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# Current Information Letter

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AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION DIVISION—PAUL E. MILLER, DIRECTOR  
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FILE UNDER: FARM CROPS -- Cereals - Oats

Farmers May Seed Light Weight Oats -- H. K. Wilson, Division of Agronomy and  
Plant Genetics

Farmers of Minnesota may use their light weight oats for seed this spring. Investigations on the use of light weight grain show that such grain is satisfactory providing seeding rates are increased so that the amount of seed sown is increased to give an equivalent total weight. For example, if a farmer normally seeds 3 bushels of oats per acre he should seed 96 pounds of the light weight grain. This will increase the number of seeds planted and should provide a good stand.

Fanning Suggested. It is suggested that the light grain be put through a fanning mill to remove any oats which do not contain a seed. This is the same as removing chaff as the naked seeds will interfere with proper seeding.

While a small seed may produce a small seedling, under normal conditions it is but a short time until the seedling will be as large and thrifty as the seedlings produced by larger seeds. Planting by weight results in a greater number of seeds and this in turn in many more seedlings. Naturally, the stronger, more vigorous seedlings will tend to crowd out the weaker plants. Under average conditions many more seeds are planted than are needed and competition results in the elimination of the poorer plants.

Germination Test Needed. It is advisable for every farmer to make a germination test of his cleaned seed oats. If the germination is 90 per cent or better, he may seed at his normal rate based on weight. With lower germination it may be possible to use the seed provided seeding rates are increased in proportion to the reduced germination.

Watch Drill Clogging. In seeding light oats with a drill it is advisable to make certain that the oats feed through properly. The lid of the drill box may be kept open so that any clogging may be observed. This clogging is much more likely to occur with light weight seed.

Drills should be calibrated using light weight seed. If this is not done it is probable that errors may be made in seeding weights.