



American farm book; or, A compend of American agriculture

Richard Lamb Allen

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This historic book may have numerous typos and missing text. Purchasers can download a free scanned copy of the original book (without typos) from the publisher. Not indexed. Not illustrated. 1852 Excerpt: ...to employ children; or if adults are put on the field, they should be barefoot. Any depression of the plants by the feet will soon be recovered by the subsequent growth, which, on good soil, will be sufficiently rapid to prevent the weeds again interfering with it. Grass seed or clover may be sown with flax without any detriment to it, but the flax ought to be too thick on the field to allow them to grow well; and in pulling the flax, they will be very likely to be uprooted. Harvesting.--When designed for cambrics and the finest linen, flax is pulled in flower; but in this country it is seldom harvested for the fibre till the seed is entirely formed, and although not ripe, most of it will mature on the stalk without any prejudice to the fibre. If required for seed, it must be left standing till the first seeds are well ripened. It is then gathered and bound in small bundles, and when properly dried, is placed under cover. If it falls before ripening, it should be pulled at once, whatever its stage of growth, as this is the only means of saving it. After Management.--After removing the seed by drawing the heads through a comb or rake of finely-set teeth, called rippling, the usual method of preparing flax in this country, is by dew-rotting, or spreading it thinly on a clean sward, and turning it occasionally till properly prepared, after which it is put into bundles and stored till a convenient period for cleaning it. This is a wasteful practice and gives an inferior quality of fibre. Water-rotting is the best plan of preparing it, which is done in vats or small ponds of soft water, similar to those used for hemp. This gives a strong, smooth, silky fibre, and without waste, and worth much more either for sale or for manufacturing, than the dew-rotted. Variou...

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