

Current Information Letter

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AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION DIVISION—PAUL E. MILLER, DIRECTOR
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September 29, 1942

UNIVERSITY FARM
ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

No. 00046

FILE UNDER: FARM CROPS--Soybeans

SUGGESTIONS ON HARVESTING FROSTED SOYBEANS By Ralph F. Crim, Extension Agronomist

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
DOCUMENTS

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Snow and freezing temperatures combined aggravated greatly the soybean situation. Even before the storm, late varieties and late plantings threatened good seed supply and oil quantity and quality. The freeze has confronted farmers immediately with the question of what to do with the crop.

Harvesting Mature Beans

Beans with some yellow leaves at the time of the frosts bearing well-filled pods containing seeds which have either changed or are beginning to change to their mature color should be harvested for seeds. If the bean crop is to be harvested with the grain binder, they should be cut as soon as the plants are dry and the leaves are fallen. The bundles should not be made large nor tied tight. The bundles should be shocked in narrow shocks, setting up the bundles two-by-two so they can dry out for threshing. For threshing, see Pamphlet 104. Especially if cut with the grain binder, it is well to harvest ^{as} soon as possible so as to avoid more lodging. The combine can handle lodged beans better than the binder. If harvested with the combine, the beans should remain in the field until they get dry and are fit to market or store.

There are few fields but what will have many small green beans more valuable for feed than oil. It may be profitable to separate out such beans and hold them on the farm for feeding.

Salvage Immature Beans for Feed

For the present situation we would define immature beans as those that were "grass green," all leaves retained at the time of the killing frost with the beans well formed in the pods, soft and green in color. Beans in this condition have little market value and will make good forage or pasturage if they can be utilized that way. Immature beans may be cut with a binder immediately, shocked in narrow shocks and allowed to dry before stacking or storing. The binder is preferable. Where the mower is used, leaves are lost and much soil picked up with the hay. Where the beans are lodged badly and tangled, it may not pay to cut them. Pasturing or hogging off may be the only way to salvage them. Hogs will recover beans better than other livestock. Hogs should become accustomed to green beans gradually to avoid scours. They will need liberal grain feed in addition to soybean pasture. Hogs being fattened for market will make soft pork if fed too many beans.

Cattle will eat some leaves as well as beans. Usual care should be taken that hungry cattle are not turned into a field. Brood sows, gilts, and summer pigs will do a good job of harvesting. On farms where the supply of hay is adequate and the bean acreage too large to be pastured off to advantage, the beans may be left standing to dry out and the seed harvested later.

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Dr. H. J. M. C. Extension University
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