

(except one sometimes). Flowers appear in these months and these are removed. In Masi, irrigation is given. Till Chittrai 2 irrigations are given per week. In Vykasi flowers formed develop into fruits. The crop is rather poor in the first year. About 50 or 60 per tree are retained and are not tasty. Irrigation is given once a month till Karthigai & interculturing or mammatti hoeing is given once a month. Till Masi next, practically no irrigation is given. From Masi onwards 2 irrigations are given a month. In 4 or 5 years there are too many spines at the bottom of the tree which are removed. Picking of fruits is done once a week from Punkuni. In those trees which flower from Adi to Karthigai, some fruits appear which are punctured by insect attack. This occurs only in these months. No remedy is known. Tree rats, squirrels, mina and parrots, are destroyers of fruits. Contractors pay 1 Rupee per tree. Ordinarily 150 to 200 fruits are obtained per tree. The ryots generally sell them at 40 to 50 per Rupee. The immature ones are steamed over boiling water to obtain good colour on the skin and sold as good fruits.

W. RAGHAVACHARI,

Ag. Farm Manager, Erode.

**A method of Ragi cultivation as a dry crop practiced in the
Melur Taluk.**

The crop is generally cultivated in all kinds of dry soils except those of a sandy nature. The season is from July to September. The seedlings are raised under wells.

The fields are ploughed with summer showers of May and June. Sheep penning is generally done for the crop, if not, yard sweepings are used. A good soaking rain is taken advantage of, by the end of July or after, for planting the crop in the field. The time at which the seedlings are pulled out from the nursery varies from 3 to 6 weeks. Generally black gram is broadcasted

in the field first and Ragi seedlings are dropped down $1\frac{1}{2}$ ft. apart (1 muzham). This is done as follows:—When the black gram sown is covered with ploughs, the seedlings are dropped down in the furrow made by the 1st plough, the succeeding plough covering and earthing up the roots. The seedlings are again put in the furrow of the 3rd plough, the next one earthing up, and so on in alternate furrows. Only one seedling is planted at a time. There is also the practice of growing this as a pure crop. This method of raising ragi dry is known locally as சால் கெப்பை சாகுபடி which literally means “cultivation of ragi in plough furrows.” It is considered that a rain in August after planting is sufficient to maintain the crop and the September—October rains bring the crop to maturity. There is also a practice of penning sheep a month after planting (*i. e.* after the crop established itself well) and, by so doing, it is said that the crop comes up with renewed vigour and yields also better. The yield varies from 720 to 1200 Madras Measures per acre. This is considered a risky crop and they say that, of late, the cultivation of this is going down in extent owing to the uncertainty of the season.

K. SANKARA IYER,
Farm Manager, Madura.

Practice better than Precept.

M. R. Ry. Karuthiruma Goundan, Thulukkanaickanpalayam hamlet of Vanyputtam, Gobichettipalayam Taluk, writes:—

A quantity of 21 Madras Measures of Daincha seed was sown over an extent of 10.56 acres in S. Nos. 93, 101, 102, 105, 106 and 110 wet in Vanyputtam village on the 1st of May 1913. The seeds were obtained through the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Southern Division. The crop was on the ground for $3\frac{1}{2}$ months and, as soon as water was allowed for paddy cultivation, this crop