

THE FRUIT GARDEN.



PEARS and peaches may taste better when they are allowed to ripen perfectly on the trees before being plucked, but apples or pears don't: they should be gathered before they are ripe and brought indoors into a cool, dark room or cellar and there allowed to mellow at leisure. Among pears we now have Doyenne d' Ete, Osband's Summer and Giffard, in using condition, and some Margaret and Clapp's Favorite plucked and in store. When gathered eight to twelve days before they are ripe they don't assume that dry, insipid condition that pears that ripen on the tree are apt to have, they are juicy, refreshing and well flavored, and they keep longer. Early fruit when stored in the house or cellar is apt to be kept too warm and dry, avoid this as much as practicable, heat hastens maturity and decay, and dryness causes it to shrivel. While we can stow winter apples in bins or barrels with perfect safety, keeping fruit in any such bulk at this time of year is to invite decay.

It is now time to set out strawberry plants. The ground should be deep, rich, and moist if possible. The best sorts to plant are the ones that thrive best in your locality, for no strawberry is good in all places. We recommend for trial Sharpless, Bubach, Parker Earle, Marshall, Timbrell and Brandywine. Some one of these is almost certain to suit your ground. What are called potted plants, are runners that have been rooted into little pots plunged under the brim in the ground; when the pots are filled with roots the runners are severed from the parent plant, and are fit for planting out. Before setting them shake the ball of earth and roots a little to unravel the roots somewhat, and plant firmly. Strawberry plants set now or for six weeks to come should yield a fine crop of big berries next June. While as potted plants is an excellent way to get young stock from the nurseryman, it isn't at all necessary in the case of saving runners from our own beds, when they are well rooted lift them with a trowel and plant them out at once. Our rows are two feet apart, and hills about 20 inches asunder in the row, three plants in each hill. We also have a good many rows where the plants are set six to eight inches apart in the row and not in hills at all. But this system is only for the garden, in the field the rows should be three feet apart.

As soon as red raspberry bushes have finished bearing cut out the old canes and the most slender and supernumerary of the young ones, but don't shorten back any of the young canes retained for next year's crop, it would cause them to sprout again, hence become more tender than if left uncut, hence more apt to winter kill.

Thin out old, scraggy, and worthless wood from the currant bushes to allow of the young stems remaining ripening up their wood better.—Gardening.