NOTE

A RAPID METHOD OF PLANTING SMALL FIELD PLATS OF ROW CROPS

Several years ago at Texas Substation No. 12, Chillicothe, Texas, it became necessary to enlarge those phases of the work that required the planting of plant-to-row progenies of cotton and sorghums and to refine the field experiments with all crops by decreasing the size of plats and increasing the number of replications. The principal difficulty encountered was the increased number of times seed had to be changed and planter hoppers had to be emptied and cleaned in the course of planting the tests. After a year or two in which various efforts were made to overcome this difficulty, a method of planting was adopted which has been found to economize time and labor but which requires no additional equipment.

During the planting season of 1932 there were 2,130 head-to-row plantings of sorghums and 400 plant-to-row plantings of cotton. There were 1,566 test plats of sorghums varying in size from \( \frac{1}{600} \) to \( \frac{1}{42} \) acre and 200 \( \frac{1}{84} \) and \( \frac{1}{42} \) acre plats of cotton. These figures make a total of 4,296 plats. These plantings occupied 52 acres and were made in 64 hours by three men and a team of two mules.

An ordinary two-row-press-wheel corn and cotton planter is used. Seats are supplied for three men, two to drop the seed and one to drive the team and handle the planter. The planter hoppers are removed, and each of the two men who are planting is equipped with a piece of down-spout rainwater pipe of proper length to reach from the operator's lap to the planter seed-spout. The seed is distributed by hand through these spouts. Seed that has previously been put in bags or packets is arranged in a box placed convenient to the hands of the two men who are planting. In planting cotton delinted seed must be used. After a little practice, seed can be distributed with considerable uniformity and desirable rates of planting approximated.

The use of this method of planting saves a great deal of time because the pause between the planting of one plat and the next is only long enough to allow for the disposal of the sack or packet from which seed has been planted and the picking up of another. Much more time than this is consumed in the usual method of emptying and cleaning hoppers, and still more time is saved if frequent changes in planter plates are required as is sometimes the case in planting variety tests.

In addition, this method allows the use of a larger part of an area for experimental purposes than is sometimes possible otherwise. Alleyways between series of plats may be reduced to a minimum because planting may easily stop or start within the space of a few inches. The width of the alleyway may, therefore, be determined by conditions other than that of the space required to turn a team and planter.

A press-wheel planter may be used in lister furrows if the land is prepared for planting by listing with covering plows attached a few hours previous to the actual planting. Enough time should elapse