2A. WHAT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE AGRONOMY DEPARTMENT OF THE COLLEGE IN DEVELOPING GOOD SEED AND SEED CERTIFICATION

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"Better Seed" is an extension slogan in a good many states. There were 224,000 demonstrations carried on by the state extension services in 1924 to teach the value of better seed. This was about a fifth of all the demonstrations carried on in 1924 of all kinds. A lot of our extension energy is spent on securing and planting better seed every year, and yet, when I came to look into just how important better seed is to the farmer in dollars and cents, I found very little definite information. I wrote, therefore, to a number of agronomists in the central states to get their estimates of the value to the farmer of improved seeds.

I summarize only a few of the replies received, but sufficient to show the trend and establish the point I desire to make.

Michigan estimates the planting of about 600,000 acres of improved cereal seed, including corn and beans, annually, resulting in an increased income of nearly $2,000,000 to the farmers of that state, while the income resulting from the substitution of Grimm and Hardigan alfalfa for clover has been worth to the farmer over $8,000,000, a total average of about $50 per farm more for every farm in Michigan because of better seed.

Nebraska estimates over 5,650,000 acres of cereals planted to improved seed, with an increased money value of at least $7,825,000 or over $62 per farm, annually. No one knows how much of this gain is offset by farm losses due to unknowingly planting unadapted clover and alfalfa seed from Italy, Peru, and the Argentine.

Ohio estimates that could she but get 50% of her farmers to use better cereal and forage seeds and potatoes the increased income to the farmers would amount to a minimum of $13,000,000 annually, or an average of $57 per farm for every farm in the state.

Iowa gives data showing that in 1924 there were grown over 2,667,000 acres of improved oats alone in that state and that the increase from this acreage was over 11,000,000 bushels. About 46% of the entire oat crop of the state was from station-improved seed.

1Paper read as a part of the symposium on "Methods and Relations in Extension Work in Agronomy" at the meeting of the Society held in Chicago, Ill., November 16, 1925.