

# Successful Growers Write on Small Fruit Culture

## The Production of Gooseberries

L. B. Henry, B.S.A., Lincoln Co., Ont.

ONE difficulty in growing gooseberries is to bring them to maturity without having them become slightly scalded. A few hours' exposure to a very hot sun will scald them very badly, drying the skin to become tough and destroying the flavor of the berry. I remember three years ago we lost quite a quantity of fruit which was exposed in this way.

They can be grown in an orchard with very little extra work, as they can be cultivated lengthwise when the orchard is worked and a one-horse cultivator can be used crosswise. Two bushes can be planted between the trees in the row. Spraying can be done easily and the picking of them is more of a pleasure than being picked and pricked to small bits in the sun. Our Whitesmith patch under the trees averaged six quarts to the bush, while the other one which is in the sun averaged three quarts.

### Cultivate Shallow and Frequent

Gooseberries require the same cultivation as the currant. It is important that it should be shallow and frequent. Some people use a mulch system, claiming that they can obtain good results and also prevent mildew to a large extent. Plantations thus treated have borne large crops for 20 years. The mulch, which is usually straw, should be at least six inches deep and may be thrown on the bushes in winter and placed in the spaces in the early spring. It conserves moisture, prevents weeds and keeps the fruit clean. Its chief advantage is the prevention of mildew, but its use has largely disappeared on account of improved methods in spraying.

Gooseberries bear on two-year-old wood and canes should not be allowed to remain after they are five years old. The young bushes do not require much pruning for the first three years, except to cut back about half the new growth each year. This encourages the development of fruit spurs all along the branch instead of having them situated mostly at the ends. Low branches and those which have been injured should be removed as well as superfluous new wood.

### Prune for the Future

When pruning we have to keep in mind that the bearing canes or branches will not last for ever, so young shoots should be saved to take their places. For English varieties leave five or six bearing branches and as many more young shoots. More branches may be left in an American variety on account of their smaller size.

The idea of thinning out the bush to admit sunlight is altogether wrong, as the crop may be severely injured by the hot rays of the sun.

## Our Fruit Garden

J. H. Stewart, Oxford Co., Ont.

OUR fruit garden is now four years old, and our farm being one of the few in the neighborhood without any orchard, we have to depend on it entirely for home-grown fruit. We now have fresh fruit from spring to fall and abundance of canned fruit all winter, and it all comes from a little plot of ground at the side of the house, not more than one-eighth of an acre in extent.

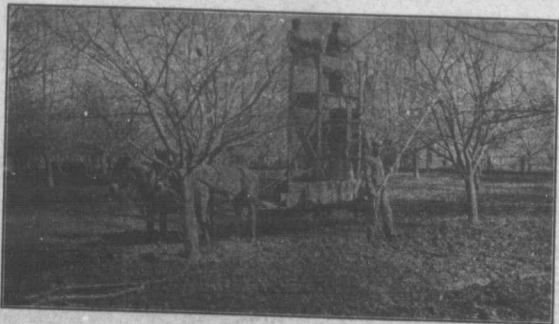
The luscious strawberry holds first place in our estimation, and about one-half of all the space in our fruit garden is devoted to this crop. The strawberry patch is divided into three plots. Each fall we plow up the three-year-old plot and reset with strawberries the following spring. We follow the matted row system, setting the plants



"Growing Things."

15 inches apart in rows four feet apart. The only training that the runners get is in cultivating; we always cultivate the same way. We grow three varieties, a very early, a medium, and a very late variety, thus extending the strawberry season as far as possible.

The other half of the garden is in bush fruits. We have six white, six red, and 12 black currant bushes, the latter used for winter canning. The product of our 12 gooseberry bushes is now very much appreciated when the bushes themselves are buried in the snow. All of these are set six feet apart each way. An assortment of raspberries, blackberries, and thimbleberries occupy



One Stage in the Production of Apples That Won Over All America.

The sweepstakes award at the Rochester Fruit Show for the choicest three boxes of apples grown in America was awarded to W. L. Hamilton, Orlingwood, Ont. This house in Mr. Hamilton's orchard shows that he did not win because of expensive equipment; he is using a barrel spray pump with a home-made nozzle. That the job was done well.

the rest of the space in rows six feet apart.

I am not a specialized fruit man. I am a busy dairy farmer. Accordingly, our system in the fruit garden is designed to reduce labor to a

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## Culture of Raspberries and Strawberries

Jos. Frappe, Hastings Co., Ont.

TO make a success of growing small fruits one should not do things simply because others do. There should be a good clear reason back of everything. The more thought and intelligent workmanship one puts into any work, the more pleasant and agreeable it becomes; and this is abundantly proved in the culture of berries. There is a pleasure in the great windrows of luscious fruits, the work is light and agreeable, and the profits to the painstaking are often large.

For the little care and work that are required, no farm house or even village home with a small garden should be without an abundance of the most wholesome, delightful and fragrant of foods—the delicious strawberry and raspberry. They are far better than medicine, for with ripe fruit in the home, sickness often becomes a stranger. The little toil required in setting out, caring for, and picking is repaid a hundredfold in health and happiness.

### Good Soil Essential

It is better to have the soil for strawberries rich with some good fertilizer, as barnyard manure. On poor soil the same amount of work is required, with only a quarter the crop.

If the ground has been cleaned by a summer fallow or some hoed crop, such as potatoes, it will save a good deal of labor. Weeds grow fast in strawberries. The ground must be well drained. Berry plants "cannot stand wet feet." A place well sheltered so that snow is likely to remain long on the ground is favorable.

For ordinary cultivation the plants are set out in rows four feet apart and eighteen inches apart in the row. Some place the rows as closely as three feet, and if they are kept narrow enough by trimming the ends of the runners the plan is good. But it is never wise to have the rows too wide or matted, as besides giving weak plants it interferes with the picking.

### Planting on a Small Scale

For a small patch dig small holes with a hoe, make a small cone-shaped mound in the centre of each, and over this place the plants, letting the roots hang around the cone, but deep. Then cover and pack tightly. This enables the moisture to rise by capillary action. Lastly cover with a loose layer of earth. This keeps the moisture from escaping.

Avoid planting too deep, or too shallow. Large patches may be set out by using a spade, trowel, or better a dibble. An opening is made, the plant inserted the proper depth, the roots shaken well out, and then the earth is pressed tightly against it with the hand or foot.

In the spring after the leaves are nicely started I go through and trim off the ends of the branches, cutting off a third or a quarter of the length, and removing dead wood. The remainder will do much better if this is done.

Directions are given for the strawberry are also applicable for the raspberry. Land sloping gently to the north is favorable to the raspberry, as the changes of temperature are not so sudden.

Plants are generally set in rows six feet apart and three feet apart in the row.