

HORTICULTURE

Marketing Strawberries

A. C. Blair, Peterborough Co. Ont.

To make the most out of the strawberry patch, the fruit must be picked properly, and sent to market in packages that will attract customers. The boxes must be as clean and bright as they can be secured. Nothing will detract more from the price of a quart of strawberries than a soiled box. The crates also must be clean and well built, and should bear the grower's name.

For an exacting market, there is much importance in having the fruit properly sorted. The boxes should be alike from top to bottom, both the berries in the boxes, and the boxes in the crate. Only one variety should be placed in the same crate. For a special trade, the berries in the boxes may be packed in tiers. This is the ideal way of marketing high-grade strawberries, but it is not always practicable, particularly in seasons when the crop is large, and labor scarce.

When long distance shipping is contemplated, select only those varieties that are firm. The most satisfactory market for strawberries, however, is one that is located as near home as possible. Strawberries must be fresh when exposed for sale to command the best prices. The problem of marketing is more important than that of growing. Honesty and cleanliness are the key notes of success.

The Cover Crop System

F. T. Shatt, M.A., Chemist,
Dominion Experimental Farms.

In outline the treatment of the orchard soil is as follows: The land is kept thoroughly cultivated throughout the spring and early summer months, say, until early in July. This conserves the moisture for the growth of the trees, favors aeration of the soil and nitrification of the humus. The cover crop is then sown. This is preferably one of the legumes. The crop is, as a rule, allowed to remain till the following spring, possibly till the second or third week in May, when the growth is turned under and the soil cultivated as many times as is deemed necessary until the beginning of July and a cover crop again sown. The growth of the cover crop in late summer abstracts much moisture from the soil, naturally checking growth of the trees and thus indirectly causing the early ripening of their wood.

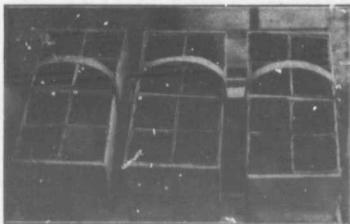
The dates for these various operations are by no means fixed; they will naturally depend on the condition of the soil and the district in which the orchard is situated. Thus, if a drought is not unusual in the early summer months, ploughing under of the cover should not be later than the middle of April, even if there then be little or no spring growth. By this means, a dry earth mulch may be maintained by cultivation which will conserve the moisture from the winter's snow and early spring showers. On the other hand, if a generous and

well distributed rainfall may be expected, the clover or other legume may be allowed to remain throughout the summer, mowing the crop occasionally and leaving the cut material as a mulch. The system allows of much modification and, in this, lies one of its best features: it lends itself readily to adaptation. The observant eye of the orchardist must note the necessities of his trees, the characteristics of soil, of the climatic conditions prevailing in his district, the practice may then be adapted accordingly.

Fruit Crop Report

A. McNeill, Chief, Fruit Division.

The weather conditions throughout the Dominion for the past month have been generally favorable for fruit. The first three weeks were exceptionally dry in the fruit districts



Ontario Strawberries Packed in Tiers

Note that there are four berries across the boxes each way. Grown by Robt. Thompson, St. Catharines, and photographed by Wilfred Thompson.

of Ontario, but occasional showers after the 20th ult. prevented serious injury except that the samples of strawberries in some cases are not so large as usual. Light frosts on the 15th did inflict a very slight damage. Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have had exceptionally favorable weather. In British Columbia, though the weather was cool and wet till the

early part of June, conditions were not seriously affected. During the latter part of the month the temperature has been higher with occasional showers.

APPLES

Prospects are not so good this month as last. The "set" of fruit was not as good as was expected, and the dry weather has probably increased the June "drop." A fair estimate of the present conditions would be an average or slightly above the average crop of early and fall apples, with the winter apples somewhat below a medium crop. The districts producing the larger quantity of fruit in Ontario, such as the counties of Hastings, Durham and Northumberland, have rather a light crop of winter apples.

Speaking generally for the whole apple belt, Spies, Baldwin and Kings will be light or very light, Russets a medium crop, Ben Davis nearly a full crop, Greenings a medium crop, the Funt, as above the average almost everywhere and at least an average crop of fairly clean good-sized fruit in the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Valleys.

In Nova Scotia the prospects for the apple crop as a whole are particularly good this being a bearing year for the Cravenstein. There are no unfavorable conditions in British Columbia, the prospects showing a medium crop.

PEARS AND PLUMS

The prospects for pears and plums are only medium. Bartletts and Kieffers have the best showing.

PEACHES

Early varieties will be fairly abundant, somewhat above the average; late varieties a medium crop. In the early varieties, Alexander, Early Rivers and Triumph are reported bearing full crops. Of the later varieties, St. John will be only a medium crop, the Early Queen light, Snooks and Elbertas good for something over a medium crop. The Elbertas are bearing heavily where they were sprayed for Curl Leaf; those not sprayed have in many cases a very light crop.

TOMATOES

The prospects for tomatoes are excellent. Should there be plenty of moisture during July, there seems nothing in the way of a full crop this year.

CHERRIES

Sweet cherries will be somewhat scarce, sour cherries more plentiful.

GRAPES

Grapes look well and promise a full crop.

SMALL FRUITS

With a moderate amount of rain, small fruits will likely give a large crop. The conditions are so favorable over all the fruit producing sections that the aggregate of the crop will likely be very large.

INSECTS

Insects are not more prevalent than at this time last year, and fungus diseases are not specially in evidence. Up to the present time most injury has been done by the Cigar Case Bearer, the Bud Moth, Canker Worm, Green Fruit Worm and Oyster-shell Bark-lice.

FOREIGN CROP CONDITIONS

The United States will have only an average crop, but very generally distributed over the apple growing districts. The prospects for stock raised for marketing during the winter months would indicate about an average crop or somewhat less.

The prospects for apples in Great Britain and for the fruit crop generally are particularly good, and there are no serious adverse conditions reported from the Continent.

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