

## SMALL-FRUIT CULTURE FOR MARKET.

these often proving very troublesome in fields enriched with stable manure.

### PLANTING AND CULTIVATION.

The best time for planting small fruits is yet a disputed question, except in the North, where fall-set plants of most species are subject to winter-killing. There are few localities where spring planting is not the safer method, though often the soil can be more thoroughly prepared and the planting be more cheaply done in autumn than in spring. If done in autumn, in regions where the ground freezes to any considerable depth during winter, the newly-set plants should be well mulched to prevent winter injury.

All planting should be in straight rows of equal distance apart. In the case of the bush fruits it is often advantageous to have the rows laid off both ways, so that the cultivator can be run in both directions, at least during the first season. If the land is hilly and inclined to wash, the rows should be laid around the hills, conforming to their curves, but on land reasonably level the rows should, if possible, run north and south and should be as long in that direction as the shape of the field will permit. Overcrowding of plants should be avoided, as fruit of large size is rarely produced by plants having insufficient food, air, and sunshine. If more than one variety of any fruit be planted, or if plants of the same variety be obtained from different sources, each lot should be separately planted and labeled. Failure to do this often leads to expensive uncertainty in later years when plants are desired for new fields or for sale. Many a careless or dishonest plant grower or dealer has escaped responsibility for misnamed or damaged stock through the inability of the planter to positively

trace the plants to his establishment.

Plants should be promptly examined upon receipt, and should be at once heeled in if planting cannot be done immediately. In no case should they be permitted to dry out or be left with roots exposed to the sun or to drying winds. If dry when received, they can often be freshened by placing the roots in water for a few hours. If the weather is dry at planting time, the "puddling" of the roots by dipping in a thin mud of clay and water to which fresh cow manure has been added will often go far toward insuring their growth.

Before setting out, each plant should be carefully examined, and all broken or decayed roots, leaves, or branches should be removed. Plants found diseased or infested with injurious insects should be promptly destroyed, unless the affected portions can be readily cut off and burned. The roots should always be placed in contact with fresh, moist soil, whether the planting be done with the hand or with dibble, spade, or other implement.

Cultivation should immediately follow planting, and should be repeated at frequent intervals during the spring and summer. The appearance of weeds should not be waited for, as the cultivation is for the crop rather than for the destruction of weeds. In general it should be shallow rather than deep, though when the soil becomes hardened by the impact of heavy rainfall or the tramping of berry pickers, the grower should not hesitate to break it up by running a sharp cultivator, or even a light one-horse plow, to the depth of 3 or 4 inches between the rows. If the soil is properly prepared and the cultivation regularly kept up, this tearing up will rarely be necessary except after the harvesting of a crop of fruit. Provided the soil is in condition to work, once a