

# Ontario Department of Agriculture

## FRUIT BRANCH

### Currants and Gooseberries

E. F. PALMER

The purpose of this bulletin is to give, in as few words as possible, some idea of the extent and importance of the currant and gooseberry industries of the Province, and the most approved methods of culture for the home garden and commercial plantation.

Both the currant and the gooseberry favor a northern climate and do not thrive in hot and dry climates. They are a complete failure in the Southern States of the Union and along the Gulf coast. Ontario seems especially adapted to the culture of these fruits and they can be grown successfully over the greater part of the Province. Some varieties will be found tender in certain districts but there are excellent hardy varieties which will thrive well in the lesser favored localities.

The area of small fruits under cultivation in 1901 is given in the Dominion census as 8,116 acres, and for 1911 Ontario is credited with 13,940 acres, an increase of 71.7 per cent. This includes all small fruits, strawberries, currants and gooseberries, raspberries, etc. In 1910, Ontario produced 2,019,319 quarts of currants and gooseberries or practically sixty-five per cent. of the total production for Canada. The production of strawberries for the same year (fiscal year 1911; crop year 1910) is given as 9,386,135 quarts, and of other small fruits 6,844,253 quarts. The increase over 1901 in the production of all small fruits is figured to be 12.1 per cent. or a little over two million quarts.

A blank form with questions pertaining to currants and gooseberries was sent to the various county representatives and out of twenty-seven replies received, representing twenty-seven counties, only two reports stated that currants were grown to any extent commercially in that county, and five others reported a few commercial patches. The report concerning gooseberries showed even less interest, seven counties reporting a few commercial patches. No reports, however, were received from Halton, Wentworth, Lincoln and Kent counties concerning these fruits.

Every county reported that both currants and gooseberries were grown in the home gardens to a greater or less extent, some counties very little, others quite extensively. Every county with two exceptions reported currants profitable, and with three or four exceptions, gooseberries were also reported profitable. Only about half of the counties stated that the patches were cultivated, pruned and sprayed, and that, not generally, there being on the whole a lack of interest on the part of the fruit growers and farmers concerning those fruits.

From the Rainy River District a most encouraging report came, stating that currants and gooseberries have been very successful where they have been tried.