

Work in the Garden.

The New Sweet Pea Culture.

AT the approach of spring the attention of many farmers' wives and daughters and many farmers themselves is directed towards the "beauty spot" of a farm. The sweet pea always has been and always will be a favorite with those who garden more for enjoyment than for profit, and if there is any class of flowers in which there has been greater and more astonishing progress within recent years than in sweet peas, it has escaped our notice. The small, insignificant, modest sweet

pea of former years, which had nothing to recommend it but its fragrance, has, as if by magic, evolved into entirely new forms and shapes of its flowers, greatly enlarged the size, and developed variety and richness of shades and colors almost incredible.

The list of named and well defined varieties is already up into the hundreds, and the novelties of each succeeding season eclipse those of the preceding. One firm alone introduces this season seven entirely new and striking varieties most of which are catalogued by

seedmen generally. One of the most remarkable of these novelties is Aurora, a life-size illustration of which is presented herewith. Its flowers are of gigantic size, of rich, salmon pink stripes on a white ground. The vines are vigorous in growth and bloom profusely.

But great and astounding as has been the evolution of the sweet pea flower, from the specialist florist's standpoint of view, this is not of nearly the importance to the amateur gardener as are the new methods of cultivation. "Plant deep"—certainly not less than six inches—was the inexorable law laid down by

all authorities of high and low degree, up to this date; and those of us who followed the advice and yet failed to secure success, attributed our failures to every imaginable cause except the real one—too deep planting. But now hope springs up in the heart of many a disappointed and discouraged flower lover, when a skillful and experienced specialist boldly announces: "We must abandon the trench method of planting sweet peas. The trench method was used to secure deep planting, and the substitute for deep planting is firming the soil. Since the trench method apparently

causes the blight, we must stop it. Sweet peas do best in a heavy soil, and you can get very nearly the same effect, if your soil is light, by firming it.

Plant, if possible, in your vegetable garden, where the soil has been deepened and enriched in past seasons. And if where the row comes it has been newly spaded, tread it down considerably before planting. The treading will hollow out the place for your row about right—and it will thus collect moisture, and by its compactness, it will hold it. In this hollow, scratch

the lines for your seed one inch deep, covering it only one inch, firm ground above the seed. When the seed comes up, do not fill in any earth about them, at least for six weeks. Every time you hoe, firm the ground compactly about them, and don't let moles loosen it up. Vines that come up in the well-trod path do not have the blight. This method applies to light soil where the blight is troublesome. In the case of heavy soil, it settles soon of itself, and the surface of it must, of course, be kept from baking. In either case, after the buds begin to appear, put on a light mulching to shade the ground "



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