

How to Store Your Garden Harvest

AND KEEP FRUITS AND VEGETABLES FRESH THROUGH THE WINTER.

(By ERNEST BADE, Ph.D.)
In previous articles I told how to plant your garden, and how to care for your growing vegetables during the summer. Now I am going to tell you how to enjoy the fruits of your labor—how to harvest your crop; more especially, though, how to store your garden products so that you will have fresh fruit and vegetables all winter.

The dry, sunny days of fall are the best of harvest. You must be careful, though, not to begin the harvesting too soon, for fruits and vegetables that are to be kept through the winter must be thoroughly ripe when picked, and perfect in every respect. It is better to delay the harvest until the first slight frost of autumn. This stops the growth of the plant, which has ripened thoroughly, and the plant can be kept fresh longer than if picked too early.

If the fall is rainy, winter cabbages tend to burst before they are harvested. This can be prevented by bending the plants to one side. Seize the stalk as if you are going to pull it out of the ground, and pull it over with a sharp jerk. This will stop the growth by destroying the tiny root hairs, and will prevent bursting.

The best way to store winter cabbages is to remove the plants, roots and all, and place them, heads upward, in a shallow trench, in a shallow ditch or against a wall. Cover them with boards, a layer of straw or alien leaves, and about a foot of sand or soil. Protected in this way, cabbage plants will keep throughout the winter.

Leaf and tuberous vegetables such as carrots and turnips, can be stored in a similar way. Place them in a trench about 18 inches deep, strung out in rows and in the same position in which they grew. Wall in the ditch with the soil you have removed in digging it. Over the ditch place boards covered with straw, leaves and soil. The boards should slant slightly so that the rain will run off.

Storing the plants in this way will slow down their respiration. Consequently the excavation will become warm if it is not ventilated. Small holes here and there will suffice to carry away the warm air. If this remedy is not taken, the plants will rot, and of course, decay. Care should be taken not to remove stored vegetables during intense cold or they will be frostbitten.

If you store vegetables in the cellar, see that it is well ventilated and dry. In damp and heated cellars the vegetables soon will begin to decay. The best way is to place the vegetables in sand or soil, using boxes if necessary. Where space is lacking, frames or shelves can be made for storing the vegetables placed one above the other. This is an excellent way to store potatoes. Celery should be placed in sand, and carrots in boxes or similar containers where they can be covered with sand.

Apples should be stored in frames or boxes. When using boxes, raise them with strips of wood to prevent moisture from gathering on the bottom.

Kitchen herbs may be kept in some protected spot in the garden, especially if covered with a light layer of straw. A better method, though, is to place the herbs in pots in the fall. These can be kept on a window-sill until the cold weather sets in, when they can be removed to the cellar or some other part of the house and placed by a well-lighted window. If you will water them occasionally, you can have fresh herbs to season your meals throughout the winter.

Icebergs Ahead

The menace to navigation from floating icebergs is well known. Only one-tenth of the mass of a floating iceberg is visible, the other nine-tenths being submerged. As melting proceeds, the centre of gravity shifts; and a berg that looks as solid as Gibraltar is apt to tip over suddenly, with disastrous results to a ship which may have been at an apparently safe distance. Likewise, the submerged part is of such indeterminate extent that a ship may ground on it while the pilot is under the impression that he is still in safe water.

In order to avoid these dangers it is necessary that the approach of the iceberg be known before it becomes visible. A "radio-micrometer" has been made for iceberg detection. The instrument consists of two parts—a thermocouple and a spherical mirror. The thermocouple is enclosed in a vacuum tube from which the air has been exhausted. The mirror has a silvered front so that the radiation has not to go through the glass, which would absorb part of it.

There is a temptation to describe the work of this radio-micrometer in the location of icebergs as depending upon the "radiation of cold" by the berg, being at a temperature some hundreds of degrees above absolute zero, is in fact radiating heat, but not of low intensity. The thermocouple reacts to this heat, and as it approaches the berg it gives a galvanometer reading in accordance with this fact.

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