

weather. If the patch is not large the sorting can be done at the time of gathering by first picking up the sound, smooth, marketable tubers, and by leaving for the second picking the small, irregular, scabby potatoes, and especially any which have started to decay. If the area used for the crop consists of a few acres, however, it is an excellent plan to run the potatoes through a potato-grader and to sort the tubers by hand at the same time. This can be done either in the field at the time of harvest or at some convenient place before the potatoes are stored for the winter. Only the very best potatoes should be stored. All small, irregular, unsound and diseased tubers should be boiled and fed to stock or disposed of in some other way as soon as possible. There are several kinds of potato-graders on the market at the present time which do fairly good work. The proper grading of potatoes is sure to receive more attention in the future than it has received in the past.

Storing.—If potatoes are grown only for home use the crop is usually stored in the cellars of the houses or of the barns. Occasionally potatoes are stored in pits. When the crop is grown commercially, however, it is generally placed in a potato storage cellar erected for the purpose. In all cases it is important to store only well sorted, sound, clean, dry potatoes and to keep them constantly in a dry, cool, dark and well ventilated place. The temperature usually recommended for the best results is from 33 degrees F. to 35 degrees F. It is stated¹ that potatoes when placed in storage shrink about two per cent. per month for a period of six or seven months.

Marketing.—The potato grower should cater to the wishes of the most particular and exacting customers. He should furnish a choice product in a most attractive form and should carefully study the demands of the market he wishes to serve. For the best prices the potatoes should be uniform, sound, smooth and of good table quality, whether selected by the pound, the basket, the bushel, the bag, the barrel or the car load. The commercial potato grower should not be confined to the local market, but should be in a position to put his potatoes on the best market available either through his own efforts or through the medium of a co-operative association. It sometimes occurs that of the price paid by the consumer for a bushel of potatoes about two-thirds are required to defray the cost of transportation and of distribution, and one-third is left for the grower. This is not as it should be. Undoubtedly one of the best remedies for such a condition of affairs is co-operation on the part of the growers themselves. This matter is discussed under the heading of "Organized Agencies in Connection with Potato Production" in another part of this bulletin.

COST PER ACRE OF GROWING POTATOES.

The cost of producing an acre of potatoes varies with the season, the soil, and the area of the crop; with the kind of machinery used, and the method of culture followed; with the price placed on the labour of the men and on that of the horses; and with the amount allowed for cost of seed, interest on money invested, rent of land, fertilizers used, etc. The writer has in his office estimates worked out in detail and printed in reports issued in Ontario and in the Northern States giving the cost of producing potatoes, and these vary from \$15 to \$60 per acre. It is not necessarily true that the greatest cost per acre will give the least profit, nor that the smallest cost per acre will give the highest profit. Exactly the opposite may be true. Much depends upon management and upon local conditions.

¹The Encyclopedia Americana, Volume XII.