

HOW TO MAKE MONEY ON FRUIT.

THERE are some precepts so important that they never grow old or go out of date. They are worthy of being impressed on the minds of all men, and some men evidently need more than one impress.

One of these venerable but patent precepts, these ever old and ever young truths, is the imperative and increasing importance of intensive culture in fruit growing. By intensive culture I mean diligent and time culture and liberal feeding with manures rich in the properties essential to perfect fruit.

It has been demonstrated that intensive culture in that it greatly increases the yield per acre, pays the general farmer, the grower of wheat, corn, cotton, tobacco, oats, etc. In fact that no other system really does pay him in the long run. How much more does this apply to fruit growing, where not only quantity is vastly more increased than is possible with the above staples, but where quality is also so vastly improved. And in fruit, quality is almost or quite everything.

A man who by intensive culture doubles his yield per acre of wheat or corn, simply doubles his dollars per acre. But the man who by intensive culture doubles his yield of fruit is pretty sure to so improve it in size, beauty and general excellence that its net value per acre will be quadrupled or even sustain a still greater increase.

My experience in fruit growing reaches back nearly twenty-five years. It has been chiefly in the culture of small fruit — strawberries, dewberries, blackberries and raspberries, but has embraced also grapes, peaches and apples. As there is an exceeding diversity of soils hereabouts, it has embraced likewise nearly every conceivable soil,

the stiffest of red clay, rocky knolls, almost pure sand, black sandy loam with pipe clay subsoil, and so on up and down the gamut of soils good and soils bad.

This experience has impressed on me the paramount importance of two things, absolutely clean cultivation for small fruits and grapes, the sowing and turning under of pea vines or some green crop in apple and peach orchards, and the liberal application to all fertilizers rich in potash. Ten or twelve per cent potash, five per cent. phosphoric acid, and two or three per cent. ammonia, I find to pay best generally

Kainit or muriate of potash for the potash, acid phosphate or dissolved bone for the phosphoric acid, and nitrate of soda or cotton seed meal for the ammonia, should be applied in a larger or smaller quantity as actual experiment dictates. But a liberal application I have always found to pay best, provided always that in small fruits the weeds and grass are kept down. If a man is not determined to give clean culture, the less manure of any kind he uses the better. And I may say, the fewer plants he sets the better. While none at all would be best of all.

The largest yield of strawberries that I have ever seen reported in the state—over 11,000 quarts an acre—I made by clean culture and the liberal and repeated applications of above fertilizing ingredients.

Of course where large quantities of fertilizers are used, it must all be thoroughly mixed and applied broadcast. For small fruit, say one-third thoroughly mixed with soil before plants are set in spring, one-third as a top dressing over plants, middles and all in October, the remainder in same way