn shows have been widely patronized by farmers and specialists in an effort to choose the best seed ears. Usually these ten-ear samples have been judged on the assumption that the crop would be improved if the seed ears conformed to a certain type, preference being given to large ears, deep grains, and, in the Reid variety, to neatly paired rows, medium rough dent, well-filled tips, etc. While these characters had a certain usefulness in elementary corn study, they were not trustworthy in careful breeding operations.

In 1912, the writer tried planting a 20-ear sample from a prize winning bushel in an ear-to-row test. The 30% variation in yield which was obtained was evidence enough that some systematic work in breeding ought to be effective in eliminating the low-producing elements which were present in these prize-winning ears of corn.

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2Winner of 1924 Gold Medal for highest yielding strain of corn in Iowa, Walden Farms, Keota, Iowa.