

HORTICULTURE

Fruit Crop Report

A. McNeill, Chief Fruit Division, Ottawa.

Weather conditions have been fairly favorable for plums, peaches and grapes, but not for pears and winter apples.

Apples.—Early and fall fruits are nearly all harvested. Winter fruit ripening prematurely and dropping, reducing the crop already below medium.

Pears.—Are ripening rapidly and

These experiments have involved the trial of a great number of varieties of apples (and concurrently of pears for the making of Perry) and an infinite number of blends in varying quantities; in fact it seems to be accepted that the choicest commercial ciders are always the result of blending, though some varieties of apples produce by themselves a most acceptable beverage.

FEARS SHORTAGE OF CIDER

The Board of Agriculture has recently issued a bulletin on "Cider Orchards," from which the following is an extract.

"The future welfare of the cider-making industry depends upon a large increase in the planting of fresh orchards in the course of the next few years. Probably the majority of the existing orchards have long passed their best days and are now dying out; and few are being planted to fill their places. In favorable seasons the supply of fruit is by no means equal to the demand, with the result that prices are high and it is difficult to manufacture pure cider at a reasonable profit. The present state of affairs points to a regular and more serious shortage of cider fruit within a few years, and this, unless something be done, means a decrease of the industry from the position it now occupies."

WOULD INCREASE THE DEMAND

It would appear from this that if Canadian cider makers enter seriously and scientifically upon the task of supplying British markets with a first-class product, the demand is likely to increase rather than to fall off, even in years when the English crop and quality are satisfactory. It may be well to repeat that the practice of cider drinking is on the increase in this country. It would not be difficult for any Canadian manufacturer to obtain samples of some of the most popular makers of cider in Devonshire, Devonshire, Somersetshire and other famous cider countries.

Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association

The executive of the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association, together with the delegates from the branch associations, held a meeting on the grounds of the Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto, at which Mr. Thos. Delworth, of Weston, Ont., gave a verbal report in connection with the committee appointed to test seeds. He had seen the Seed Commissioner at Ottawa and also the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, and had asked for legislation to prevent the selling of inferior seeds; that seedsmen be required to print on the outside of their packages the percentage of seeds that would germinate, and that, if this percentage is not reached, there should be redress at law. The Deputy Minister thought that the disclaimer which seedsmen print on their packages would protect them whether the seeds were of other varieties and kinds or of low germinative power. Most of our vegetable seeds were imported. Some of these could be grown in Canada. Why not have seed grown here that is possible and be inspected while growing? Some seed firms are commencing now to grow them here and are asking the government for a bonus on Canadian seed. He thought the work of the seed department at Ottawa could be extended to cover inspection of vegetable seeds. A

great deal of money is sent out of Canada every year to purchase foreign-grown seeds.

The committee had visited Guelph and Jordan Harbor and found the work at the former place more practical than in previous years. They are now testing peaches and tomatoes. He thought that these tested seeds should be available for the use of the vegetable growers of the province. They were agreeably surprised with the character of the soil in Jordan Harbor, which was excellent for vegetables. The only drawback was the difficulty of getting there, the station being too far away.

Mr. C. C. James, Deputy Minister of Agriculture, gave a short address touching on the investigations being held by Mr. McMeans, at Guelph and other practical men in Essex and Prince Edward Counties, into onion and tomato growing, which were intended to help the vegetable growers. There was much to be learned about both these vegetables. Large quantities of American-grown onions are brought into Montreal and the department is enquiring into the reasons for this as that market should be a good field for Ontario-grown onions. In Essex their representative was experimenting with fertilizers on onions with good results.

It was decided to hold a one-day annual convention, on Thursday, November 12th, the directors' meeting to take place the evening previous at 8 p.m. The following is the program:

MORNING SESSION

9 a.m.—President's Address. 9:30 a.m.—Discussion on President's Address. 9:45 a.m.—Report of Secretary-Treasurer.

10 a.m.—Address on "Onion Growing Industry," by A. McMeans, O. A. C. Guelph.

AFTERNOON SESSION

2 p.m.—"Notes on Irrigation," by Professor Macoun, C. E. F., Ottawa.

2:30 p.m.—"Onions," by A. McKenna, Essex.

3:30 p.m.—"Tomatoes," by Mr. Turney, O. A. C. Guelph.

4:30 p.m.—"Combating Insects and Fungous Foes of Vegetables," by Professor Jarvis, O. A. C. Guelph.

Soil Moisture and its Control

F. T. Skell, M.A., Chemist, Dominion Experimental Farms.

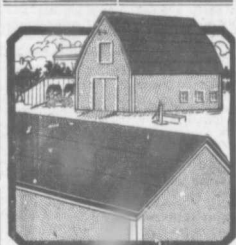
For five years we conducted experiments in the matter of soil moisture control in the orchards of the Experimental Farm at Ottawa, and similar experiments on the Experimental Farm at Nappan, N. S. The results and the conclusions therefrom, are to be found in what is the annual report of the Chemical Division of the Experimental Farms. I need not now, therefore, enter into any detailed account of this work. A few of the more important data and deductions may suffice.

Let us consider, first, the case of an orchard in soil. In 1902, one of our series consisted of two adjoining plots, the one planted throughout the season. The other one was in two-year-old soil. The soil was light and sandy. The rainfall throughout the summer was ample and well distributed. The samples of soil for moisture determination were taken every two weeks, beginning April 10, and represented a depth of 14 inches. These two plots started out with practically the same moisture content, 15.5 per cent., but as the season advanced and the grass grew the de-

mand on the soil moisture in the soil plot became greater and greater. This became evident very soon after May 1. By May 15, there was 50 per cent. more moisture in the first 14 inches of the cultivated plot. At the end of July the difference had increased to almost 100 per cent., or, in other words, there was nearly twice as much moisture in the cultivated soil. The percentages on May 31 were 17.3 and 0.8 respectively. This represents a difference of nearly 20 tons an acre. Throughout the whole growing season differences of a marked character, and always in the same direction, were to be observed. The data are of a most decisive nature, pointing to the heavy call on the moisture of the orchard soil by sod at a time when the trees are most in need of it. It was not until October 18, the close of the season, when vegetable growth had ceased, and there was a liberal rainfall, that the two plots approximated once more in their moisture content.

(Continued next week)

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