

HORTICULTURE

Sowing Tomato Seeds

ANUS MCNEIS, LONDON, ONTARIO

There are different ways in which tomato seeds may be started. Those for early use should be started in the house.

Take any box about three inches deep. To the depth of an inch place rich earth, then fill to within half an inch from the top with poorer earth. Pack very firmly with a brick or block of wood and it is ready for the seed, which must be sown as evenly as possible.

Sift clean sand over the seed such as is used for plastering or lake shore sand. My reason for this is that the plants come up better. When the seedlings are coming up they often push the earth up in great bunches and, should the weather change at this point, the young plants are liable to be chilled and die while under the earth. When coming up through sand, it falls down around the stem of the plant, especially when watered. I always use water

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A GRAND RECORD FOR BOTH

Mr. S. N. Watts, Portsmouth, writes us: This is my 50th year in the gardening business. I have just been made an honorary member of our Horticultural Society after 47 years of membership. I don't know how many years I have done business with you, but it is a long time, about 40 years, and I have had no reason to change.

Our motto since the inception of this business has been, **NOT HOW CHEAP, BUT HOW GOOD.**

John A. Bruce & Co., SEED MERCHANTS, Est. 1850. **Hamilton, Ont.**

which has had the chill taken off, as cold water keeps them back. In about four or five weeks I transplant the seedlings about three inches apart each year. Later, the boxes may be placed in a cold frame until time for transplanting to the field.

Spraying for Potato Blight

Careful potato growers can no longer doubt the advantages of spraying in "blight" years; but some doubt whether the practice is profitable year after year. Tests along this line have been continued for five years by the experiment station at Geneva, N.Y., and the evidence presented in bulletin No. 290, giving details of the fifth year's test and summaries of preceding ones, seems conclusive in favor of the practice. The gain each year has been profitable; and there is already much more than enough excess of gain over to pay for spraying five years more.

Similar gains, though not quite so great, were obtained by farmers under tests carefully checked by the station and by a much larger number of farmers who sprayed independently. If you grow potatoes, it will pay you to get this bulletin from the station—it costs you nothing, not even postage—and study it carefully before your crop management is planned for this year.

To have satisfactory results in the flower garden, make your plans now. Do not plan for more than you can easily do. Quality is of more importance than quantity.

Strawberry Culture*

J. C. Bell, Cobsville, Ont.

Although strawberries will grow on almost any kind of soil, they do best on a rich, heavy sand, with a quick-sand bottom. This type of soil furnishes plenty of moisture, not only for the growth of the plants, but also for giving size to the fruit. The land should be prepared during the previous fall by plowing-in about 60 tons of manure an acre. In the following spring it should be worked up and fertilized again with about 25 loads of well-rotted manure an acre.

The land is marked three and one-half feet apart for the rows, and two feet for planting in rows. By means of a scuffle, a shallow drill is made along the row markings. The whole area is then rolled and the drills are once more opened. Planting is done with a spade. Well grown plants are selected from rows of stock plants. A small portion of both tops and roots are trimmed off. The plants are placed in small holes made by the spade and run over the patch, then about 500 pounds an acre of a bone and potash fertilizer are applied and worked-in. Scuffling and hoeing are continued all summer. It costs at least \$150 an acre to produce a crop of strawberries.

It is difficult to recommend varieties that will do well in all localities. Those that have done best with me are, practically in the order of ripening: Excelsior, Mitchell's Early, Augusta Luther, Lovell, Tennessee, Profide, Clyde, Wm. Bell and Williams. For home use, three varieties that will cover the season nicely are Augusta Luther, Wm. Bell and Brandywine.

Notes.

Keep the bearing wood of grape vines as near the main trunk as possible.

The small onion sown last season's crop may be used as sets this spring.

One-fourth of an acre planted to small fruits and properly cared for will supply an average family throughout the season, but the land must be reasonably rich and kept in a good condition by thorough cultivation.

Readers of THE CANADIAN DAIRYMAN AND FARMING WORLD are interested in fruit growing, vegetable gardening or the culture of flowers, plants, shrubs and trees are requested to contribute letters and photographs for publication in our horticultural department.

*Extract from an address delivered at a recent meeting of the Toronto branch of the Ontario Vegetable Growers' Association.

POULTRY YARD

Trap Nesting

H. E. Vidal, Lincoln County, Ont.

The subject of trap nesting is becoming a most important one with those who are engaged in the production of eggs, or in the building up a strain of heavy layers. In most farm flocks, it is probable that the average yearly yield is not more than 90 eggs a hen.

By the use of trap nests, a famous Maine poultryman has raised the laying qualities of hens until last year they laid, on an average, 160 eggs. This was done by never breeding from any hen that did not lay 200 or more eggs a year, and by using a male that was not the son of a 200 egg hen. If the truth be known, there are but few of these hens in the country. The 200 egg hen usually starts laying early in the fall, and lays right through the winter. By the spring she is weakened by the heavy strain on her constitution, and her eggs do not hatch so well as those of the hen that has been resting all winter, and that starts laying in the spring. Hence, except for the fewer eggs that we hatch from the hard-working layer, we are going back.

The best way to get over the dilemma, is to breed only from two year old, or even three year old hens, mated with a husky cockerel. These older hens by reason of their age, have not contributed so freely to the egg basket as they did when young, but the laying habit, if they make good records when young, is in them, and will be productive for years. When the matured stock are far more likely to hatch good, strong chicks than those of a record-breaking pullet.

I would not advise farmers to trap-nest their whole flock. Pick out the earliest and quickest growing pullets; birds that show their combs red younger than their sisters. Take about one-fourth more than you really wish to use as breeders, and trap-nest them in the winter months, when you are slacker in work. Set apart the poorest quarter and keep the rest for your breeding pen for two years, each year trap-nesting the best pullets for next year's breeding. In this way you will have no old hens left in your flock, except those that you have kept for breeders, and if these birds have made a good winter record you should not grudge them their keep. By this method you will not be progressing so rapidly as the poultryman who gives his entire time to the hens, but you will be jogging in the right direction, with a minimum of labor.

I find that it is useless to rely on the eye to pick out good layers. Though the long, wedge-shaped egg, in the main, may be correct, it is apt to fail woefully, if relied on blindly.

Running Incubators

J. H. Stewart.

The success or failure of artificial incubation depends largely upon the machine selected to do the work. Great care should be exercised in making the selection. To be satisfactory a machine must be durable. There are many machines on the market which will hatch when new, but which are constructed so flimsily, that in a short time they become worthless.

An incubator which fails to give good hatches is worse than useless. Each time that it is operated unsuccessfully the eggs are lost, the oil used to heat it is wasted, and the opportunity to make a profit from the chickens which should have been

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