

The Farm Garden

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The object of this article is to impress upon the farmers the advisability of growing more garden vegetables. Carefully compiled statistics have demonstrated that, yearly, large quantities of vegetables are being imported from outside sources to supply the demand of the local markets. This should not be. Besides, many farmers do not even grow sufficient vegetables to supply the demand of their own household.

In a country where practically all classes of vegetables can be grown with such good success as they can in the West, there is no reason why every farmer's household should not be provided with a liberal supply of fresh vegetables, and sufficient grown in excess to meet the demands of the local markets.

The liberal use of vegetables will do much to reduce the cost of living, and besides can be made to supply in a palatable form a most healthful class of human food. By exercising care in the selection of varieties, and by carefully arranging the dates of sowing, a liberal supply of succulent vegetables can be provided for practically all seasons of the year. The variety of crop that will be grown will depend very largely upon the personal tastes of the grower and upon the amount of time he will have to devote to this phase of his farm work.

Planning the Garden

One of the first considerations in planning a garden is to determine the size. The important point in connection with the size is that it should be large enough to meet the needs of the household. Sufficient space should be provided to give a successive supply of vegetables throughout the entire growing season. Conditions will vary somewhat, but one-half acre of well prepared soil, carefully planned, should provide sufficient vegetables for the ordinary household.

The location of the garden is also an important consideration. Convenience of access, thorough drainage, suitability of soil and exposure are points that should receive consideration in the selection of the site of the farm garden. Good drainage and a suitable soil are probably the most important considerations. The soil, if possible, should be of a sandy texture, and the land preferably should slope slightly to the south or south-east. Much can be done to simplify the work of caring for a garden if the arrangement of the crops is carefully planned. Perennial crops, such as asparagus and rhubarb, should be placed in some place where they will not interfere with the cultivation of the other crop of the garden. The vine crops, such as squash, pumpkins, cucumbers, marrows, etc., should also be placed by themselves. If properly planned, a considerable part of the heavy work of a farm garden can be done with the aid of the horse and cultivator. The coarser gar-

den crops, such as peas, beans, corn, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, potatoes and such crops, may be so arranged and planted at such distances (say thirty inches apart), that the work of cultivation may be done with the horse and cultivator. In planning the garden it is advisable to have the rows as long as possible, so that the work with horse and cultivator can be carried on as easily as possible. The root crops, such as carrots, parsnips, beets, salsify and onions give better results if grown more closely together and cultivated by hand. Eighteen inches is a good distance apart to plant crops of this class. A small Planet Junior cultivator is very valuable for work of this nature.

Soil and Cultivation

A good garden soil should contain a liberal amount of sand. A moderate sandy loam makes an excellent soil for vegetables. The quality of vegetables depends, to a very considerable extent, on the quality of soil on which they are grown, as vegetables of much finer texture are produced on sandy soils than on those of a clayey nature. Sandy soils will stimulate a much earlier growth than the heavier clay soils. In districts where the soil is of a clayey nature, the lightest land obtainable should be selected for the garden.

The soil for vegetables cannot be too well prepared. Many garden seeds are very fine and require a finely-prepared soil to give a good germination. For this reason it is better to use the same land, providing it is properly enriched for garden purposes, for a number of years. The continued cultivation that is given the land brings it into excellent condition for the purpose of gardening.

Practically all garden crops are benefited by a thorough cultivation of the soil during the season that the crop is growing. The cultivation serves to destroy weeds, conserve moisture, which is very essential for garden crops, and maintain a finer physical condition of the soil, which is also very essential

for the successful production of garden crops. This cultivation should be repeated at intervals of a week or two weeks throughout the entire growing season, and may be carried on successfully with a hoe and rake or light garden cultivator.

Garden Seeds

One of the difficulties experienced in gardening is getting good seed, and much of the success of any garden depends on the quality of the seed used. The seedsmen are not always to blame for this state of affairs, as in many cases the growers of the seed themselves are responsible. As a rule, the best results are obtained from new, plump, vigorous seed. The most important points to consider in connection with seed are its viability or germinating power and purity as to variety. Many seeds lose their viability in a few years, and a wise precaution is to test the viability of garden seeds before sowing. The matter of purity as to variety is one that has to be left to the honesty of the seedsmen. In sowing garden seeds, and especially if there is a possibility of the seed being old, it is well to sow an abundance of seed. This thick sowing is likely to ensure a much more reliable stand of plants than where a small quantity of seed is sown. The excessive plants should be removed when the plants are young, usually when they are from two to three inches in height.

Transplanting

On account of the shortness of the growing season it is necessary to sow the seed of some garden crops, such as celery, cabbage, cauliflower and tomatoes in seed boxes in the house or hotbeds outside early in the season, that they may be started and transplanted to the permanent ground later on. This gives them a much longer growing season and allows them to come to maturity by the time they should be harvested. Seed of celery may be sown

about the first of March or the latter part of February.

