

PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (HORTICULTURAL BRANCH).

PROGRESS AND PROSPECTS IN FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWING.

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PROGRESS IN 1912.

THE season just closed has been marked by the movement of the largest crop of fruit and vegetables ever grown in this Province. On the other hand, the general range of values has been low, and market conditions have, in some respects, been unsatisfactory. The quality of vegetables and of some fruits in several districts was not as high as usual, owing to unusually damp weather conditions.

Owing to the high level reached in prices of both land and labour, there has been a slowing down in the amount of development-work and orchard-planting. Growers, however, feel satisfied that large profits are to be made in fruit and vegetable growing as a solution is found for difficulties such as those occurring in the marketing this year.

The main features of the situation this past season may be briefly outlined as follows:—

CLIMATIC CONDITIONS.

On Vancouver Island there has been the usual winter precipitation. The spring commenced early, and was favourable, marked by dry and sunny weather. The summer was marked by an ample supply of moisture.

In the Lower Mainland, general climatic conditions were favourable, save that the unusual precipitation during the summer and early fall was too great for satisfactory results.

In the Dry Belt, a mild winter was followed by an open and very favourable spring, which resulted in a generally heavy setting of fruit, though the summer was so moist that, as a rule, but one irrigation was necessary.

In the humid regions of the Interior, all conditions were eminently favourable up to the end of June, but after that time precipitation was heavier throughout the summer, which was, in consequence, rather cool.

FRUIT PESTS.

The small fruits of the Province, such as strawberries and raspberries, are but little injured in any year by pests of any description, and this was the case again this year. Cherries, plums, and prunes, throughout the Province, being softened by the damp weather, were more subject to rot than usual, and this was the cause of considerable loss in the more humid sections. On apples there was very little in the way of injurious pests. Fruit-pit or Baldwin spot, as was predicted in circular issued by this