

Get Busy.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

In order to secure best results from the vegetable garden, including the potato, corn and turnip crops, we must bear in mind that cultivation is the last word to secure a good yield. No matter what kind of weather prevails, the cultivator and hoe must be kept moving. The continued rain of the past month has packed the ground so hard in many places that a first-class crop can scarcely be expected, but a great deal may be done towards improving it. Where the ground is so hard that the young plants have difficulty in pushing their slender leaf-stalk up, a tillage hoe is indispensable. With it the soil can be broken and mulched right up and around the plants, without danger of cutting off or pulling out the plants. The cultivator, though, is best for using between the rows, not only for destroying the weeds, but also to provide a moisture-conserving mulch. With regard to weeds of all kinds, the majority of them grow about three times as fast as any vegetable that I have ever seen, and harsh measures must be taken to get rid of them. If you can possibly help it, do not let them grow until you are forced to pull them. They are not worth the exertion, although, of course, the plants are. Then, again, most weeds yield a harvest of seed much in excess of many of our cultivated plants, and with unsurpassed vitality, so that it is "up" to all to prevent as many seeds as possible finding lodgment in the soil, and strive to exterminate every weed months before it goes to seed. Tillage should be preventive of hard soil conditions and big weeds, rather than remedial. Following the usual trend of nature's dealings, feast is nearly always succeeded by famine. Applying this general rule from now on, we may have too little, instead of too much rain in some localities, and if so, a more intensive method must be made use of on our garden patches. Providing a dust mulch is an excellent remedy against the drouth, and, keeping the surface of the soil constantly stirred up, the moisture will be kept down in the ground where it belongs, instead of being allowed to escape. As a rule, the hoe and rake are of more benefit to the garden than the watering can, providing that the man behind the hoe does not overdo the matter and stir the soil too deeply. The surface is all that need be touched, and that should be kept loose and mellow.

Perhaps nothing responds more perfectly to extra cultivation than potatoes. A year ago I had a piece of ground which, in the hands of another man, had been literally seeded to weeds. To rid it of them seemed to be an almost hopeless undertaking. However, I concluded that a hoed crop would be best to put on it, and after having run a fire over it to burn off the weed stocks, I plowed it, disked and harrowed it. I then let it lie for a week, and again went over it, first with the disk, and then with the harrow, after which I planted the potatoes. From the time the potatoes appeared above ground until blooming time, the cultivator or hoe went over those potatoes every week. As a result, I practically cleaned out the weeds, and, besides, had a splendid crop of tubers. They were much larger, more uniform in size, and more than double the quantity grown on another piece of land which was just as good, but did not get the same amount of cultivation, having fewer weeds. I have noticed the same results with other hoed crops, as well. The much-hoed crop is the crop that pays for the time spent on it. In some places, by this date, the vegetables will have grown to such a size that hoeing them becomes difficult. But the weeds never take a vacation, and are always ready to take advantage of the situation, so, to carry the crops through to maturity and still keep the weeds in check is no small task.

It is often discouraging to note how the weeds grow, and to find a piece of ground apparently perfectly clean to-day, in a few days completely covered. But one must not become discouraged. Two years of perfect cultivation will clean the worst weed-bed on the farm. If the weeds are kept well in check, and not allowed to go to seed, the old stock stored in the ground will become exhausted and be far less troublesome.

If you have a strawberry patch, it will by now have paid up for the amount of attention you have given it. A well-cultivated and well-fertilized strawberry patch this year should yield an extra crop, and anyone who does not or has not given it the attention it deserves will be reaping his or her reward in a long-drawn-out yield of small, imperfect berries. After the yielding season is over, the strawberry plants are very much exhausted, and require a rest, as well as generous feeding and careful attention.

