

The Farm.

Gooseberry Culture.

Under good culture gooseberries will succeed well on a variety of soils, but as with the currant, the best results are obtained on a strong, rather moist, well-drained, clay loam. Thorough, but shallow, cultivation should be given.

As a commercial crop gooseberries are often grown between the trees in young orchards, as they do fairly well in partial shade. In ordinary field culture the plants should be set five feet apart each way, or in rows six feet apart and four or five feet distant in the row. Gooseberries are trained both in the tree form and in the bush form. Ordinarily the latter is preferable.

As a rule, pruning is not required during the first three or four years, except to head back the strong new shoots and remove a few of the less vigorous ones for the purpose of developing fruit spurs all along the canes. The latter treatment consists in annually removing superfluous branches and checking growth sufficient to keep the bushes within bounds.

The gooseberry may be grown from cuttings, as is the currant, or by mound layering. By this method the old plants are headed back to induce the formation of strong new shoots near the surface of the ground. Late in June or in July, when the new wood has become somewhat hardened, a mound of earth is made about the "stool" the earth being about four or five inches deep above the bases of the shoots. In the fall the earth is removed and the rooted shoots are cut off and planted at once in well-prepared soil, or they may be tied in bundles and treated as cuttings until the following spring. If care is used in removing shoots during the winter, propagation from the same plants may proceed indefinitely from year to year.

The American varieties are those which have been developed from our native species, and are of comparatively recent origin, for it is but a few years since gooseberry growing came to be a profitable industry in this country. The European varieties are very large, and have the advantage of a great variety of coloring. They are, however, susceptible to mildew.

Downing, Smith's Improved and Pale Red are the most valuable of the native varieties. Downing is much superior to the others in size and quality. It is not quite as prolific as Houghton, but the fruit is much more attractive and, therefore, it is the variety most popular in the market. Of the European sorts, Industry and White-Smith lead.—Professor W. M. Munson, before the Maine Pomological Society.

Preparing Seed for Sowing.

It is very important to have clean, plump seed, whether wheat, oats or barley, for sowing. Usually as these grains come from the threshing machine, they are not in the best condition for the purpose. There may be some foul stuff and light chaffy grains, the first of which is undesirable and the last useless or unprofitable as seed. For years I have used a fanning and grading mill with good success. The lighter grains, that at best would produce but a feeble and unprofitable growth, go into one receptacle and the heavy, well-filled ones into another, while the chaffy stuff is blown away. This work has been done principally with oats, with the results excellent. The grain thus screened is all of the best and will produce a uniform and strong growth.

There is freedom from weeds, and a field, after it is well headed, looks very fine even on the ground, owing to the strong vitality of the seed sown, as well as in height and general appearance. The crop from seed thus treated is cleaner, plumper and heavier than otherwise, while the yield is improving from year to year. This process does away with the necessity or desirability of frequently changing seed, is more satisfactory and should work equally well

with other kinds of grain, as the arrangements are calculated for this purpose. We have a neighborhood mill, and I calculate that its use saves its cost each year to the owners, from the increased value of the crops from seed thus prepared.—E. R. Toule in American Agriculturist.

Poultry Notes.

The Black Spanish chickens are great layers and do not much care to waste time in brooding. Their eggs are very white and well flavored and quite large for the size of the birds. The black Langshans are extra large and will attract attention in any show. So also for a little variety we may name the silver and gold lace, Hamburgs. These are also classed as good layers.

Children in families which can afford to keep pet stock take great delight in guinea pigs and rabbits, and really there is no more innocent or attractive pleasure for the little ones.

There are three distinct breeds of chickens which are almost of a feather and which make a most unique and beautiful show when only these and no others are in sight. These are the Partridge Cochins, the Brown Leghorns and the Black Breasted Red Bantams. These last are as pugnacious and as audacious as the best games and do not hesitate to tackle the largest of the Asiatics.

The best turkeys for breeding are those 2 years old. If yearling stock is used, the earliest hatched hens and toms should be selected.

Round Silos.

We have frequently been asked the last winter whether a round silo carried an advantage over those built in the usual square or rectangular form sufficient to compensate for its extra cost. Our answer is emphatically, no! In fact there are objections to the round silo aside from increased cost. The most important objection perhaps, and certainly enough to condemn it, is the waste of room. In constructing a silo inside of a barn—and no sensible farmer would locate one anywhere else—the round silo can only utilize the space measured by the circle that can be drawn in the section of the barn to be taken for the purpose. All space outside the circle must necessarily be left as waste room. With the rectangular silo all the space can be utilized. This alone is enough to give the preference to the latter, hence we trouble to give no others.

The only advantage ever claimed for the round silo over the square is that the labor and care involved in keeping the corners of the latter properly filled while the fodder is being put in are avoided in the case of a silo that has no corners. This matter is so insignificant as to be of trifling account. A square silo can, by exercising proper care, be filled so that the material will be as well preserved as that in the circular silo. This has been proved by wide experience.

The circular silo, then, on the whole, cannot be commended above those as commonly constructed, and it is not readily seen why it should have claimed the attention it has received.—Maine Farmer.

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