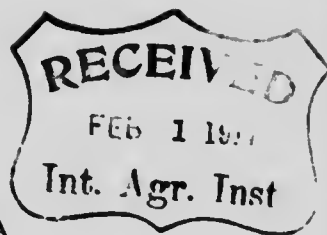


20-15

CIRCULAR No. 2.



PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (HORTICULTURAL BRANCH).

COMMERCIAL ONION-CULTURE.

By P. E. FRENCH, B.S.A., ASSISTANT HORTICULTURIST.

THE onion is one of the most important vegetable crops. In the districts of the Delta and Chilliwack, Armstrong, Vernon, and Kelowna, growers making this crop a specialty now ship numbers of straight car-loads every year. Crops from the first two mentioned points go largely to the local markets, the Coast onion not being a particularly good shipper for Prairie trade. The Interior-grown product goes to local markets also, but principally to the Prairies. Only the main crop mature bulbs so far are being grown, though there is an opportunity for development of the trade in pickling-onions, onion-sets, and the large Spanish types, such as Prizetaker and Gibraltar.

The large profits resulting from skilful culture on reasonably suitable land have made onion-growing popular with those holding limited tracts, especially among young orchard trees, while truck-growers in localities particularly adapted, both as to soil and climate, to onion-culture have found the business profitable in larger areas.

The market is generally good. Even against the duty into Canada of 30 per cent, *ad valorem*, we import about 75,000 bushels annually. The c.o.b. price at Okanagan points for a number of years past has averaged about \$20 per ton for Yellow Danvers in 100-lb. bags. As a general rule, the price increases during the winter months, but lack of storage facilities and the danger of frost in transit have prevented any great development of storage business. Prices, nevertheless, have been highly remunerative, and the market is steadily increasing.

THE NEW METHOD OF ONION-CULTURE.

There has recently arisen a method of culture in which the seed is sown in February or March in hotbeds and the plants set out in the field in May, when about the size of a lead-pencil. The advantages of this method are:—

- (1.) Less seed is required;
- (2.) There is a more uniform crop and the expenses of weeding and thinning are almost entirely obviated; and