VARIETAL NAMES OF OATS.1

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In connection with the discussion of varietal names of field crops in the January-February issue of the JOURNAL OF AGRONOMY,2 the writer wishes particularly to point out the confusion in nomenclature and in forms of oat varieties grown in this country. In attempting a classification of oat varieties on a morphological basis it has been found that varietal names very often have little or no significance. Many different names are applied to the same variety and many different varietal forms are found under the same name. For example, let us consider the vagaries in nomenclature of the widely known variety, Swedish Select.

The Swedish Select oat was introduced into this country from the St. Petersburg province of Russia in 1898, by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It had been carried to Finland and Russia from Sweden and was thought to be an improved strain, hence the name "Swedish Select." The distinct worth of the variety under the new conditions of this country was soon recognized. At the present time it is one of the most popular varieties among northern white oats, which perhaps accounts for the multiplicity of wrong names applied to it. No description of the Swedish Select was published at the time of its introduction beyond the statement that it was a "very large-grained, white oat."3 The following description of the variety as it now exists in this country is therefore given, in order to delineate the type to which reference is here made.

Swedish Select.—Culms erect from early growth, medium large, stiff, glabrous; sheaths dark green with grayish bloom at period of full heading, scarcely covering the internodes; leaves colored as sheaths, medium wide, margins smooth; ligules well developed; rachis straight; panicles equilateral, medium long, somewhat compact, erect, the branches ascending; 3-grained spikelets usually numerous per panicle, sometimes predominating over 2-grained spikelets.

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