HARVESTING BUFFALO GRASS SEED FOR INDIVIDUAL USE

BUFFALO grass seed was successfully harvested at the Blackland Experiment Station at Temple, Texas, this season during the last week in June, at the rate of about 1 pound per man hour cleaned unhulled weight. A lawn mower was prepared for the job by removing the cutter bar, taking off the roller, attaching an ordinary grass catcher, and placing a shield on top of the mower and up the handle to deflect the scattering seed into the catcher (Fig. 1).

This machine was used on a buffalo grass lawn that had been mowed regularly and on a field area that had been cut with a mowing machine immediately prior to the seed collecting operation. In both cases satisfactory amounts of seed were secured. On the lawn, earthworms had worked up considerable soil which was caught with the buffalo grass seed. This soil was removed by placing the catch in a tub of water and skimming the seed from the top.

By using this method of collecting seed, the amount of hay that is caught in addition to the seed is materially reduced by removing the cutter bar on the lawn mower. The separating process is thus simplified so that the coarser surplus hay is easily removed by hand. Fanning is then effective in the removal of the smaller trash particles. Neither the floating nor the fanning need be done if the seed are to be planted by the collector.

This economical method of harvesting buffalo grass seed will make possible the seeding of pastures to this grass, an operation that has not been practicable because of the difficulty in securing a seed supply.—H. O. Hill, Texas Blackland Experiment Station, Temple, Texas.