

## Picking and Handling Apples

W. H. DEMPSEY, TRENTON, ONT.

The picking should be done only by very careful hands. No apple, no matter how firm, has been found that will not show marks of rough handling, revealing brown spots and giving it the appearance of a windfall. The baskets should be lined with heavy burlap to keep the fruit from bruising against the sides, and if the fruit is to be kept by the grower until shipped to market I find it better to place them in barrels in a cool place the same day they are picked. They should not be touched until ready to pack for shipping.

A great deal of choice fruit is destroyed by too much handling, placing them on the packing table, putting in baskets, then into the barrel where they are allowed to remain in the orchard until cold weather, then placed in the storage building, emptied on the packing table, sorted and packed for shipping. They are more or less damaged by so much handling.

## Wood Ashes in the Orchard

PROF. R. HARCOURT, O. A. C., GUELPH.

How heavily should wood ashes be sown in orchards?—(R. Robinson, St. Catharines.

It is estimated that 20 crops of apples will remove more than twice as much nitrogen, one and a half times as much phosphoric acid, and nearly three times as much potash as 20 crops of wheat. A crop of wheat will remove about 40 pounds of potash per acre, therefore a crop of apples will take 100 to 120 pounds of potash per acre from the soil. As ashes contain five per cent. of potash, it would require one ton of ashes to supply that amount of potash removed from the soil by one crop of apples. This may be looked on as the minimum amount of ashes for an orchard in bearing. The best time for the ashes to be applied is in the early spring or summer. The potash

in them is immediately available and may be taken up by the plants at once.

As to whether they will hurt a growing crop, such as vetches or crimson clover, if applied when the leaves of these crops are dry, ashes might sift through to the ground readily and no harm might be done. If they are applied while the leaves are wet they would seriously burn and destroy the leaves. If the cover crop is plowed down in the spring the wood ashes might very conveniently be plowed down with them. A good plan is to cultivate the ashes into the soil and not plow them under. Although the potash of wood ashes is soluble and immediately available to the plant, there is not much fear of serious leaching of this constituent from the soil. Nature has provided means by which it is held in the soil, and, therefore, not subject to loss by leaching, as is nitrogen.

## Planting Peach Trees

“HOW far apart do you plant your peach trees?” was asked Mr. Adolphus Pettit, of Grimsby, recently by an editorial representative of *The Horticulturist*. “In the past,” replied Mr. Pettit, “I have planted them 18 to 20 feet apart, but I find that rather close on my soil which tends to luxuriant growth.

“Were I setting out an orchard now I would set the trees 25 feet apart to allow a free circulation of air and plenty of sunlight. This would also allow lower headed trees. Where trees are planted too close together they grow high and the lower branches die. When planted 25 feet apart berry bushes can be grown in between, which I have found is advantageous.”

In this part of the township apples are the main fruit crop, and the price has been so low that some are cutting down their orchards.—(N. B. Hagar, Allanburg, Ont.