The vines must be all cut off and the beds burned over. It will then be much easier to work the ground thoroughly and destroy all the weeds which have escaped you before. In a few more weeks the strawberry plants will be forming their fruit crowns for next season, and should

from now on be highly fertilized. Wood ashes are valuable as a fertilizer, and there is nothing better than stable manure; but at all events, supply them bountifully with some kind of fertilizer, as they will abundantly repay the outlay of time and energy in the next season's crop. To those of our readers who have not got a strawberry patch, my advice is to get ready to put one in this autumn. August is the best month for this work, and, in my estimation, no garden crop affords more genuine pleasure to the whole family than a well-kept strawberry patch. J. S. Carleton Co., Ont.

Buying Elgin Fruit Lands.

A recent newspaper item stated that extensive options were being closed on fruit lands in the neighborhood of Vienna, in Elgin County, Ont., along the north shore of Lake Erie. Inquiring into the matter, "The Farmer's Advocate" is informed by R. H. McCurdy, secretary-treasurer of the Port Burwell Fruit-growers' Association, that A. C. Pratt, M. P. P. for South Norfolk has had agents taking options on land in the district, covering a strip from three to six miles wide, on the North Shore of Lake Erie, from Port Burwell, east a distance of about twelve miles, since last November. Most of this land has been accepted, and much of it has been settled for, and deeds made to a Mrs. McGrath, of Toronto. It was said by the agents that the land was to be planted to fruits, but as yet nothing in that line has been undertaken, and it looks like a speculation enterprise. However, the fact is that many farmers who sold are feeling a little rueful. I think, perhaps, that 17,000 acres would not be an overestimate of the acreage bought by these men. Following their lead, several other concerns are operating west and north from Port Burwell, taking options at about six months' time, but are not paying any money for the options, and as yet our informant has heard of no actual purchases by these men. Prices of land have risen in eight months nearly 100 per cent. It is questionable whether this kind of boom is a benefit to the country at large, but, of course, some are profiting by it. The land here is admirably adapted for fruit, and extensive plantings in expert hands should prove profitable.

Ontario Orchard Competition.

Editor "The Farmer's Advocate":

The Department of Agriculture and the Ontario Fruit-growers' Association will this year conduct an orchard competition in all parts of the Province. We wish to bring this to the attention of fruit-growers everywhere at as early a date as possible. The money for this competition has been secured from the Federal grant, and announcement of the competition could not have been made earlier. It is a little bit late now, but we desire to go on with it this year, and are, therefore, anxious to get in touch with your readers through the next issue of your publication. The Province will be divided into six districts, as follows:

No. 1.—Eastern Ontario District, comprising Lennox, Addington, Frontenac, Renfrew, Leeds, Lanark, Grenville, Carleton, Dundas, Russell, Stormont, Glengarry and Prescott.

No. 2.—Lake Ontario District, comprising Halton, Peel, York, Ontario, Durham, Northumberland, Hastings and Prince Edward.

No. 3.—Niagara District, comprising Lincoln and Wentworth.

No. 4.—Lake Erie District, comprising Essex, Kent, Elgin, Norfolk, Haldimand, Welland, Brant, Oxford, Middlesex.

No. 5.—Lake Huron and Georgian Bay District, comprising Lambton, Huron, Bruce, Grey, Simcoe.

No. 6.—Centre Ontario District, comprising Victoria, Peterboro, Dufferin, Waterloo, Wellington, Perth.

With prizes in each district of from \$15 to \$75, depending on the acreage. In two of the districts, where apple orcharding is not carried on to as large an extent as in others, the sizes of orchards specified are somewhat smaller, ranging from 30 to 120 trees. In the districts around the lakes, prizes are offered for orchards from 40 to 120 trees, from 120 to 300 trees, and in orchards from 300 trees up. A score-card will be used in judging, with the following number of points given for each orchard operation:

Pruning and scraping	18
Spraying	18
Cultivating or mulching	10
Barnyard manure or commercial fertilizer	10
Quality	10
Quantity	10
Cover crop	8
Marketing	6
Fences	2
	100

The competition will be for the present year

only, and bearing orchards will be considered, non-bearing orchards not being counted in the acreage entered. In District No. 3, comprising the Counties of Lincoln and Wentworth, all tree fruits and grades will be included. In the other districts the competition will be limited to apples.

