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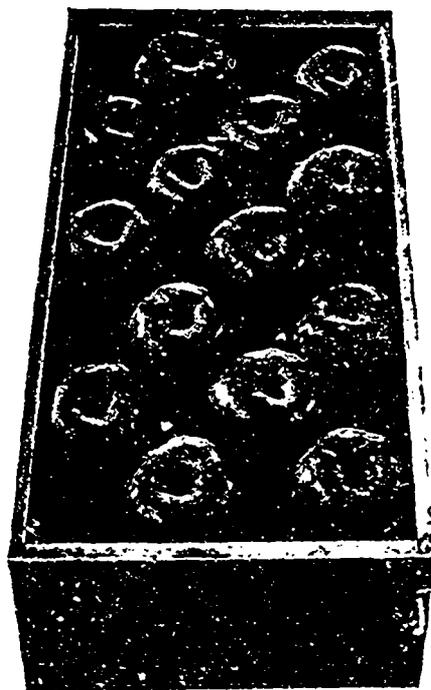
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Hints to Box Packers

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PACKING is placing fruit of the same size solidly in boxes in such a manner as to insure uniformity of appearance, neatness and protection from bruising. The purpose of careful packing is to make the box of fruit as attractive as possible to the purchaser, and obtain thereby for it the highest possible price. The few hints here given are intended as a help and a guide in obtaining a good commercial pack.



The 2-2 Diagonal Pack. Fig. 1.

I would emphasize first the point that only neat and clean boxes of properly gauged lumber should be used. It is a faulty plan to use packing boxes "just once" for packing the fruit in.

If the fruit is not to be wrapped it is advisable to line the box with lining paper cut especially for this purpose. Two pieces are required for each box, and in placing the paper in make allowance for the bulge on the box after it is nailed up.

A convenient packing table is important. The surface area of the table should not, as a rule, be greater than three feet by four feet, as anything larger will not allow two packers to reach all points of it without unnecessary stretching. Larger tables may be used if there

are four packers to a table, but as a general rule their use is to be avoided. There is too much fruit in one pile, and furthermore two packers at one table can work to better advantage than can four.

THE METHOD

The fruit should be carefully graded before packing, particularly for inexperienced packers. Good packers, too, will do better and faster work where this is done. Unless the fruit is sized properly it cannot be made to fit evenly and snugly. It is essential that a man be able to size an apple properly, else he will never make a packer. One should grade for color as well as size and freedom from blemish.

Stemming the top and bottom layers of the box is a practice that has been given more prominence than it deserves. When apples are being packed in barrels stemming is quite possibly an economic operation, but for box packing, where practically half the apples would have to be stemmed, it is not—it is too costly. It means an increase of approximately one-third in the cost of packing. Rather than stem the apples for the top and bottom tiers, pack the fruit calyx-end up or on its side.

Space will not permit of a discussion of styles of packs. The accompanying illustrations show the principal style, the diagonal, figure one, shows a two-two diagonal pack, and figure three, a three-two diagonal. The other two principal styles of packs, the straight and offset, are defective, and should be avoided. But remember that the style of pack is not so important as having the fruit packed well. That is a uniform, neat and attractive pack with the least amount of bruising possible. Vary the style of pack to suit the shape and size of apple so that the fruit may always be shown to advantage in a good commercial pack. It becomes almost absolutely necessary to use such packs as the riff-ruff and offset at times, as certain sizes and shapes of apples will not pack to advantage any other way. But, as previously stated, such packs are defective and therefore to be avoided whenever possible.

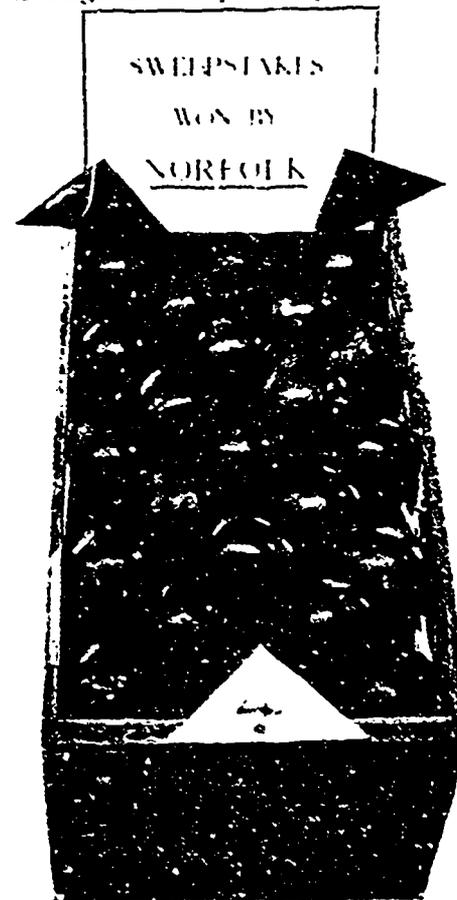
ESSENTIALS OF A GOOD PACK

Whatever the style of packing used—whether it is straight, diagonal or offset—the essentials of a good pack—firmness, regularity, correct bulge, smoothness and finish—should be kept constantly in mind

by the packer. The pack must be so firm that there is no chance for the fruit to shift in any way. To prevent this it is almost necessary that each apple touch all those surrounding it in the proper way. This means that one style of pack, and practically one size of apple, must be used throughout for each box. On no account should a box be started with one size of apple and finished with another, nor should the style of pack be changed, otherwise unnecessary bruising is almost sure to result.

PROPER BULGE

Proper bulge is one of the hardest things for a beginner to secure. A bulge of one and a quarter to one and one-half inches, counting both top and bottom, is sufficient. A bulge of two inches or more is unnecessary and undesirable, as the fruit is more liable to be bruised. As bulge is an important point and one



A 3-2 Diagonal Pack. Fig. 2

This was the sweepstakes box, packed by the Norfolk County Fruit Growers' Association and shown at the Ontario Horticultural Exhibition in 1912.