

School Gardening

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THIS topic, as related to the teaching of agriculture in Ontario schools, should be divided into two parts, since it must deal with rural as well as urban schools. Rural schools require a more extensive type of gardening as they must include the field crops as well as the horticultural. While city schools may devote some time and space to field crops, the value of this would come largely from the acquainting of the urban scholars with rural problems, and not from any use they could make of them while in the city, where most of them will remain. They are most interested in small fruits and vegetables.

In all garden work, the most important aims should be to instil into the child a love for Mother Nature and a desire to study the problems which arise daily. We know but little at present about agricultural problems in comparison with what there is yet to solve, and the pupil should be taught early in life to grapple with these. Our gardens, then, should be so planned that the child will go home and put into practice on the larger scale, the results he has seen obtained at school. It should also be the meeting place of the parents, for through it, if it has been properly planned and handled, much of the prejudice which people, especially those of the rural districts, have against scientific agriculture can be overcome.

In planning all garden work, the teacher should remember that the child

must take definite ideas from the plan, and these should be as near the recognized commercial as possible. Much of the distrust of older people is caused by the teacher doing something in a way which cannot be used successfully at home by the parent. Plan your garden in a large area, to be cared for by a number of pupils, rather than giving each child a small plot. In this way the older pupils can help instruct the younger. If you must use single plots, have them so arranged that they will form long rows when the garden is

finished. This will overcome the difficulties of cultivation, especially during summer vacation and will give added appearance to your garden. The garden plan should be made to be applicable to the surrounding district. Each one of course, should contain a good vegetable garden and added to it should be a section wherein would be grown the crops most suitable to the district.

Here are a few rules that may aid in planning:

1. Know definitely the exact length and breadth of your plot. Make a plan of the garden during the winter months, giving a definite area to each crop.

2. Run your vegetable rows north and south—if possible—but have them always the long way of the garden. On a slope run them across rather than up and down.

3. Manure and plow your ground in the fall, leaving it rough—especially if

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