Regular application forms are now being printed, and may be obtained from the offices of any of the District Representatives of the Department of Agriculture, or direct from the Fruit Branch, Department of Agriculture, Toronto, on application.

The judges will pay two visits to each orchard during the remainder of the present season. Men thoroughly in touch with modern orchard practices will be sent out to do the judging, and the visit of these men alone will be of value to the orchardist, as he should be able to obtain some valuable information on the most modern lines of handling trees. We would urge your readers who consider that they are conducting their orchards along the most profitable lines to enter this competition. P. W. HODGETTS, Director.

Short Berry Production for Lincoln.

The strawberries are ripening, and picking is in full progress. The quality is excellent, but the small acreage will keep the output to not over 50 per cent. of last season. Prices will stay at 8 cents per box and over. Raspberries will not reach 50 per cent. of last season's crop, and prices will be \$3.00 per crate of 24 boxes and over. Blackberries, 70 per cent. frozen back. The last week of warm weather has worked wonders in the tomato fields, and the plants are looking fine and tomatoes are setting freely; looks like a full crop of tomatoes. Apples looking well; little or no twig blight in this section in the sprayed orchards, although it is reported bad in sections west of St. Catharines. Pears a fair average crop, and no blight showing. Peaches, on the whole, will be a fair crop; orchards in their prime and well cared for will have heavy crops, while all orchards that have been allowed to overbear, and thus weaken their vitality, are shedding their fruit, and old and diseased orchards and trees are showing signs of weakness, and many are dying, some from the cold winter; but all trees that were in good shape in the fall have more peaches than they should have; also, on unsuitable locations the orchards are not doing well. Plums—Japanese varieties, very light; European varieties will be an average crop, some orchards very heavy. Grapes looking well, and promise a full crop; at present one week late, but warm weather will help to force them.

We need rain very badly, as, after the excessive rains, the ground baked badly. Hay is being cut, and is an average crop; corn doing well. Lincoln Co., Ont. ROBT. THOMPSON.

Fruit Crop Report.

The June Fruit Crop Report, issued by the Dairy and Cold-storage Commissioner's Branch of the Dominion Department of Agriculture, shows fruit to be in a favorable condition. The weather of the past month, while cool and wet, has been very favorable for the fruit, the earlier portions of the country not showing the usual advance of season over the later sections.

There have been several reports of injuries from frost in low-lying fields, and vegetables have undoubtedly suffered severely. In the commercial orchards and plantations no serious injury is anticipated as the result of the low temperature.

Prospects for an excellent crop of apples are maintained. In Eastern Ontario and Quebec the tent caterpillar is doing serious damage. With this exception, insects and fungous diseases are no worse than usual. Well-cared-for orchards are increasing in number. British Columbia looks for a heavy crop, following last year's light yield, and Nova Scotia looks for a crop almost equal to last year's record-breaker.

The pear crop is in good condition, although the blight has practically ruined the industry in Eastern Canada.

European and American plums promise well. The Japanese varieties are irregular, but the crop, on the whole, is above the average.

The Niagara district has a good setting of most varieties of peaches. Southern Ontario will have a very short crop. The British Columbia crop is good, but the aggregate is small.

Sour cherries are an excellent crop, but sweet cherries are light, showing signs of winter-killing. A medium crop of grapes is expected.

Strawberries show a good crop per vine, but a much-reduced acreage. Ontario will be short, owing to the poor stand of last year's plantings. Black currants will also be short, while red currants and gooseberries promise well.

Tomatoes look well, and a much larger acreage than usual is under cultivation.

New Brunswick, Southern Quebec and Eastern Ontario have been rather badly affected by tent