

### The Farm.

#### A New Currant Disease.

For some time past the Cornell Experiment Station has been investigating a disease in currant canes. This cane blight is more widespread and serious than many have suspected, and it is possible that much of the trouble with currants generally laid to poor soil and severe winters is really the result of fungus.

The attention of the station staff was first called to the trouble when a diseased bush was received from Chautauqua county. In order to obtain material for study the fruit farm of W. I. E. Wilcox, of Chautauqua county, was visited. The currant plot was about an acre in extent. Two-thirds of the bushes were either dead or diseased. The first effects of acute disease were plainly visible. The foliage had wilted and the fruits were prematurely colored. The leaves were yellow, the fruit clusters small, and many canes were quite barren.

Cuttings were made from apparently healthy bushes in this plot. They were unusually slow in starting, and many died. Those that did succeed in making a start remained very inferior. The poor showing of the cuttings was doubtless due to the fact that the mycelium of the disease is perennial in the tissues of the host plant, or that the vitality of the young plant is impaired before the external effects of the disease become visible. A careful study of the dead canes revealed the presence of the pink tubercles of the fungus *Tuberularia vulgaris*. In no case were these tubercles found on healthy plants. They occurred most abundantly near the base of the stalk, but sometimes were found high up on the stem. Examined microscopically, a delicate threadlike mycelium was found spreading through the tissues of the currant stem. The fungus thrives well in the inner bark or cambium layer, thus cutting off the nutriment and causing the death of the plant. The cells effected by the mycelium are disintegrated and turn brown. The results of these and many more elaborate experiments have led the Cornell investigators to the following conclusions:

The mycelium of the fungus having once gained an entrance to the plant lives from year to year in the tissues of the host.

The disease may be transmitted through cuttings.

It is therefore essential that all cuttings should be taken from plants known to be free from the disease.

It is not safe to take cuttings from an apparently healthy plant in a diseased patch.

The Conidia, or summer spores, exist in the soil and on the bushes, and cuttings are liable to be infected.

These Conidia effect an entrance generally through injured portions of the plant.

The only positive remedy is the removal of the whole plant as soon as the disease is seen in the yellow foliage and prematurely colored fruit.

All diseased plants should be burned at once.—(William Macdonald.)

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#### Handling the Strawberry Crop.

The following methods which I have used in picking and marketing strawberries have proved satisfactory. I have found that successfully to market my berries they must be well grown and they must be picked by good pickers, who will carefully assort them. When a large field of berries are to be picked, I erect a temporary shed on one side of the field, in which to store crates and to protect the berries when picked from sun and rain. A good supply of crates should be on hand before the picking is begun, and the fancy berries should be put only in new baskets. The pickers should be engaged before the crop is ready to pick, and the best pickers, I have found, are women, or girls about fifteen years old. It is not profitable to have children in the berry field. They soon get tired of picking and want to play. Picking stands holding four baskets are furnished the pickers. It is a good way to have rules for picking printed on cards and tacked on the stands. The pickers

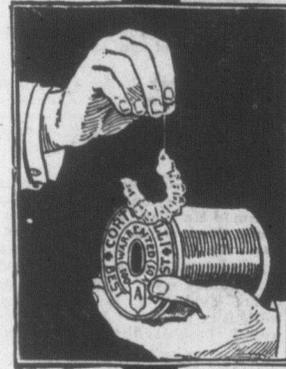
should be instructed to take hold of the stem and not the berry, when removing the berries from the plant; also that each berry shall go into the basket as soon as off the plant.

All ripe berries should be picked, but those that are overripe or decayed should be thrown away. A few poor berries in a basket will sometimes be the means of losing a customer. In finishing out a basket have the hulls turned down, placing only average berries on top. The picking stands are brought to the packing house as soon as filled, so the sun will not injure the berries. The system of keeping accounts with the pickers which I use is that of giving checks or tickets for the berries when they are brought to the packing house. I have used printed cards one by two inches, with name and number of quarts represented printed on them. The numbers are from one to four. The cards are of different colors, so they can be distinguished readily. If the carriers or stands hold four quarts the greater number of the tickets should be four quart tickets. It is well to have some twenty five, fifty and hundred quart tickets to exchange with pickers that are paid only once a week. It is also convenient to have a small box for tickets, with sections, and have each section labelled. I prefer to pay the pickers only once a week, for then they will stay with me until payday. I make two grades of the berries, and have the berries assorted when they are picked. Some pickers will object to assorting the berries, so I give each picker a basket of berries at night to pay him for the extra work. The most of the berries are sold from the market wagon in my own and nearby villages. The berries are picked late in the afternoon and kept in the cooler overnight. I try to get the wagon started very early in the morning, for I cannot always depend on my customers waiting for it. Success in marketing depends on having berries that are of better quality than the average, and so getting a reputation of selling the best berries.—(W. H. Jenkins, Delaware County, N. Y.)

#### Keeping A Cool House.

The temperature of a house in summer or in winter depends to a large extent upon the proper management of draughts and the general care of the house in respect to heat. There are many houses which would be comfortable dwelling places, but which are converted into veritable ovens by having the ceiling of the upper rooms placed adjacent to the roof. When this is the case the house cannot be made cool in summer, even though it be thoroughly ventilated. There should always be an attic above the upper rooms of the house, and this would have a current of air constantly flowing through it in summer. In addition to this protection from heat, it is desirable to separate the sleeping and a few other rooms on the upper floor from the attic by filling the space above the lath and plaster in the ceiling with mineral wool, sawdust or some material which neither heat nor cold will penetrate. A house protected in this way is cool in summer and warm in winter. All the rooms in a house are cooler if the attic is properly ventilated and isolated as described. A great deal of nonsense is uttered about sunshine. Desirable as sunshine is during nine months of the year, from about the middle of June to the middle of September in this climate sunshine is something to be avoided. Only the slattern housekeeper, under the excuse of letting in the air, throws open the shutters at this season. From early in the morning until late in the afternoon at the season given the shutters should be closed, and if the rooms cannot be conveniently protected in this way the house will be cooler if the windows are shut. The air of the house is cooler than the air outside, unless there is a fire in the room. In that case the windows must be kept open, but well shaded from the sun. An iron or brick oven which is easily cared for on baking days, when it is needed, is a great convenience in a family where all the baking is done at home. The rest of the cooking for a large family can then be done with a summer stove, which is kept burning only while it is in use. Gas, gasoline and improved oil stoves are best for summer. They are all virtually gas stoves, the fluid being converted into gas before it reaches the wick. The old fashioned oil stoves were a vexation to the spirit, because of the frequent spasms of smoking which overcame the best of them. It is easy to keep a house cool if the rooms are kept from the heat of the roof, if the shutters are properly closed during the middle of the day, if the cooking is done on a summer stove, and the baking on an oven set in a room apart from the house.

All animals and birds keep away from the sun and heat, and seek the shade in the middle of the day during the sultry season of summer. They seek shelter from heat as much as from cold.—(N. Y. Tribune.)



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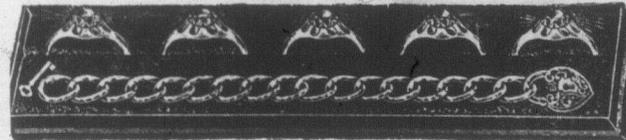
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