

Handling Grapes for Market

G. H. Carpenter, Fruitland, Ont.

IT is one thing to produce grapes of good marketable quality; it is a different matter to harvest and market them in such a way as to make the industry profitable. In this latter branch of the work, many fruit growers are unsuccessful; some through ignorance of the proper methods of grading and packing, more through carelessness in the work. Careless and shiftless methods of handling are detrimental to the trade.

In grapes we have one of our most tender fruits, one that is easily rendered unsaleable by rough usage. Furthermore, it is a product that is consumed almost wholly as a dessert fruit, lending itself only to such secondary products as wine and jam, which, considering the vast acreage in grapes, is a comparatively small outlet, and one used principally for the less valuable fruit. Consequently, the grower is largely at the control of the market and only fruit of a good quality, that is, properly graded and packed, will find ready sale. I was about to use the word "faced," but that is a term that has been abused by fraudulent packers to such an extent as to cause buyers to regard all faced fruit with

whole market, and all growers of fruit. Such men when caught should be dealt with in proportion to their crime, which is no small affair.

Unlike many fruits, the grape will not ripen after being picked. It must be allowed to mature on the vine. Commence cutting when the dew is off in the morning, remove all green, broken and diseased berries, and pack carefully in the package in which the fruit is to be shipped. In this way, the fruit is handled but once, it is kept clean, the bloom is preserved and you have a nice, attractive package, which is always in demand on the local markets. In this system, which is the one universally adopted in the general trade, great care must be exercised in handling the fruit, and only personal supervision over pickers by those who understand the stage of maturity at which fruit should be picked, and proper methods of grading and packing, will insure the best success.

Many middlemen who have special markets whereby they place their fruit directly into the hands of the consumers, make use of specially prepared packages to suit their own particular trade. These packages bear the brand of the packer

exercised in the preparation of such packages. All extra cost and labor are fully compensated for by the high prices paid by consumers who desire the best quality of fruit direct from the vines. This principle is also made use of by



In the Midst of Plenty

unions and cooperative associations, and, in many cases, by individual growers who have been shrewd enough to advertise their business through the quality of the fruit handled, and have thus secured private customers.

The essential points in handling grapes are: handle the fruit as little as possible, consistent, of course, with the market to which you are catering; do not handle until ripe, then pick; keep out of the direct rays of the sun, and get them off your hands as quickly as possible so as to have them looking fresh when placed on the market. There is always a demand for the best. If we strive to put fruit up in a clean, neat and attractive way, in the way the people want it, or in such a way as to make them believe they want it, we need not worry about low prices or slow sales; the fruit will sell itself.

Orchard Notes

Examine the peach and plum trees for peach borer larvæ, and destroy all that are found.

A little wood ashes around the fruit trees is a good thing. Spread it thinly; too much in a place may injure or kill the trees.

If there is a tree in your orchard that yielded no fruit this year and looks like it will not live another year, dig it out of the way. It only serves as a brooding place for insects and fungi, and is very injurious in this way to the other trees.



Preparing Grapes for Shipment, Carleton Fruit Farm, St. Catharines

suspicion. If those miserable frauds who persist in covering trash with a layer of good fruit were alone injured, it would not matter much; the practice would soon be stopped; but the fruit being unlabelled, its sale injures the

and serve to advertise both the fruit and the shipper. Where these are in use the fruit is graded and repacked in packing houses or other convenient places, and only fruit of the highest quality is made use of. Too much care cannot be