

# THE VEGETABLE GARDEN

BY

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Vegetable growing involves more detail than does the growing of any of the general farm crops. Many of these details may be of minor importance in general agriculture, whereas in vegetable growing, success or failure may be determined largely by attention to them. For this reason to deal with vegetable gardening briefly in a comprehensive manner is exceedingly difficult. Consider, for instance, details incident to the growing of tomatoes, or any representative vegetable crop, such as starting the seed, usually under glass, and the management of the hotbed for best development of seedlings; transplanting of seedlings to secure desirable plants; hardening off of the plants for setting to the open field; preparation of the ground; setting out the plants; cultivation; training; harvesting as the crop matures, and the packing of such perishable fruit in attractive and stable packages, in comparison with a grain or fodder crop, to start which the preparation of the soil is usually not nearly so important; the seed is sown where the crop is to develop; the product is harvested easily, usually all at one time, and in bulk; does not require so careful handling and permits of easy storage.

I shall attempt first to point out certain important details more or less common in their application to all vegetable crops, and follow this with more specific information relative to the growing of some of the principal vegetable crops.

## STARTING THE SEED.

In sowing seed whether in the open ground, hotbed or greenhouse, attention should be given to certain factors which contribute to successful germination. Heat, moisture and air are essential. The temperature requirements for best germination are usually a few degrees higher than required for the best development of the plant. Avoid extreme temperature conditions. A high temperature followed by cold may prove disastrous.

Uniform moisture conditions are imperative. Excessive watering one time followed by drying out is the cause of many seeds not starting. Keep the soil moist, not wet. Seeds if not in contact with moist soil cannot possibly germinate. The reason for pressing the soil over seeds that are small is to bring the soil moisture to the surface to supply the seed. The smaller the seed the shallower they should be planted as a rule. The air requirement is regulated largely by the depth of planting. The depth of planting will be governed somewhat by the condition of the soil, for on