



Grading and Packing

Orchard of Charles Patchett, Cooksville, Ont.

of the hardest for the beginner to master, it will be dealt with more in detail.

In the straight pack, before the lid is nailed on, the apples at either end of the box should come up a little better than flush with the top. With the diagonal the ends should be a little higher—about one-fourth to three-eighths of an inch in all. Then from either end there should be a gradual bulge amounting at the middle of the box to about one and a half inches. Thus, when the lid is nailed on, there will be a bulge of practically three-fourths of an inch each on top and bottom. Less bulge is desirable with the straight packs on account of their unyielding nature. There is no settling of the apples into the crevices as in the diagonal.

The proper bulge is obtained, in the straight pack especially, by selecting apples that are a trifle smaller for the ends. With apples that are being packed on the cheek, it sometimes becomes necessary to turn the end rows flat to secure the desired bulge, and, at the same time, have the ends low enough. When it becomes necessary to do this, the ends of two layers at one end of the box, and the ends of the other two at the other end of the box should be turned, otherwise one end will be two high and the other too low.

SECURING THE BULGE

In the diagonal pack, the small spaces left at the end of each layer aid materially in securing the proper bulge. This, and pulling the apples tighter towards the centre of each layer, is sufficient to give the necessary bulge in wrapped fruit. By packing closer in the centre you close the pockets between the apples more, the next layer will not sink so deep, and, therefore, the centre is built up. The

ends being left a little looser, the pockets are opened a little more, the apples drop in further and do not build up so high. Practice will give the knowledge of just how high to pack the centre or how loose to pack the ends.

When the fruit is not wrapped, this difference in firmness cannot be made and the packer has therefore to take advantage of the small irregularities and differences in size of the apples. This difference in size must not be so great as to attract attention. It is essential to begin the bulge with the first layer of fruit and to pack each layer with the same end in view.

In finding a pack too flat it is usually no use to repack the top layer, as the trouble probably extends through the box. The bulge should form an unbroken arch so that the pressure of the lid will be equally distributed over the fruit. A bulge high in the centre and dropping off to the sides will not be held firmly in place by the cover, causing the whole pack to become loose.

WRAPPED AND UNWRAPPED FRUIT

In wrapped fruit the top of the box should be packed last, while in unwrapped fruit the top is packed first. Packing the top of wrapped fruit first is a poor method and should be discouraged, as the smooth side of the wrapped fruit has to be turned down, and the consequent loose ends projecting, are very confusing to the packer, making his work considerably slower.

Only number one fruit and possibly number two of the winter varieties should be wrapped. All fruit intended for distant markets as Great Britain, should be wrapped, unless unwrapped fruit is desired, as the fruit carries much better. Wrap, too, for markets where there is no competition with wrapped fruit from other districts.

Smoothness and finish to a pack are very essential. Contrary to a fairly common belief, the box alone will not sell the apples. The high prices rely in a large measure on the appearance of the pack, which should be regular in size and perfect in alignment. If the fruit is wrapped, smoothness of wrap is of great importance.

PILE BOXES ON THEIR SIDES

Nail the lids on the boxes as they are packed, and pile them on their sides, as the sides, having no bulge, do not bruise the fruit.

Clear the packing table several times during the day so that no fruit becomes bruised from continually "pawing over."

Avoid turning the stem of one apple to the cheek of another, for the stem is likely to puncture the cheek and destroy the apple, especially for storage. This is the objection to the riff-raff pack.

When wrapping use the proper size paper for the apple. Using paper too large or too small increases the labor of

wrapping, and further gives a defective pack. Use paper nine by nine inches for fruit of the general size of Snows, ten by ten for medium sized fruit—that is fruit of about two and three-quarters to three and one-quarter inches diameter. For larger fruit use ten by twelve and twelve by twelve.

Mark the number of apples in the box, rather than the tier. The designation by tiers is misleading to buyer and consumer alike.

One last point: Keep your pack above the requirements of the "Fruit Marks Act."

Why Norfolk Apples Lead

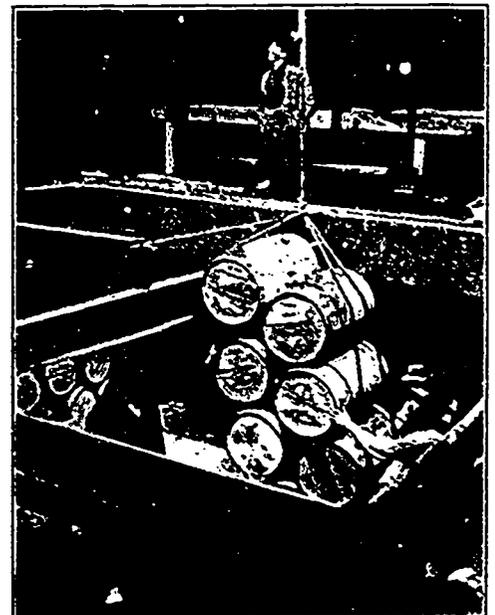
J. E. Smith, B.S.A., Simcoe, Ont.

For several years past Norfolk county has occupied the premier place with her fruit at the Ontario Horticultural Exhibition. Ever since the inception of this big fair, she has invariably had a wide margin on the remainder of the province with her splendid display of high quality apples.

The outsider naturally is led to believe that Norfolk county must be one large orchard with something exceptional about the soils and climate that gives to the fruit its high color and quality. But have you ever visited old Norfolk? When you do, you will not be impressed with the extent of her bearing orchards. The outsider must conclude after a trip through the county that it is a mixed farming district, with a slight emphasis on wheat and dairying in some of the townships.

FRUIT COMES FROM OLD ORCHARDS

True it is that large areas—even as high as five hundred acres—have been and are being set out to fruit throughout the county, but the older bearing orchards are but of a few acres such as are found almost anywhere over the pro-



Loading Apples on the Steamer at Montreal