



A Line of Frames Showing Method of Cultivation

set is ridged up in beds of from twelve to sixteen feet in width, having a centre elevation of possibly one foot. Along the centres of these ridges, where the sectional frames are to be placed, a trench is dug about two feet in width and from fifteen to eighteen inches or more in depth, depending on the earliness of the season. This trench is filled almost level with the surface with well-fermenting manure, and a portion of the surface excavated soil thrown back over the manure, slightly more being drawn in where the plants are to be set. The frames are then set in place and covered with sash, which in turn are further reinforced with mats and wooden shutters, or hay or straw with or without the shutters. A space of from four to six feet is allowed between the ends of each sectional frame.

When the soil over the manure is well warmed up everything is in readiness to plant. The warmest portion of some favorable day is selected for the purpose and great care is exercised in transferring the plants from the hotbeds to their permanent quarters in order to guard against the possibility of their receiving a setback by sudden changes of temperature or soil conditions. Unlike the transferring of most plants to their permanent place of growth, the coddling process does not cease with this type of melon. In fact it is simply spread over a greater area and in a measure the plants require even greater attention than before, for as the sun gets stronger, greater attention must be paid to watering, syringing and venti-

lation. Success at this stage in keeping the plant in a healthy, actively growing condition and free from insects is very largely dependent upon proper syringing and airing. On bright sunny days frequent syringing of the soil under the sash enables the grower to maintain a somewhat higher temperature without incurring the risk of an invasion of red spider or thrips.

As the fruit attains some size, and especially as it begins to reach full development, it is usually kept from contact with the soil by placing it on a shingle, piece of board, or flat stone. Uniform shape, color, netting, and ripening is secured by turning the fruit every few days. Much loss from cracking, rot, etc., is thus avoided. Pinching out the central shoot of the plant, while not absolutely essential to success, is usually practised. When the runners or shoots are fairly occupying the enclosed area, the sectional frames are raised a few inches above the bed, thus allowing the shoots access to the surrounding unoccupied land. As the weather grows warmer and the summer advances, more and more air is admitted to the frames until, finally, the sash and then the frames themselves are entirely removed. This does not usually occur until the melons are almost fully grown.

As each fruit sets, the shoot on which it is borne is pinched off one or two joints beyond it. A crop of from fifteen to twenty melons is considered sufficient from each six by twelve feet sectional frame. In this area from three to four hills are planted, depending on whether

a three by six feet or four by six feet sash is used. Usually two plants are set per hill.

#### SIZE OF MELONS

As in most crops of like nature the melons vary greatly in size. The writer was informed by one commission house that it had purchased a melon weighing forty-four pounds; and he personally saw one weighing twenty-two pounds which had been selected by the grower for seed purposes. The average weight of number one melons ranges from eight to fifteen pounds, with a mean weight of about ten pounds; that is to say, a dozen melons, packed for shipment, will weigh on an average from one hundred and twenty to one hundred and thirty pounds. In exceptional cases some have been shipped weighing two hundred and forty pounds per dozen package. As a rule the larger melons, those weighing twenty pounds and upwards, do not possess the quality of a perfect specimen weighing from eight to fifteen pounds.

#### Picking Strawberries

Grant S. Peart, Burlington, Ont.

Strawberries keep much longer if picked with their stems left on. The old-fashioned method was to pull the berries, but it has been found that one can pick them as quickly by pinching the stems with the thumb nail. There has been considerable talk about precooking berries before sending them to market. We cannot see that this would pay in the case of our local markets, but doubtless it would be of immense value were we shipping to any great distance.

At what stage of ripening should we pick strawberries? is the next question. We cannot set any hard and fast rule. We believe in allowing the fruit to mature as much as possible. However, we cater more or less to market requirements. Some demand fully matured berries. Toronto will not accept strawberries unless red all over. In the case of Montreal we are required to pick a little on the green side on account of extra distance, and Montrealers are not so particular as to draw the line at partially green berries. At all events the patch should be picked over so often that no fruit becomes soft.

#### Enemies of the Strawberry

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One of the enemies to which the strawberry is subject is the white grub. It is the larva of the May beetle. The grub when fully grown is about an inch and a half long and three-eighths of an inch thick, nearly white, with a brown head. They are usually more numerous in old pastures and meadows than elsewhere, because their principal food is the roots of different kinds of grass.