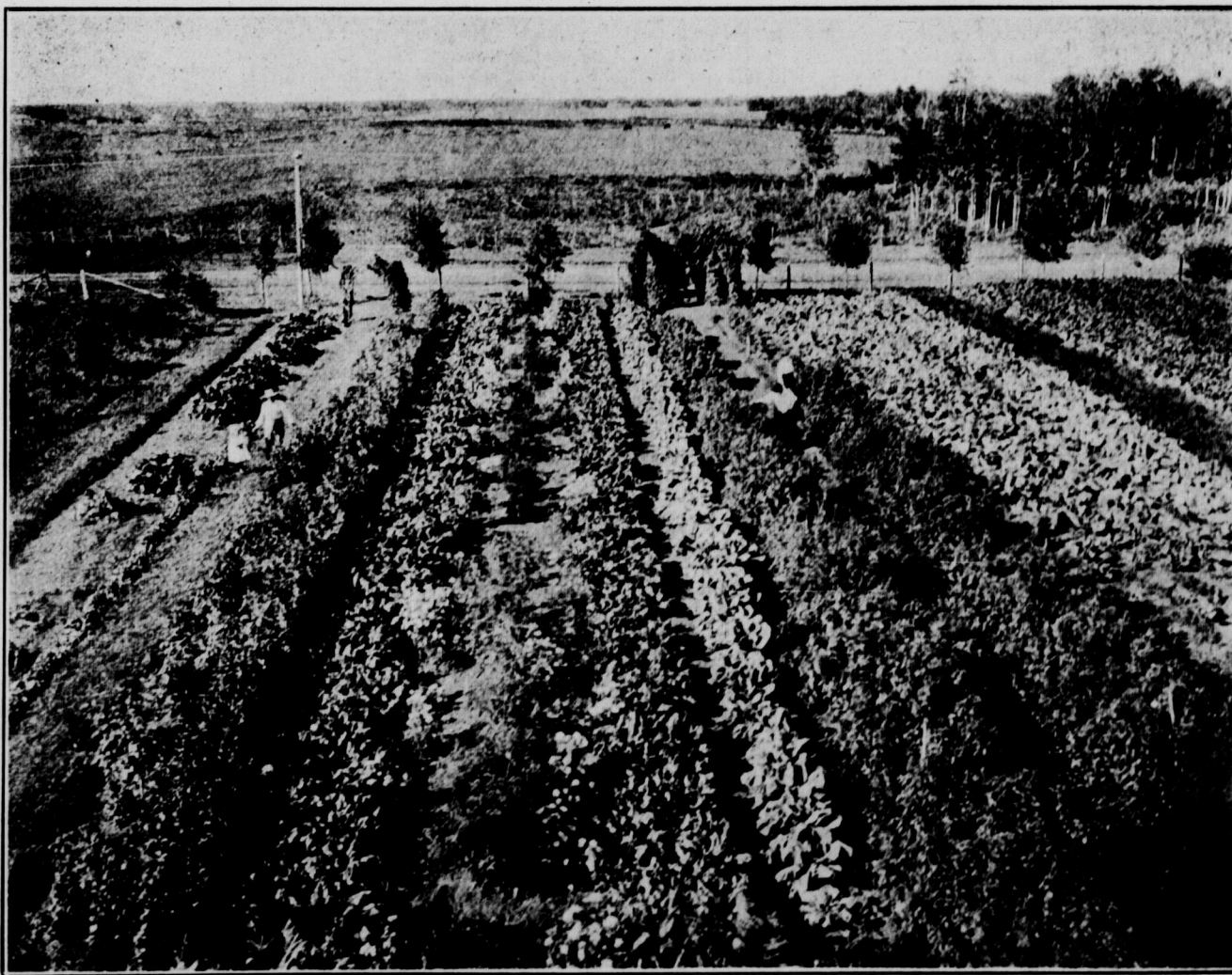
Cabbage and cauliflower seed may be sown later, or about the first of April. The main essentials in growing plants is to attend carefully to the watering and heat. The soil should be kept moderately moist, and an average temperature of 55 to 60 degrees should stimulate good healthy growth. To get the best results it may be necessary to transplant the young plants from the seed boxes to other boxes at least once before planting out permanently. The plants may be made much more vigorous and in better condition for permanent transplanting if they are gradually exposed to the outside air for some time before being permanently planted out. This causes the young plants to become stocky and resistant to outside conditions and will give good results when finally planted. The final transplanting may be done about the first of June. If possible this work should be done in the evening or on a cloudy day. It is a good plan to give the young plants a thorough watering after transplanting and cover them over for a few days with some coarse litter to protect them from the excessive heat of the sun until they become established in the soil.

Storing

The keeping qualities of vegetables depend very largely on the way in which they are stored. Most garden vegetables keep best when kept at a temperature slightly above freezing. Roots such as carrots, parsnips, and turnips can be stored successfully in bins or boxes packed in dry sand. Celery, which is a difficult vegetable to store, may be kept very well by placing the bunches upright in a cool cellar and packing sand about the roots. Cabbage should be stored so that the air will circulate freely about the heads, and thereby prevent decay. Decaying vegetables should be removed from the cellar as soon as possible, as they frequently cause very disagreeable odors and

may be injurious to the health of the members of the household. A few notes are given on some of the garden crops that may be successfully grown by the western farmer, together with suggestions as to the best varieties to use. At the beginning of the vegetable alphabet is found asparagus. It should be found also in every garden in the West, as it is one of the easiest to grow, and never fails. While some advocate trenching and heavy manure before planting, it is sufficient if our soil is plowed or dug twelve inches deep, the roots planted in rows thirty inches apart and two feet apart in the rows. Each fall after frosts set in a heavy coat of well rotted manure should be applied, and in the spring dug in about the roots. For asparagus, a bed should be set apart by itself, as the one set of roots will con-

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Rice Sheppard's Garden at South Edmonton