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THE FARMER'S ADVOCATE

FOUNDED 1866



Our School Department.

How Fruit is Judged.

Most of us have visited one or more of the big shows or exhibitions, and have wondered when we saw the long rows of fruit on plates, how the judge ever could decide which was the best and deserved the first place. Now, of course, the judge must know what he is doing or he might not be fair to everyone who has apples on exhibition. Some of us may think that it is an easy job, instead of a hard one, whereas one must be very careful or he is apt to make a mistake. Now suppose we imagined we had two plates of apples in front of us, and we will suppose too, that they are Northern Spys, because these are among the nicest of all apples and the ones we like to eat best about Christmas time. What should we look for in these two plates before we can tell which one is the better of the two?

To do that we must first think what there is about an apple that would make it better than another. In the first place, we will probably think that some apples are bigger than others, and we know that when we eat an apple we do not want it to be too small, because then there would be too much core with the result that there would not be very much of it to eat. On the other hand, apples that are very very large have not the same flavor as apples of a moderate size, so that we must see that all the apples on the plate we choose as the winning one are big enough to be called good Northern Spys, but are not overgrown. 'Size is not a very important point, but still we must consider it.

Most of us will look immediately to see whether the apples are red, or whether they are green and unripe. Color is very important in judging fruit of all kinds because as soon as fruit begins to get ripe and ready to eat, it also begins to color up. Most people, too, will buy fruit that is highly colored in preference to other fruit that has less color, and so when we are judging our two plates of apples we must remember what the consumer or the market demands. It is not possible to get too much color in fruit, as was the case with size, so we conclude that the plate of apples that has the most color is best in this respect. Now suppose one of these plates has three big apples and two little ones

Now suppose one of these plates has three big apples and two little ones, while the other has five apples that are moderate in size. What should we think about this? We would immediately say that one plate lacked "uniformity", and this would be a very serious fault, because if we go into a store to buy some apples we would not buy a basketful if half of them were very little and the half of them were very little and the other half very large. We would want them all the same size. The same thing is true with regard to color; we would them green and the other half very red. The result is that when we are judging apples we judge them in many respects just as if we were buying them, and this point regarding uniformity is very important—just as important as color, in fact. Now suppose, after we had found out which plate was the better in size, color and uniformity, we looked them over again and found that one of them was cut with a knife, or had a worm-hole, or a big, black-scab spot on the top or side. What should we do with this apple? Once more we must consider what we would do if we were buying them. Insects, such as the coddling moth, and diseases such as apple scab, do many thousands of dollars' damage every year to our fruit crops, and fruit growers have to spend a great deal of time and money in carefully spraying their trees to keep away these troublesome pests. Is it not fair that the man who goes to all this trouble in order to produce clean, fresh fruit should not be rewarded in some way for doing so? Good judges at exhibitions think that they should, and as a result they will look very closely for worm holes and scab spots. Sometimes people who are not honest will try and scrape off a scabby spot, or, if the worm hole is a small one, will try to cover it up, hoping that the judge will not see it and will believe that they have sprayed carefully and produced good fruit. The judge, however, knows that it would not be fair to encourage

people to grow wormy and poor finit so that if the worm hole is at all bad he will throw the plate out altogether and not give it a prize of any kind. The same thing is true where there are holes in the side of the apple so that the skin is cut through and the flesh exposed buch wounds will not heal over and will pread rot if alongside of other apples is being picked for exhibition the picker will get careless and pull the stem out. This exposes the flesh too and is just as bad as a hole in the side of the apple. Sometimes the stem is put back in again to make the judge believe it was not pulled out, but a good judge will along the stem is put back is the stem to see it they are

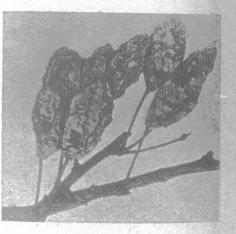
loose. Now we come to perhaps the most important point of all, and that is the quality of the fruit. How does a judge tell the quality? He almost never cuts the fruit to find out what it tastes like. It is pretty easy to tell rather by the looks of an apple whether it is of good quality or not. Most of us know this by experience, and can pick out a good apple from the top of a barrel without cutting it open. We do this by looking at the

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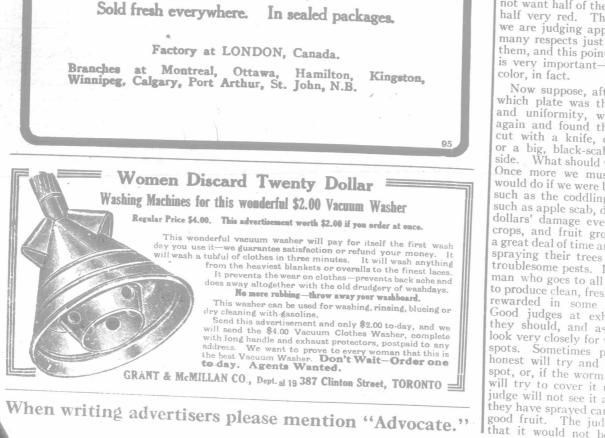
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Mummified Plums. This is caused by brown rot, and they should be picked off and burned. The disease winters in them.

size and the color to see whether it is ripe enough. An apple that is fully ripe will be as full of quality as it ever will be. Some apples will be very red outside, but if we looked at what is called the under color we will find that it is, still very green. There are two kinds of color in apples and pears, as well as in peaches. These are called the under color, which shows up before the apples begins to turn red, and the body color which is the red itself, and comes after the apple begins to ripen. By looking closely at both the body and the ground color one can get a good idea



Jersey Cream Sodas

the ground color one can get a good idea of the quality of an apple, and this point is very important.

Now there is one other point that we must look for, and that is to see whether the apples on both plates are really Northern Spys. To find this out, we must, of course, know what these varieties look like, and it is pretty easy to tell one variety from another by the shape of it. All the fruit on one plate should be shaped as nearly alike as possible, because that adds to the uniformity of the plate, and may also mean that the fruit on the plate is more likely to be all of the same variety. Thus we have covered nearly all the

Thus we have covered nearly all the points about these apples that we need to look for in order to find which plate is the best. We have looked them all over carefully for size, color, shape, freedom from blemishes, uniformity and quality, so that it is a comparatively easy matter to size them both up from what we have found out and give the first prize to the best one.

Teachers are invited to discuss school problems through this department. An intercnange of ideas and experiences will be helpful to all.

Burn the dead vegetation and plow the school garden this fall if possible. Insects and fungous diseases harbor in the rubbish about the garden and thus survive the winter.