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Potato Growing in Saskatchewan

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The Potato crop occupies a position of relative unimportance as compared with grain crops in Saskatchewan, yet its use is so universal and its future so promising that the important points in connection with its culture should be well understood by all growers.

In Saskatchewan, potatoes are used almost altogether for human food. As yet none have been used for making starch or alcohol and only the unmarketable ones and the small surplus above the needs of the family have been used as food for stock. Up to the present time the only market outside the farm has been the village, town and city homes, chiefly within the province.

ADVANTAGES OF POTATO GROWING.

When given suitable soil conditions the potato is very productive. Yields ranging from 70 to 800 bushels have been produced in many parts of the province in different seasons. The average for all varieties good and poor, under field conditions, at Saskatoon for the last five years is just over 200 bushels per acre; the better varieties averaged 250 bushels. Under more favorable conditions average yields approaching 400 bushels per acre have been reported. Of course, under drier climatic and poorer soil conditions lighter returns have been secured.

The Potato furnishes the cheapest food the farmer can grow. When one considers that from 15 to 20 per cent. of the total yield is starch or, in other words, that a 200 bushel potato crop contains between 1,800 and 2,400 pounds of starch the value of this crop forces itself to one's attention.

The potato is an "intertilled" crop and being such leaves the land in much better condition for grain than any other crop with the exception of corn. Potato ground and corn ground have produced nearly as high yields of grain as a good summerfallow and much higher yields than land that in the previous year carried any other kind of crop.

DIFFICULTIES IN POTATO GROWING.

The production of potatoes presents fewer difficulties than that of most crops. Drought can generally be guarded against by thorough fallowing and planting in wide rows. Spring frosts often cut down the tops and thus lessen the yield but they seldom kill the plants, unless the planting has been done very early. Fall frosts sometimes come before the plants are mature thus lessening the yield and lowering

